

# Lynn to take 'big step forward' with ferry launch

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**LYNN** — The naysayers said it would never happen but a Lynn-to-Boston commuter ferry service is set to start May 19.

James Cowdell, executive director of the Economic Development and Industrial Corporation, said, “EDIC took a project that many people said would never happen and now we’re two weeks away from a maiden voyage.”

Cowdell signed a contract with Boston Harbor Cruises to operate a two-year pilot program with three departures daily each way. Starting May 19 the ferry will run through Sept. 12 and pick up again next summer.

“We think people will find that it is a very appealing alternative to driving into Boston,” Cowdell said.

The boat will depart from the Blossom Street Extension ramp off the Lynnway and dock at Long Wharf in Boston, located off State Street. It will leave Lynn Monday through Friday at 6:30 a.m., 8 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. Return trips will leave 7:15 a.m., 5:45 p.m. and 7:15 p.m. The cost for the 30-minute trip is \$7 each way for adults, \$3.50 for children and seniors and MBTA Zone 2 passes will be honored as well, Cowdell noted. Payments will be made on board with cash or credit and parking is free. For the first week, May 19 through May 23, Cowdell said the ferry would be free, too.

“We are very excited to get the ferry up and running,” he said.

Mayor Judith Flanagan Kennedy said she is hoping the ferry will be the catalyst for future waterfront development.

“We are grateful for the investment made by state and federal agencies as well as the EDIC that is allowing us to provide this service,” she added in a prepared statement.

The ferry project has received \$7.65 million to this point, with \$5 million coming from the state Seaport Advisory Council, \$2 million from the U.S. Department of Transportation and \$650,000 from EDIC.

“Thanks to the hard work of the Lynn delegation, local officials, the Patrick administration and Seaport Advisory Council, the Lynn commuter ferry is now a reality,” said Sen. Thomas McGee.

McGee said the ferry creates a true “multimodal transportation system” in the city. He also compared it to Hingham, which also has a ferry, and said he believes it will not only create a group of passionate water travelers but it could spur significant economic development as well.

“This is another big step forward in taking advantage of one of our greatest natural resources, our waterfront,” McGee said.

The ferry project consisted of three phases, starting with the removal of an old bait shop, drainage improvements, repaving the parking lot and reconstructing a boat ramp. Phase 2 included rebuilding the seawall, while the final phase consisted of dredging, building the dock and installing new lighting in the parking lot.

“This has been a lengthy process, but the final result will be well worth the wait,” Cowdell said.

EDIC Chairman Charles Gaeta said he was pleased the agency would lead the way on the project and he believes it could be the key to future economic development.

“We are pleased that EDIC was the lead agency on this important project, and believe that this will lead to future economic development,” said Gaeta.

“Everyone knows how difficult it is to drive into Boston in the morning and get home at night,” Cowdell said. “The ferry is a convenient, cost-effective, efficient option that we hope people will utilize. We will be tracking ridership closely.”