



FIRST LIGHT RESORT & CASINO **GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY**

Taunton, MA (April 5, 2016) - At a groundbreaking ceremony today, the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribe took the first step in the construction of the historic tribe's billion-dollar First Light Resort & Casino.

Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Council Chairman Cedric Cromwell and Taunton Mayor Thomas Hoye were joined by tribal leaders; city and state officials; as well as hundreds of tribal citizens and city residents to celebrate the official start of construction. Cheers resounded as an excavator-claw swung into action to begin the demolition of one of the existing buildings on the tribe's reservation land in Taunton - the future site of First Light Resort & Casino.

The demolition work - in conjunction with \$30 million of off-site traffic improvements - will clear the way for the construction of what will be the state's first destination resort casino. One of the largest economic revitalization projects in southeastern Massachusetts in recent years, a portion of the casino is set to open for business by the summer of 2017.

"As People of the First Light, we are here to inaugurate the beginning of a strong economic partnership with the City of Taunton as well as the first tangible step in building an economic base for our tribal nation," Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Council Chairman Cedric Cromwell said.

"The Wampanoag people have lived off this land for 12,000 years," Cromwell noted. "And though some doubted we would ever see this day come to pass, here we are - on track to open a first-class resort and be the first to market."

Mayor Thomas Hoye characterized the project as a win for the tribe, the city and state.

"Not only will this help sustain the Tribe and their magnificent culture for generations to come, it will also provide a tremendous economic jolt to the proud City of Taunton and surrounding region, as well as boost revenues to the Commonwealth by as much as \$2 billion dollars," Hoye said, noting the 1,000 construction jobs and 2,600 permanent jobs First Light Resort & Casino will create.

In addition to the groundbreaking ceremony, tribal leaders also announced an upcoming job fair to be held in Taunton to introduce tribal citizens and area residents to the employment opportunities that will be available - from construction jobs to resort & casino careers. The job fair will be held at the Holiday Inn in Taunton at 700 Myles Standish Blvd. from 11-4pm. Once construction is complete First Light Resort & Casino will include:

- 3,000 slot machines
- 150 table games
- 40 poker tables
- Fine dining restaurants; food court with international buffet; and 24-hour cafe
- Three 15-story, 300-room luxury hotels
- Lounge and performance stage
- Indoor pool
- 9 retail stores
- 31,000 square-foot multi-purpose function room
- 5 meeting rooms
- Spa and water park

About First Light Resort & Casino:

The Mashpee Wampanoag are also known as People of the First Light. True to their name, the Tribe will build a first-class gaming and entertainment venue; a first-of-its-kind economic revitalization project in the heart of Southeastern Massachusetts on tribal lands in Taunton. For more information visit www.firstlightresort.com

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