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CITY OF NEW BEDFORD
Jonathan F. Mitchell, Mayor

P R E S S   R E L E A S E

New Airport Terminal Gets Green Light

New Bedford, Massachusetts – New Bedford Mayor Jon Mitchell and Massachusetts State Representative Bill Straus have received a commitment for design and project funding for a new terminal and control tower for New Bedford Regional Airport from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation.

In June of this year, Mitchell and Straus hosted a visit to the airport by Secretary Tesler for the Secretary to be briefed by Airport Commission members and staff on the project background and design options for a new airport terminal. The current administration and passenger facility at the New Bedford Regional Airport was built in the 1950's and is in need of replacement and infrastructure updates. The current terminal building is the oldest commercial airport terminal in New England still in active use.

Specifically, Straus and Mitchell are confirming, "MassDOT is funding and authorizing the City/Airport Commission to proceed with full design and engineering of the Airport Terminal Building. As part of this overall engineering effort, a critical and early component of this process will be to update the Airport Layout Plan (ALP). An updated ALP is an essential ingredient for eligibility for Federal and State funds and can be completed in advance of the completion of the full design. Additionally, within the next update to the Capital Improvement Plan, MassDOT will incorporate this project."

The commitment from the state means the city's airport commission can begin immediate design and permitting to bring the replacement facility to a bid-ready level of completion while funding for the project's completion will be a part of the state's

five-year Capital Improvement Plan. As a result of this funding authorization by the state, completed designs and permits can be expected by mid-2023.

Mayor Mitchell and Representative Straus, House Chair of the Legislature's Joint Transportation Committee, have continued to have conversations in recent months with Secretary Tesler to review the project's status, which led to today's announcement.

"I want to thank the Mayor and the Commission for their aggressive pursuit of this needed project which meets an important need in the region's transportation growth over the next several years," said Representative Straus. "This state commitment, however, would not have been possible without the strong interest in the South Coast by Governor Baker and Lieutenant Governor Polito", he added.

"I want to thank Chairman Straus for teaming up with my administration, along with Chairman Carlos DaCunha and the other members of the Airport Commission, to advance this long-needed project, which will bolster the airport's ability to expand commercial air service offerings," said Mayor Mitchell. "It represents another key investment by the Baker-Polito Administration to support Greater New Bedford's long-term economic competitiveness."

Secretary Tesler added MassDOT is pleased to advance projects at New Bedford Regional Airport, "Municipal airports are a tremendous boost to the economic vitality of a region and investments in New Bedford and updating the Airport Layout Plan will have positive benefits for residents and the business community for many decades."

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation Aeronautics Division (https://www.mass.gov/orgs/aeronautics-division) is tasked by statute with building, maintaining, and advancing an efficient Massachusetts aviation system to drive economic development and improve the quality of life in the Commonwealth. MassDOT Aeronautics is the lead agency responsible for planning aviation capital investment for the Commonwealth's 35 public use airports, as well as a variety of private use landing areas, seaplane bases, and heliports.