

Springfield, West Springfield, Chicopee, Northampton share in \$4.8M worth of casino mitigation grants

Written by Administrator
Tuesday, 29 June 2021 15:26 -

SPRINGFIELD — Some \$644,000 in grants will help the city revitalize properties near MGM Springfield, repave downtown streets and more.

The Massachusetts Gaming Commission on Tuesday announced grants from its [Community Mitigation Fund](#) totaling \$4.8 million statewide. Other area communities receiving funds are West Springfield, Chicopee and Northampton.

Since 2015, the Gaming Commission has awarded nearly \$28 million in grants from the Community Mitigation Fund. The state created the fund when it legalized casino gambling to compensate surrounding communities and institutions for costs related to the MGM Springfield, Encore Boston Harbor and Plainridge Park casinos.

Work on the paving project begins in a few weeks, said Springfield director of public works Christopher M. Cignoli. The total cost of the project is \$600,000. The city is putting up \$400,000 in Chapter 90 transportation funding from the state, and the rest will be covered by a casino mitigation grant.

The city will redo Dwight Street from the arch to Carew Street, and Hampden Street from its intersection with Dwight Street west to Main Street and East Columbus Avenue.

A \$400,000 grant will support the [Springfield Blueprint Plan](#). The plan acknowledges, according to documents on file with the Gaming Commission, that MGM Springfield has not had the expected positive impact on neighborhood redevelopment, in part because of real estate speculation and poorly maintained properties nearby.

The money will continue the city's work pursuing property purchases and partnering with owners. The plan also foresees improvements to Court Square and the neighborhood around the MassMutual Center.

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Springfield police received \$22,500 for equipment and technology for the Metro Unit. The Springfield Fire Department received \$22,00 for defibrillators on trucks that respond to MGM.

Holyoke Community College received \$400,000 to fund adult education and work readiness programs with Springfield Technical Community College and the Springfield Public Schools.

The [Hampden County Sheriff's Department](#) got \$400,000 for the Western Massachusetts Recovery and Wellness Center, which was forced to relocate to make way for the casino.

Chicopee received \$200,000 for streetscape improvements [in the Chicopee Center](#) neighborhood. The streets in the neighborhood are designed too much for the benefit of driving and are unsafe, the application said. The new streetscape will be better for bicycling, pedestrians and public transportation.

About 10% of Chicopee residents do not own a vehicle, and 3.5% use public transit or active transportation to get to work, the city's application said.

West Springfield received \$200,000 to address the added demand for police, fire and emergency medical services related to MGM.

Northampton received \$75,000 to continue its [northampton.live](#) marketing program for the upcoming year.

The Hampden district attorney's office will receive \$75,000 in continuing funding to mitigate the impact on the casino on crime.

A full list of grants [is here](#) .

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Read more <https://www.masslive.com/news/2021/06/springfield-west-springfield-chicopee-northampton-share-in-48m-worth-of-casino-mitigation-grants.html>