



Market St. on a busy Wednesday. (Sheldon Jacobsohn)

Lynn turns its attention to Market St. makeover

For the Item
November 7, 2024

LYNN — With one side of Market Street – from City Hall Square to the MBTA garage – set for improvements as part of the Northern Strand Extension project, the City will make similar enhancements to the other side, with the help of a state grant.

Community Development Director Jamie Marsh secured a \$595,000 MassWorks grant from the state Executive Office of Economic Development. The funding will be used to conduct in-depth engineering studies and design work for the project, which will include new sidewalks, ADA-compliant curb cuts and crosswalks.

In addition to those improvements, the Northern Strand work, a separately funded \$11 million project already under construction, will also feature a dedicated shared-use path.

“We thought this would be a good opportunity to complement the work being done as part of the Northern Strand,” said Mayor Jared C. Nicholson. “Market Street is an important corridor and gateway to our downtown and when these projects are complete, traveling that area will be a better experience for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists, improving quality of life for our residents and encouraging investment in our downtown.”

Marsh said the work the City is doing on the northern side of Market Street is more involved than the other side, due the presence of underground vaults, or old coal chutes. Federal regulations require that sidewalks above them be reinforced.

“It’s very expensive work that requires a lot of engineering, surveying and design,” Marsh said. “Regular sidewalks are easy; you’re just dealing with dirt. On that side, there are the vaults, utilities and other factors to consider.”

Marsh said the in-depth engineering includes the use of sonar equipment to confirm where the underground voids are located.

“This work goes well with what the state is doing with the Northern Strand,” said Marsh, who has successfully applied for more than \$17 million in MassWorks grants in the last 12 years. “It’s all tied to making sure our public infrastructure support investments made in our community.”

The previous funding has helped the city complete projects in areas including: Federal Street, Demakes Family YMCA, Washington Street, the Lynnway at the new Breakwater development, Blossom Street and the Lynnway, Hanson Street (Harbor Park), and the intersection of Broad, Washington and Spring streets.

“We sincerely appreciate the partnership with the state that has allowed us to make significant improvements in many important areas,” Nicholson said.

In addition to the funding for Market Street, the City received a \$234,000 grant from MassDevelopment to be used for Brownfields remediation in the area around the Multi-Service Center on Willow Street. The majority of the work will be done in a parking lot across the street from the center, which houses My Brother’s Table, as well as an emergency shelter and a health clinic.

Once the remediation work is completed the city will be looking to sell the building through a process that would continue the use of a soup kitchen and encourage renovations and improvements.

The Economic Development Industrial Corporation (EDIC/Lynn) received two grants totaling \$125,000 – a \$100,000 Urban Agenda Grant and a \$25,000 Massachusetts Downtown Initiative Grant. Cowdell said this is the fourth straight year EDIC has received the Urban Agenda Grant.

“The Healey-Driscoll administration continued to focus on important issues and projects here in Lynn. We are excited to continue our partnership and thank them for their support,” said James Cowdell, EDIC Lynn executive director. “These resources directly help small businesses, specifically women-owned and BIPOC companies.”

Cowdell said EDIC will be working with MassDevelopment to explore ways to improve wayfinding at the Blossom Street Extension where the commuter ferry is located.

“We are proud to be a state of strong cities and towns, made stronger by programs like the Community One Stop for Growth, which deliver the resources our communities need to grow their local economies and meet the needs of their residents,” said Gov. Maura Healey. “Communities will use these grants to build more housing and lower costs, improve road safety, revitalize their downtowns, create new jobs and more.”

“It is great to see that Lynn continues to utilize MassWorks funding for important infrastructure investments throughout our community,” said State Sen. Brendan Crighton. “This project will improve mobility, safety and traffic while at the same time boosting our local economy.”



This article was submitted to The Item and not produced by its editorial staff.