Commonwealth of Massachusetts
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
One Ashburton Place, Room 2102, Boston, MA 02108

Seaport Economic Council Grant Program

Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA)

FY2027 Dredging Construction and Regional Equipment Grants
Guidelines and Application Template

Application Publication Date: **July 30, 2026**

Application Deadline: **September 17, 2026, at 11:59 p.m.**

Questions: **seaportcouncil@mass.gov**

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A. INTRODUCTION

The Healey-Driscoll Administration is pleased to announce the availability of grants for coastal dredging and regional equipment projects through the FY2027 Seaport Economic Council (SEC) Grant Program.

Coastal harbors throughout Massachusetts are critical economic, environmental, and public infrastructure assets that support the Commonwealth's blue economy, including commercial fishing, maritime transportation, tourism, recreation, public safety operations, waterfront industries, and coastal communities. Maintaining navigational access within these waterways is essential to sustaining economic activity, protecting public safety, preserving working waterfronts, and supporting long-term coastal resilience. Sedimentation, channel shoaling, and changing coastal conditions continue to impair navigational access in many Massachusetts harbors. These conditions can restrict vessel access, increase safety risks, hinder emergency response capabilities, negatively affect waterfront businesses, and limit economic opportunities within coastal communities.

Historically, the Massachusetts Dredging Program provided competitive capital funding for saltwater dredging construction projects. However, that program has been discontinued in the state's capital budget. Given the continued need to support dredging projects in our coastal communities, the Seaport Economic Council is offering this targeted funding opportunity for projects in FY2027 to address critical dredging needs and maintain continuity of investment in the Commonwealth's maritime infrastructure network. The SEC intends to incorporate this funding category into the Community One Stop for Growth process starting in FY2028.

Through this competitive grant program, the Seaport Economic Council will provide capital funding for shovel-ready dredging construction projects and regional dredging equipment investments that advance maritime economic development, public safety, environmental stewardship, and coastal resilience objectives throughout Massachusetts.

B. PROGRAM PURPOSE

This Dredge Construction and Regional Equipment funding opportunity is established to provide capital funding for construction-phase saltwater dredging projects and regional dredging equipment investments that:

- Maintain and improve navigational access in Massachusetts harbors;
- Support commercial fishing, maritime transportation, tourism, recreation, and waterfront industries;
- Enhance maritime safety and emergency access;
- Protect and improve coastal ecosystem health;
- Preserve and strengthen working waterfront infrastructure;
- Expand regional dredging capacity and shared municipal resources; and
- Advance the Commonwealth's maritime economic development and coastal resiliency goals.

This opportunity supports the SEC priorities established under Executive Order No. 649, *Reestablishing the Seaport Economic Council*, which identifies dredging projects, maritime infrastructure investment, waterfront revitalization, working waterfront preservation, and coastal resiliency as critical components of the Commonwealth's long-term maritime economic development strategy.

C. ELIGIBILITY

This opportunity is open to any public entity located in the Commonwealth's 78 coastal communities. Eligible entities include:

- Municipal governments;
- Public harbor commissions;
- County commissions;
- Other qualified public entities; and public entities representing two or more coastal municipalities for regional equipment purchasing proposals.

Two or more municipalities may apply jointly, with one municipality or public entity serving as fiscal agent. Preference may be given to applications that demonstrate regional collaboration, shared service delivery, long-term operational sustainability, or benefits extending beyond a single municipality.

D. GRANT FUNDING CATEGORIES

In FY2027, the SEC will consider applications proposing projects in one of the following categories:

Dredging Construction Projects

This category provides funding for shovel-ready saltwater dredging construction projects that improve navigational access, maritime safety, waterfront economic activity, public infrastructure protection, coastal resilience, ecosystem health, and public access to waterways. Eligible activities may include:

- Dredging operations;
- Sediment removal and transport;
- Disposal and placement costs;
- Mobilization and demobilization;
- Marine construction services;
- Construction oversight directly related to dredging activities; and
- Other eligible construction-phase expenses associated with the approved project.

Regional Dredging Equipment Purchases

This category provides funding for regional dredging equipment and related assets used in the operation and delivery of saltwater dredging services on a regional basis. Regional equipment investments should demonstrate broad public support and benefits, operational readiness, and the ability to support multiple municipalities or harbor systems. Eligible equipment may include:

- Dredgers and dredging systems;
- Pumps, barges, and booster equipment;
- Sediment handling and transport equipment;
- Bathymetric surveying equipment;
- Navigation and positioning systems;
- GPS RTK systems;
- Dump scows;
- Push boats and support vessels;
- Environmental monitoring equipment;
- Heavy construction equipment used in dredging operations; and
- Other assets directly related to the operation and delivery of regional dredging services.

Ineligible Costs: The following costs are not eligible under this funding opportunity:

- Feasibility studies;
- Design and engineering;
- Permitting activities;
- Real property acquisition;
- Pre-construction planning activities; and
- Costs incurred prior to execution of a grant agreement.

Applicants seeking support for pre-construction activities should consult the Seaport Economic Council regarding other available funding opportunities.

E. PROCUREMENT FEATURES

Application and Program Highlights

Project Categories	• Dredging Construction Projects • Regional Dredging Equipment Purchases
Grant Use	Construction-phase capital expenses directly associated with saltwater dredging projects and regional dredging equipment investments.

Acquisition Method and Contract Payment Terms	Cost reimbursement contracts. Funds will be disbursed only for approved expenses incurred pursuant to an executed contract with EOED.
Match Requirement	Minimum fifty percent (50%) non-state match required.
Maximum Award	Up to $1,000,000 per project.
Anticipated Award Range	$100,000 to $1,000,000.
Anticipated # of Awards	Approximately two to five awards, subject to available funding.
Performance Period	Up to two fiscal years from contract execution or notice to proceed.

Anticipated Procurement Calendar

NOFA Published / Application Open	July 30, 2026
Application Deadline	September 17, 2026, at 11:59 p.m.
Application Review Period	October 2026
Anticipated Award Announcements	Winter 2026
Anticipated Contract Start	Following completion of required approvals and contract execution

F. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Only applications meeting all eligibility requirements will be considered. Applications will be evaluated based upon the following criteria:

1. Applicant Information
    - Applicant is an eligible public entity.
    - Applicant demonstrates organizational and financial capacity to manage the project.
    - Application demonstrates meaningful partnerships or regional collaboration, where applicable.
2. Project Readiness
    - Project is shovel ready.
    - Construction schedule is reasonable and achievable.
    - Required permits and approvals have been obtained or are substantially advanced.
    - Applicant demonstrates ability to proceed expeditiously following award.
    - Procurement and contracting plans are adequately developed.
3. Public Benefit and Economic Impact
    - Project supports maritime industries, waterfront businesses, tourism, recreation, or commercial fishing activities.
    - Project improves navigational access and public safety.
    - Project contributes to economic activity within the affected community or region.
    - Project protects or enhances critical public infrastructure.
4. Environmental and Coastal Resilience Benefits
    - Project demonstrates environmental stewardship.
    - Project protects or enhances coastal ecosystem health.
    - Project advances climate resilience objectives.
    - Project appropriately addresses environmental compliance requirements.
5. Project Budget and Funding Sources
    - Budget is reasonable and aligned with project scope.
    - Cost estimates are adequately supported.
    - Matching funds are documented and available.

- Project demonstrates cost effectiveness and long-term sustainability.

6. Regional Significance

- Project provides benefits to multiple municipalities or harbor systems.
- Project expands regional dredging capacity.
- Equipment proposals demonstrate shared service delivery and long-term public benefit.
- Project supports long-term harbor maintenance and resiliency objectives.

G. APPLICATION PROCESS AND GUIDANCE

Applicants must submit a complete application package containing the following information:

- Project description and location;
- Construction schedule and project readiness documentation;
- Detailed project budget and funding sources;
- Documentation of matching funds;
- Dredging volume estimates, where applicable;
- Public benefit narrative;
- Economic impact narrative;
- Permitting status and regulatory approvals;
- Procurement and contracting strategy; and
- Regional service area and shared-use plan for equipment proposals, if applicable.

Applications must be submitted electronically through the process and platform identified by the Executive Office of Economic Development.

The Seaport Economic Council reserves the right to request supplemental information from applicants, conduct additional reviews, recommend partial awards, or decline funding for any application.

H. OTHER TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The Executive Office of Economic Development complies with all applicable Commonwealth procurement laws, regulations, and grant administration requirements. Successful applicants will be required to enter into a grant agreement with EOED and comply with all applicable reporting, contracting, procurement, environmental, and financial requirements.
Grant recipients shall submit periodic progress and financial reports in a format prescribed by EOED and shall maintain all records relating to the grant in accordance with applicable state record retention requirements.

All responses and information submitted in response to this NOFA are subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law. EOED reserves the right to amend, suspend, or terminate this funding opportunity at any time and to make awards in amounts different from those requested based upon available funding, project readiness, and program priorities.