

Town of Dighton Awarded \$150,000 ADA Improvement Grant

by Taylor O'Neil

Town Administrator Michael Mullen, together with a number of Dighton town officials, is pleased to announce that the town has been awarded a Municipal Americans with Disability Act Grant from the Massachusetts Office of Disability to fund various accessibility improvements in the town.

The Town of Dighton was awarded a grant in the amount of \$151,250 from the Massachusetts Office of Disability to support and improve ADA compliance in the town's public facilities, policies and infrastructure.

"We are extremely proud to have been awarded this funding from the Massachusetts Office on Disability to continue making progress to address our accessibility needs," Town Administrator Mullen said. "This grant is a direct result of a team effort between Selectman Brett Zografos, ADA Coordinator Jonathan Gale, Parks and Recreation Commission Chairman Kevin Smith, Jr., Building Commissioner Jim Aguiar and Highway Superintendent Tom Ferry. Dighton works best when we work together. Our efforts to advance the projects funded in this grant will have a lasting impact for all Dighton residents, businesses and visitors."

Funding awarded through the grant will build upon ongoing efforts at the Town Hall to make various public counter and employee workspace accessibility improvements. The grant will fund the accessibility improvements to the main level restrooms with updated facilities and electric doors. It will also fund the construction of a new outdoor ramp into the Town Hall to remediate one of the biggest barriers for residents to access the building with the grade of the current ramp being too steep, turning radiuses too tight and inadequate railings.

At the Dighton Old Town Hall, which houses the Town's main meeting space for public meetings, the grant will fund the construction of an Architectural Access Board-approved accessible ramp, an electric door and improvements to a restroom facility in the building.

The grant will fund accessibility improvements at Dighton's Tennis and Basketball Courts, located on Route 138, and at the School Lane and Lane Field walkways and play areas. The town will also be able to fund the purchase of mobile accessibility mats (also referred to as rubberized grass mats) for playground areas and the Town's new Briggs Garden.

Importantly, the grant will also provide critical funding to improve the accessibility of Dighton's town website in line with recommendations made by a town accessibility consultant in 2020.

"Dighton officials, residents and key community stakeholders are proud of the overarching commitment being made throughout the community to strengthen and better-ensure accessibility of municipal affairs for all residents, businesses and visitors," said ADA Coordinator Gale. "We look forward to continuing to work tirelessly to reach our goal of full inclusion and are excited to continue our partnership with the Massachusetts Office of Disability to move our efforts forward."

The Town's grant award will also be matched by an in-kind Town of Dighton contribution of \$61,500. This funding will also help finance the work associated with the recommendations identified through the town's comprehensive evaluation of ADA compliance in all town-owned facilities and recreational areas. The evaluation was made possible through a [2019 Massachusetts Office on Disability Planning Grant](#).