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PRESS RELEASE

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Byrne Grant Award

The City of Chelsea is pleased to announce that it was awarded a \$1 million grant from the US Department of Justice to support community safety improvements. Chelsea's grant is just one of eight funded projects nationwide made in this fall's Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation program. The grant leverages community, business, non-profit and city investments in support of greater public safety managed collaboratively through the [Chelsea Thrives initiative](#).

Since mid-2014, when Chelsea Thrives was launched, community leaders have met on a regular basis to align resources in support of greater public safety. Led by an Executive Council with regular participation by 20 civic, business, and municipal leaders, Chelsea Thrives seeks to reduce crime by 30% over ten years and to improve our community's perception of safety. Since the initiative began, 1,500 residents and 70 institutions have participated, drawing from local and regional government and non-profit agencies and our area's businesses. Key areas of focus are youth safety, coordination of services to prevent trauma and violence, infrastructure improvements in support of safety, and greater community engagement in support of a safe community.

"Unfortunately Chelsea has historically faced persistent crime problems," reports City Manager Tom Ambrosino. "Chelsea Thrives had just started to focus on safety when I started my position as City Manager. Safety is a critical component of a vibrant community, every bit as important as quality and affordable homes, good jobs, and high performing schools. Chelsea is making progress with steady reductions in crime year over year since 2013. The support of US Department of Justice will bring us one step closer to our goal of a safe and thriving community."

The grant's timeline and activities are designed to dovetail with the City's Downtown Initiative to create a more welcoming downtown experience. The first phase of the Downtown Initiative is now underway. The [Re-Imagining Broadway](#) participatory planning started in January 2017 with construction to occur in 2018-2019. Design goals for the city's downtown infrastructure investments include improvements to pedestrian safety, public transportation hubs, and traffic flow and deterrence of crime



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and loitering. The resources made available through the Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation grant will further leverage the value of this significant infrastructure investment by providing complementary policing, community revitalization, and social service supports.

In the first year of the grant, a criminologist from the University of Massachusetts Lowell will work with CPD and Chelsea Thrives partners to better understand Chelsea's crime patterns and locations. With that information in hand, the researchers and community partners will identify appropriate community-based interventions to address crime hot-spots. Included in the grant's planning phase is a review of ideas proposed by the Chelsea Thrives partners in the grant application, including supports for:

- The Chamber of Commerce to promote the city's façade improvement loan program plus technical assistance made available to downtown business and property owners to access and utilize the loans;
- Downtown festivals and community activities based out of Bellingham and Chelsea Squares;
- A Roca-led youth work crew to assist with the festivals and downtown improvement projects;
- Downtown area safety walks and beautification activities managed by The Neighborhood Developers; and
- Emergency assistance funds for use by the Chelsea Hub, managed by The Chelsea Collaborative.

"Receiving the Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation grant award is a testament to the hard work of all of the community leaders and institutions that have dedicated time and energy to the collective work of Chelsea Thrives partnership over the last three years," says Melissa Walsh, who leads Chelsea Thrives as part of her position at The Neighborhood Developers. "This grant award will bring valuable resources to the City and other community partners in order to continue to make progress on addressing the social drivers of crime and making Chelsea a safer place for all."

The new Department of Justice grant is the second \$1 million investment secured on behalf of Chelsea Thrives from the US Department of Justice. The Safe and Secure Grant has just finished its one-year planning phase and will soon begin implementation to build community capacity for youth opportunity and safety. The Safe and Secure grant responds to the high volume of young people who have recently come to Chelsea from Central America who have experienced harrowing and traumatic journeys. Chelsea Public Schools, CPD, MGH Chelsea Health Care Center,



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The Chelsea Collaborative, The Neighborhood Developers, and Roca are collaborating to deliver trauma informed care, Overcoming Violence training for all 7th graders, trauma training at Lesley University for CPS teachers, case management and social service supports for at-risk youth, and parent leadership training.

The Chelsea Thrives Executive Council includes representatives from many city departments, residents, businesses and non-profits, including the City Manager, CPD's Community Services Division, Chelsea Public Schools, People's AME Church, Bunker Hill Community College, Chelsea Chamber, the Chelsea Collaborative, the Community Enhancement Team, East Cambridge Savings Bank, GreenRoots, Metro Credit Union, MGH Chelsea HealthCare Center, Phoenix Charter Academy, Roca, and The Neighborhood Developers. Monthly meetings are open to all who are able to regularly attend. For information on how to join, contact Melissa Walsh at The Neighborhood Developers at MWalsh@tndinc.org.