

Town of Acton

John S. Mangiaratti,

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Town of Acton Receives \$1M State Grant for Removal of River Street Dam

ACTON — Town Manager John S. Mangiaratti is pleased to announce that the Town of Acton has received a \$1 million state grant to support the removal of the structurally unsafe River Street Dam.

The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs is providing the grant through its [Dam and Seawall Repair or Replacement Program](#), which aims to address failing dams, coastal infrastructure, and levees across the Commonwealth

The funding will go toward the design and construction of the removal of the dam at 53 River St. on Fort Pond Brook. Construction is expected to begin in May 2023.

In 2017, the Town acquired property, including the dam, following a Special Town Meeting vote. The property is a 7.26-acre former industrial site.

"Thank you to the Baker-Polito Administration for this important funding," Town Manager Mangiaratti said. "The dam is unsafe, and removing it is vital to the safety of

our community, including the people and property in this area. It will also help support and enhance the ecological conditions of species in the brook."

On the property, there are remnants of the historic dam and raceway that powered a mill. Once the dam is removed, the Town plans to construct a public park highlighting the industrial history of South Acton Village. The new park will retain the stone features of its industrial past, trails, trees and access to the brook.

The South Acton Woolen Mill was constructed in 1845 as a sash and blind factory, and later became associated with the textile business. During the Civil War, blankets were made at this location to be shipped to soldiers. Wool shoddy also was produced there and it later became known as the Shoddy Mill, which burned down in 1951.

In 2018, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation's Office of Dam Safety determined that the dam was structurally unsafe and would eventually need to be mitigated through repair or removal.

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