



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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THIELE AND VAN SCOYOC ANNOUNCE FUNDING PLAN TO UNDERGROUND UTILITY LINES FOR THE MONTAUK GATEWAY

State Grant of \$250,000 Will Provide Down Payment to Complete \$750,000 Beautification Project as Part of the Ongoing Effort to Underground Utility Lines along Old Montauk Highway; Officials Credit Montauk Resident John Keeshan for His Vision in Spearheading the Project.

New York State Assemblyman Fred W. Thiele, Jr. and East Hampton Town Supervisor Peter Van Scoyoc today announced an intergovernmental partnership to fund the undergrounding of utility lines at the gateway to the hamlet of Montauk. The project would supplement an ongoing private effort to underground utility lines along Old Montauk Highway. The State of New York would provide an initial \$250,000 of funding under the State and Municipal Facilities Program (SAM) toward the total estimated cost of \$750,000. A second state grant would be included as part of the 2022 State Budget. The Town of East Hampton would provide the funding for the remaining cost of the project.

The Gateway project supplements a private effort to underground utility lines on Old Montauk Highway in Montauk. Several phases of this effort already have been completed.

Both elected officials credited Montauk resident John Keeshan for spearheading the idea of beautifying the entrance to Montauk by eliminating all the utility poles and lines. Keeshan has advocated for this project for more than a decade. The more extensive Old Montauk Highway underground utility line project is being led by Montauk resident Dan Cahill.

State Assemblyman Thiele stated, "I am pleased to work with the Town of East Hampton in making this project a reality. The undergrounding of these utility lines not only beautifies one of the most iconic scenic vistas on Long Island, it is also another step forward in hardening our

infrastructure in the face of climate change. John Keeshan's dogged pursuit of this improvement for the Montauk Gateway is only one of the multitude of contributions he has made to our community. We are much appreciative of his unflagging efforts for Montauk. Dan Cahill is also to be commended for his invaluable citizen leadership in initiating the larger Old Montauk Highway project with private funding. Finally, I thank Supervisor Van Scoyoc and the Town of East Hampton for again leading to protect our community character. This partnership among the state, town, and private citizens is a model for addressing pressing community issues like community character, safety and climate change."

East Hampton Town Supervisor Peter Van Scoyoc stated, "Placing the utility lines underground will significantly enhance the scenic vista at the gateway to Montauk. Increasing energy resiliency by safeguarding our electrical supply lines underground is a critical step, in line with the Town's overall coastal resiliency goals as we work to mitigate the increasing effects of climate change. This success could not have been achieved without John Keeshan's vision and persistence, Assemblyman Thiele's continued work on behalf of East Hampton Town and his success in securing state funding for this project, and the impressive efforts of Dan Cahill in marshaling private community support and resources to bury the lines along an extended stretch of Old Montauk Highway. I thank them all for their help in this coordinated effort to address a community project."

Montauk resident John Keeshan declared, "I believe in leaving the world a little better than you found it. I love Montauk, it's been my home for over six decades. Now, when you drive into the gateway of Montauk, the natural open vista of the Atlantic Ocean will be here to greet you."

Dan Cahill said, "I feel very lucky to live in Montauk, and I consider it a privilege to support Fred, Peter, and John's efforts to enhance the beauty of our community."