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For Immediate release - October 16, 2012

LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR MURRAY BREAKS GROUND ON \$1.5 MILLION MASSWORKS INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT IN PEABODY

PEABODY – Tuesday, October 16, 2012 – Lieutenant Governor Timothy Murray joined state and local officials today to break ground on a MassWorks Infrastructure Program-supported project that funds a variety of improvements as part of an effort to revitalize Peabody's downtown corridor.

The project, which includes \$1.5 million in MassWorks funding, includes lane reconfiguration, improved crosswalks, synchronized traffic signals, upgraded sidewalks to be ADA compliant, landscaping and the addition of traffic medians. These infrastructure improvements will specifically address current safety issues and facilitate economic development through sound urban design. The project is expected to be complete by June 2013.

"Our Administration continues to partner with cities and towns to invest in local infrastructure improvements," said Lieutenant Governor Murray. "By working with the City of Peabody through the MassWorks Infrastructure Program, we are building on the city's comprehensive plans to support private investment and helping to advance local and regional economic and community development."

The City of Peabody was awarded the MassWorks Infrastructure Grant for the Main Street Corridor Realignment project in the fall of 2011. The public infrastructure project is part of a broader effort to spur private investment and development in the downtown business area. In conjunction with the Flood Mitigation Program, a nearly \$18 million program, and new zoning code, downtown Peabody is becoming more attractive for developers, retailers and businesses in the North Shore. Pedestrian access and traffic management will invite growth and investment along the corridor's new streetscape, inviting development to the historic but vacant or underutilized buildings in the downtown.

"The MassWorks program is an integral part of the Patrick-Murray Administration's commitment to improving our infrastructure, creating jobs and spurring economic development in every corner of Massachusetts," said Greg Bialecki, Secretary of Housing and Economic Development. "This program matches the objectives of our long-term economic development plan, which includes empowering our local and regional economies."

In addition to the \$1.5 million awarded by the Patrick-Murray Administration, the city is also investing in the project. The MassWorks grant leverages \$270,000 in funding Peabody committed to complete the design and engineering work and ensure the construction readiness of the project. Furthermore, the city committed an additional \$500,000 towards construction costs when bids came in higher than expected.

The MassWorks Infrastructure Program, which is overseen by the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (HED), held its first competitive grant round in September 2011, consolidating six capital budget programs to give communities a single entry point and one set of requirements for state public infrastructure grants. The consolidation aimed to improve efficiencies and streamline the decision-making process, increase access for municipalities of all sizes and enhance state-regional-local partnerships around economic development and housing production.

During the first grant round, 158 applications requesting more than \$400 million in infrastructure grants were received from cities and towns of all sizes and representing every region of the state. In total, HED awarded \$63.5 million in grants to 42 communities throughout Massachusetts for public infrastructure projects that began this past spring and summer.

"Like so many of us who live on the North Shore, I look forward to the day when our downtown is once again bustling and vibrant. In the not too distant future, I can see Peabody featured in lifestyle publications, business and trade journals, social media and abuzz with word-of-mouth tributes. This MassWorks Infrastructure Grant is an important part of the effort to revive our venerable downtown," said State Representative Joyce Spiliotis.

"This project is a key part of our efforts to revive downtown Peabody and tap into its full potential as a hub for culture and commerce," said Mayor Edward A. Bettencourt, Jr. "We are grateful to the Patrick-Murray Administration for demonstrating its commitment to this vision through the MassWorks Infrastructure Grant program."

To learn more about the MassWorks Infrastructure Program and how it is supporting job growth and long-term, sustainable economic development, please visit: www.mass.gov/eohed/infrastructure.

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