

New Bedford's Mayor Mitchell delivers inaugural address as City elected officials sworn in

"On Monday evening at Keith Middle School, the City of New Bedford held an Inauguration Ceremony for municipal office holders, which featured an Inaugural Address by Mayor Jon Mitchell as he begins a sixth term. Among state officials attending was Governor Maura Healey, who administered the oath of office to Mitchell.

Reflecting on Progress

In his remarks Mitchell highlighted the progress New Bedford has made since he took office in 2012, saying "Today New Bedford has near record-low unemployment, safer neighborhoods, more stable finances, new parks and walkways, a population back over 100,000, and a stronger reputation beyond its borders."

Place-Based Citizenship: A Call to Civic Leadership and Collaboration

The Mayor emphasized the need for a strong collaborative approach to effectively address the City's challenges. Drawing on the concept of "place-based citizenship," the Mayor pointed to the powerful impact that residents and businesses working together can have in solving collective problems, rather than relying on city government acting in isolation.

The Mayor noted "Citizenship is rooted in the idea that we have obligations to one another. In a city, these obligations are inherently tied to the place itself, to the interaction of residents, neighborhoods, businesses, and institutions around us."



City of New Bedford photo.

He added, “the responsibilities that come with place-based citizenship require more than simply expressing an opinion about what someone else should do. They entail action [and] everyone has something to offer. If you’ve been sitting on the sidelines, I want you to know that our City – your City – needs you to get in the game. If you have ideas, bring them forward, but also be prepared to say what you will do to help implement them.”

The Importance of a Local Focus In the Face of National and Global Uncertainties

The Mayor took time to highlight in his remarks the importance of New Bedford staying focused on a local agenda that delivers the tangible benefits to residents, and preventing the

divisiveness and uncertainty prevalent at the national and level from trickling down.

Referencing geopolitical tensions, impasses in the nation's capital, the impending presidential election, climate change, and concerns with artificial intelligence, the Mayor acknowledged that "in an ever-interconnected world, New Bedford is hardly an island. We are not insulated from the divisiveness...[but]as the ride gets bumpier at the national level, our task here in New Bedford is to keep our eyes on the road we are on. Our opinions about national and global events may diverge from one another, but we must never lose sight of the fact that there is a whole lot we can still do, working together to strengthen our City..."

Policy Reforms

Mitchell's address also included three significant policy proposals to 1) upgrade local roads, 2) hold irresponsible absentee landlords accountable for their impacts on neighborhoods and tenants, and 3) address the ongoing staffing challenges facing city government.

On Road Improvements

The Mayor said he would increase funding for road improvements as part of an effort to boost the physical condition and appearance of the City. Last year, he prioritized road construction by allocating \$3 million in Capital Improvement funds for road repairs. Follow-up road investments are now under development, according to the Mayor.

"I believe that our residents deserve to live in a clean city with well-designed and visually appealing public spaces, and effective infrastructure," he said.

On Housing Code Enforcement

The Mayor said he would increase fines for irresponsible absentee landlords, holding them accountable for the blight and disorder they bring to neighborhoods and tenants.

“There aren’t many of them, but they are all too willing to pay minor fines as a cost of doing business, rather than managing their properties as they would their own homes, which is not too much to ask,” he said. “I will propose to the City Council that recidivism landlords be subject to fines that are more appropriate for the costs they impose on their neighbors.

“If they haven’t gotten with the program by now, they soon will.”

On City Government’s Staffing Challenges

The Mayor acknowledged the tight regional labor market was having a negative impact on the City’s ability to recruit and retain skilled employees, especially department heads and senior managers. Long-standing vacancies have undermined the operations of several key departments in recent years. In response, the Mayor called for eliminating residency requirements for management positions, which would help enlarge the pool of potential candidates for open positions.

The City’s employee residency requirement has made it extremely difficult to land the best qualified candidates ... as much as I’ve long supported the residency requirement as a way of encouraging the hiring of City residents, it has become unworkable,” he said. “Most cities have abolished their residency requirements, and it’s time now for New Bedford to do it, too.

Top Blue Economy City on the East Coast

The Mayor said he feels New Bedford is in a perfect position to develop into a center for marine technology.

“The cluster of maritime businesses, the proximity to marine research institutions, and the emergence of new technologies that can be deployed from here, together make New Bedford the perfect place for marine technology and innovation, especially related to climate and fisheries,” he said. “Our overarching goal, simply stated, is to establish New Bedford as the top

blue economy city on the East Coast, and we will do that by making the most of our advantages and out-hustling everybody else.”

Other Local Officials Begin New Terms

Joining the Mayor in beginning new terms of office were members of the City Council, Board of Assessors and School Committee. Council President Linda Morad delivered a brief address, and City Clerk Denis Farias administered the oath to Council members Ryan Pereira, Derek Baptiste, Leo Choquette, Shane Burgo, Joseph P. Lopes, Brian Gomes, Ian Abreu, Linda Morad, Naomi Carney, Maria Giesta and Shawn Oliver; Board of Assessors member Martin Treadup; and School Committee members Christopher Cotter, Joaquim “Jack” Livramento and Bruce J. Oliveira.”

Theater Opens in Downtown New Bedford

The story of an 11-year-long effort to transform a crumbling, historic church into a modern performing arts venue began, literally, on a dark and stormy night.

It was April 2012, and heavy wind was blanketing Downtown New Bedford. Debris from the deteriorating steeple atop the historic First Baptist Church crashed onto William Street. More debris fell again in November 2012, forcing firefighters to use yellow caution tape to block off the area in front of the almost 200-year-old building.

Mayor Jon Mitchell and church leaders agreed that the building’s worsening condition posed a public safety risk, and the Mayor moved to place a tax lien on the church in 2013. The

lien allowed the City to not only step in to stabilize the failing steeple, but City action spurred discussions among historic preservation partners on how to save the historic church from ruin.

Ten years and roughly \$3 million in public and private funds later, on Friday morning, Mayor Mitchell and other officials gathered for a ribbon-cutting ceremony to officially mark the end of the long journey that transformed the historic church into a new theater, The Steeple Playhouse. The extensive renovations and repairs over the last decade, driven by the City and the Waterfront Historic Area League (WHALE), have resulted in a modern performing arts center that will be the home of Your Theatre Inc., a volunteer, non-profit local theater group that has educated and entertained generations of Greater New Bedford residents and visitors.

“Eleven years ago, we sought to kick start a more-focused discussion to preserve the First Baptist Church by repairing the steeple, which was damaged in a storm, and placing a lien on the building,” Mayor Mitchell said. “At the time, it was an unorthodox use of public funds, but it launched an effort, with the help of partners like WHALE, Reverend Dalton Said, and Your Theatre, that has resulted in the establishment of a new Downtown theater and the preservation of one of New Bedford’s most historic buildings.”

Funding for the nearly \$3 million renovation project was roughly evenly divided among City, state, and private sources. The City of New Bedford’s contribution totaled approximately \$900,000, with \$500,000 directed to the project from the Community Preservation Act (CPA) grant program, \$240,000 from the federal American Rescue Plan (ARP) grant, and \$150,000 from the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. The state contributed a nearly equal amount, with \$400,000 allocated from the Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund and \$480,000 from the Commonwealth’s Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credit program. Your Theatre and WHALE

raised almost \$1 million in private donations and grants to cover the final third of project costs.

The new Steeple Playhouse theater offers modern lighting, sound, and performance space, and can fit more than 250 guests. Your Theatre has been in contact with several organizations interested in hosting performances there, and also offers a unique setting for weddings, meetings and other events. The architect for the renovation was Kathryn Duff of Studio2Sustain.

“For over 60 years, WHALE’s work has focused on some of the most important and threatened historic buildings in New Bedford and First Baptist was the epitome of our mission-based work. Shepherding this project for nearly a decade took incredible vision, creativity, and a collaborative spirit, all of which made the Steeple Playhouse possible. We are incredibly proud of what our organization, project team and the entire community has accomplished here, and our thanks go out to everyone who supported it. Now, we are excited to see this newly restored treasure brimming with life once more and wish Your Theatre, Inc. incredible success with the Steeple Playhouse,” WHALE Executive Director Erin Miranda said.

“Repurposing this building into an active performing arts, conference, and wedding space will not only help preserve the building for generations to come, but will provide much needed small and midsize performance spaces in the heart of Downtown with a transformable stage, professional lighting and sound array, and updated accessibility and utilities. We couldn’t be happier to have such great partners in WHALE, The City of New Bedford, and Studio2Sustain, to make this vision come to life,” said Eric Paradis of Your Theatre Inc.

Massachusetts October Home Sales Fell To 12-Year Low

Colin A. Young

State House News Service

As Gov. Maura Healey and her team rolled out her plan to move the needle on housing production and ease housing hardships with outside-the-box policies, people looking to buy a home in Massachusetts faced much of the same in October: the thinnest inventory in more than a decade, record high prices and expensive borrowing costs.

There were 3,515 single-family homes sold in Massachusetts last month, down 16.9 percent from October 2022's 4,228 sales and the fewest number of single-family home sales for any October since 2011, The Warren Group said in its first look at monthly real estate data since Healey filed her policy-heavy \$4.1 billion housing bond bill on Oct. 18.

With the options for prospective homebuyers relatively few and far between, the median sale price for a single-family home jumped 10.6 percent year-over-year to \$575,140, The Warren Group said. Like September's \$565,000 median sale price, October's mark set a new all-time high for the month.

"Home sale prices in October climbed to the highest they've ever been during this time of year," Cassidy Norton, associate publisher and media relations director at The Warren Group, said. "Inventory is far below historical norms, and limited choices make it more difficult to find a home. And record high prices paired with rising interest rates make the task of buying a home that much more formidable."

Through October, there had been 34,515 single-family homes sold in Massachusetts this year. That represents a 23.9 percent decline from the first 10 months of 2022. The year-to-

date median sale price is up 3.6 percent from last year, at \$570,000, The Warren Group said.

Potential homeowners are running out of options in Massachusetts, the group said in its October analysis. Last month's 1,562 condominium sales marked a 9.4 percent decrease from a year ago while the median sale price climbed 4.4 percent to \$500,000. Year-to-date, condo sales are down 19.7 percent and the median price is up 4.9 percent to \$515,500.

"Massachusetts condo prices soared to a record high in October, setting a new benchmark. Condos previously offered a more affordable purchase option; arguably, at just \$75,000 less than a single-family home, those times are over," Norton said.

High interest rates are affecting would-be homebuyers, and potential sellers. With rates as high as they are now, some prospective buyers have to limit their options because it is far more expensive to borrow money than it was two years ago. And people who are locked in at a much lower mortgage rate are less likely to give that up by making their home available for sale.

As of Thursday, the average interest rate on a 30-year fixed-rate mortgage was 7.44 percent APR, according to data compiled by Freddie Mac. A year ago, the average interest rate was 6.61 percent, and two years ago it was 3.10 percent, Freddie Mac said.

Healey and Housing Secretary Ed Augustus have hit the road over the last month to tout the five-year, \$4.12 billion housing bond bill that they think will help to ease the housing crunch that threatens the state's continued development and its competitive standing with other states. In Attleboro last month, Augustus said that 1.6 percent of housing units across Massachusetts were available for sale or rent, calling it the lowest vacancy rate of all 50 states.

“A healthy housing ecosystem should be 4 to 5 percent vacancy rate at any given time, which empowers a consumer to be able to get a rental unit or to make a reasonable offer on purchasing a home,” he said. “How many people here have a family member or experienced themselves or know somebody they’ve worked with who’ve had to make multiple over-asking offers and then still to come away not having the opportunity of homeownership? That is what that low vacancy rate represents to real people.”

He added, “And those people increasingly are saying, ‘Well, I guess that homeownership isn’t an opportunity for me here in Massachusetts. I’m looking elsewhere.’ And the governor was very clear and very specific: We can’t let that happen any longer.”

Healey has tried to attach a level of urgency to her bill (H 4138), suggesting it will be a missed production opportunity if the policies in her bill are not law before the spring construction season gets underway.

But the bill is now in the hands of a Legislature that has struggled to make quick decisions, meet its own deadlines and seldom reaches agreement on anything of consequence without taking it to, and sometimes beyond, the brink. Healey’s housing bill has not moved since it was sent to the Housing Committee on Oct. 18 and the Legislature is in a seven-week stretch of limited activity.

In Attleboro last month, the governor said she needed help from local officials and supporters “to get it done and get it done quickly.”

“Housing construction starts will start in the spring or not, right? So we’ve got to get this going and get this going now,” Healey said.

MBTA South Coast Rail train arrives in New Bedford for emergency first responder training

After years of doubt and speculation, New Bedford residents finally saw the MBTA South Coast Rail train in New Bedford this past weekend.

On Sunday, November 19, 2023, at approximately 10 AM, the MBTA conducted an emergency evacuation training drill in the area of the Whale's Tooth parking lot in New Bedford as part of safety training in support of the start of South Coast Rail passenger service.

The drill was a learning exercise that included a scenario in which a train traveling along this section of track unexpectedly experiences an incident. Several passengers are injured, and others must evacuate the train. This exercise was designed to establish a learning environment for public safety officials to exercise emergency response plans, policies, and procedures as they pertain to a mass casualty event on a Commuter Rail train. First responders received hands-on Commuter Rail equipment familiarization training. To ensure an effective exercise, subject matter experts and representatives from numerous agencies took part in the planning process and the exercise conduct and evaluation.

Agencies that participated in this joint exercise included the MBTA, MassDOT, Keolis Commuter Services, MBTA Transit Police, Mass Coastal Railroad, AECOM, the Federal Railroad Administration, and first responders from New Bedford,

Dartmouth, Acushnet, Fairhaven, Norton, Freetown, Mattapoisett, Taunton, and Raynham. The exercise was developed and led by K&J Safety and Security Consulting Services, Inc.

We were at the scene getting photographs and video which you can see below.

Massachusetts will switch to “4-day work weeks” with new bill on Beacon Hill

In a newly proposed program called the “Massachusetts Smart Work Week Pilot”, Massachusetts workers will switch over to 4-day work weeks with no decrease in pay. Companies that reduce work hours for at least 15 employees, without giving them a pay cut will receive a tax credit.

This aims to not only reduce employee “burnout” but make Massachusetts a more desirable location for talented individuals seeking a job.

The beginning of the proposed bill (Bill H.3849) reads,

“Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the executive office of labor and workforce development shall establish a pilot program to promote, incentivize and support the use of a four-day work week by qualifying employers and to study the benefits and impacts of such work arrangements on participating employees and employers. This program shall be known as the Massachusetts Smart Work Week Pilot.”

(b) For the purposes of this act, the following terms shall have the following meanings, unless the context clearly requires otherwise:-

“Four-day work week”, employees receive a meaningful reduction in actual work hours without any reduction in overall pay.

“Pilot”, the Massachusetts Smart Work Week Pilot Program, as established in this act.

“Qualifying employer”, an employer operating in the commonwealth that enters an agreement to participate in the Massachusetts Smart Work Week Pilot Program subject to this act.”

So the question is, if your job switches over to a 4-day work week, do you think you will be less stressed and more productive? This seems like it could be a win-win for companies and employees. If you would like to read the bill yourself, [CLICK HERE](#).

Massachusetts shelters officially at capacity as migrants forced to “join a waitlist”

Massachusetts has officially reached its capacity at emergency shelters to house migrants in the state. As of Friday morning, the “Emergency Assistance Placement Data” government website shows Massachusetts currently has 7,517 families enrolled and 37 families have enrolled in the past 24 hours. Capacity in

Massachusetts is 7,500 families.

Emergency Assistant Director Gen. Scott Rice recently announced that once the system hits the 7,500 capacity, "Families eligible for emergency assistance will be placed on a waitlist".

Massachusetts Governor, Maura Healey stated, "We will continue to provide resources to families. Food, clothing, access to information about alternative shelter options. So, that will all continue".

It appears that more taxpayer money will be thrown at this issue as the House Pours \$250 Million More Into Massachusetts Shelter Crisis. Of greatest note is the House requirement that \$50 million of the \$250 million to go toward, "The identification, acquisition and operationalization of a state funded overflow emergency shelter site or sites" for families placed on a shelter waitlist.

Local entrepreneurs building clothing "Megalocation" in Fairhaven with over 1,000 sneakers in stock

Cameron Langlois and Jon Silva are betting on themselves and expanding their clothing stores to a "Mega location" in Fairhaven, Massachusetts. Cameron, who is the owner of "The 508 Sneaker store", and co-owner of "508 PSC" gym and "508 Streetwear" made the announcement on social media.

“WE’RE MOVING, GET EXCITED WE’RE GROWING EVEN BIGGER! Over 1000 sneakers, over 1000 essentials/bape/supreme/gallery dept/hype clothing items, one super location side by side with thousands of square feet, our own parking lot, billboard and more. We are proud to announce the 508 mega location @the508sneakerstore @508streetwearstore coming very early 2024. Now the amazing inventory of both stores in one convenient location on route 6 fairhaven. Coming very early 2024 ?.”

Jon Silva also posted a statement on social media,

“Super excited for this move, I want to thank everyone for the support thus far. This is going to be huge for our community & culture. And I can’t do it along side a better guy Cameron Langlois it’s our time? #blessed”.

We recently spoke with co-owners Cameron Langlois and Jarrid Antil inside of their new gym “508 PSC” at the Kilburn Mill in New Bedford. Watch below!

City of New Bedford receives National Award for Financial Reporting

“An organization of municipal finance experts is giving the City high honors.

The Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA), the preeminent association of government finance professionals in the U.S. and Canada, recently announced that the City of New Bedford’s Annual Comprehensive Financial Report FY22 has

earned its Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting.

“This honor is the latest in a long line of awards the City has received from the GFOA,” Mayor Jon Mitchell said. “It is a reflection of the City financial team’s skill, hard work, and professionalism. New Bedford taxpayers can have confidence that their hard-earned money is being well-managed.”

The award is the third the City has received from the GFOA for its financial reporting, and was preceded by seven straight honors for the City’s Annual Budget. In total, the City has received 10 awards from the GFOA since Mayor Mitchell took office.

Michele Mark Levine of the GFOA wrote in the notification letter to Mayor Mitchell that the award is the “highest form of recognition in government accounting and financial reporting, and its attainment represents a significant accomplishment by a government and its management.”

The GFOA established the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting program in 1945 to encourage and assist state and local governments to prepare annual comprehensive financial reports that evidence the spirit of transparency.

New Bedford’s FY22 financial report was judged by an impartial panel and found to meet the highest industry standards, including demonstrating a constructive “spirit of full disclosure.” The City scored proficient in all 17 grading categories.

“This Certificate of Achievement reinforces the City’s commitment to strong financial performance,” City Auditor Emily Arpke said.

Arpke added: “The Annual Comprehensive Financial Report provides a review of the City’s financial health for the

residents, ranking officials, and financial institutions, and evaluates whether the City is operating in line with our laws, State and Federal regulations, and internal policies. Achieving this year over year is only possible with the hard work and dedication from the City's finance team, administration, and its independent auditors: Hague, Sahady & Co."

BayCoast Mortgage opens doors for first-time homebuyers with down payment assistance program

"SWANSEA, MA – BayCoast Mortgage (baycoastmortgage.com), a top residential lender on the South Coast of Massachusetts and Rhode Island, is excited to announce it has helped more than three dozen first-time homebuyers in the community achieve their dream of homeownership, thanks to its highly successful Down Payment Assistance (DPA) program.

The DPA program debuted in August of 2022, in an effort to help meet the financial needs of our local community, and ensure homeownership is within reach for more individuals and families in Southern New England. With a total of \$500,000 available, BayCoast Mortgage proudly provided down payment assistance of up to \$17,500 on a matching basis for eligible first-time homebuyers in Rhode Island and up to a \$10,000 down payment match for qualifying borrowers in Massachusetts.

A total of 42 borrowers – 21 in Massachusetts and 21 in Rhode Island – realized their goal of homeownership through the DPA

program. Breaking down the statistics by county, the largest number of DPA grants went to eligible borrowers in Bristol County, Massachusetts, with 21, which included Fall River, New Bedford, Taunton, Fairhaven, Acushnet, Lakeville, and South Dartmouth.

Providence County was at the top of the list for Rhode Island, with 12 DPA grants being provided to qualified borrowers in Providence, North Providence, East Providence, Riverside, Tiverton, Newport, Cranston, Warwick, West Warwick, Cumberland, Pawtucket, Richmond, and South Kingstown.

“At BayCoast Mortgage, we recognize the financial challenges many first-time homebuyers face,” said Daniel J. Briand, President and CEO of BayCoast Mortgage. “Saving for a down payment on a home can take years. Our Down Payment Assistance Program was the key to opening more doors, especially for those at low-to-moderate income levels, who may have thought homeownership simply wasn’t possible.”

To qualify for the Down Payment Assistance Program, borrowers were required to meet income and purchase limits.

“The Down Payment Assistance Program offered by BayCoast Mortgage was lifechanging,” said Evelyn Ranone, First Vice President, CRA Officer for BayCoast Bank. “Buying your first home can be a very emotional experience. It is gratifying to know we truly helped members of our community achieve the American Dream by making homeownership more affordable.”

BayCoast Mortgage is announcing even more exciting news!

It has earmarked another \$500,000 in down payment assistance for their local community and the funds are available to eligible borrowers starting today. To learn how the program works, and to see if you may qualify, please contact BayCoast Mortgage at 877-466-2678 and a Loan Officer will be happy to assist you.

About BayCoast Mortgage

BayCoast Mortgage Company, LLC is a wholly owned subsidiary of BayCoast Bank, serving MA, RI, CT, NH, PA, NJ, MD, VA, SC, NC, and FL, offering a wide variety of home mortgage products including FHA, VA, Land, Construction, Conforming and Jumbo Loans. Visit baycoastmortgage.com or call 877-466-2678."

New Bedford's Buttonwood Park receives \$2 million "to improve water quality" of brook and pond

New Bedford, MA – Mayor Jon Mitchell announced that the City, along with local, state, and federal partners, is launching a major effort to improve water quality in Buttonwood Brook and Pond.

More than \$2 million in state and federal funds has been secured for the project, which aims to better manage stormwater to reduce pollution in the Buttonwood Brook ecosystem.

"This project will have a lasting positive impact on the ecological health of Buttonwood Park," said Mayor Jon Mitchell. "I want to thank our federal delegation, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Coalition of Buzzards Bay, and the Healey Administration for their support of this critical green infrastructure initiative."

Environmental infrastructure improvements are planned for the northern end of Brownell Avenue, Kempton Street near the Route

140 intersection, and around the Buttonwood Warming House. They include rain gardens, retention ponds and bioswales, which will capture stormwater and allow it to filter and clean, keeping street pollutants from reaching the brook and pond.

Capturing and filtering stormwater will help Buttonwood Brook absorb heavy rains and reduce the chance of flooding. The Brook runs 8.5 miles, from Hathaway Road south through Buttonwood Pond and eventually emptying into Apponagansett Bay in south Dartmouth, passing through many residential areas along the way.

The parking lot for the Warming House will be repaved, and the walkways will be brought up to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. The City worked with the Buzzards Bay Coalition and the Town of Dartmouth to plan and secure funding for the project.

Funding sources include:

- A \$500,000 Watershed Implementation Grant from the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Southeast New England Program to the Buzzards Bay Coalition, which accepted the award at Wednesday's ceremony.
- A \$350,000 grant from the state's Municipal Vulnerability Program to the City.
- A \$375,000 grant from the EPA's National Estuary Program to the City's Department of Parks, Recreation and Beaches.
- Almost \$710,000 in American Rescue Plan funds from the federal government.

"This project, which will protect our watershed and improve access for all who visit Buttonwood Park, is a reminder of what can happen when the local, state, and federal government partner with each other and with non-profit organizations like the Buzzards Bay Coalition," said Congressman Bill Keating. "I'm proud of the work that the Southeast New England Program

has accomplished since Senator Jack Reed and I worked together to start the program a decade ago, and I am proud to see this increased federal investment in the City of New Bedford as a result of President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the American Rescue Plan."

"Massachusetts' senior elected officials continue to do a fantastic job crafting great solutions for the challenges facing our coastal waters – and this funding is a result of their hard work and creativity," said EPA New England Regional Administrator David W. Cash. "These projects announced today will advance EPA's and the Commonwealth's commitment to investing in underserved communities."

"This project will not only improve the water quality in Buttonwood Brook and Pond, but it will keep the Buttonwood ecosystem healthy and thriving for years to come," said Ward 5 City Councilor Scott Lima. "This is a good example of the good that comes when local, state, and federal bodies come together as a team."

"Climate change impacts like sea-level rise and increased rainfall require innovative approaches," said Commissioner Bonnie Heiple of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. "We applaud the collaboration that led to the use of nature-based solutions to improve water quality and reduce flooding risks to the New Bedford community."