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Baker-Polito Administration Announces \$4 Million in MassTrails Grants

55 Local Projects Will Greatly Enhance State's Network of Trails

BOSTON – The Baker-Polito Administration today awarded \$4 million in MassTrails Grants to 55 local trail projects throughout the Commonwealth. The grants will support the state's vast network of trails with projects dedicated to the construction, maintenance, and improvements for a variety of public trails, including hiking trails, bikeways, and shared-use paths.

“Massachusetts has an extensive network of public trails connecting communities and regions while offering excellent recreational opportunities,” said Governor Charlie Baker. “By supporting local trail projects, our Administration is dedicated to building on that network and ensuring residents and visitors can hike, bike and run on safe, well-maintained and accessible trails.”

“Trails are important resources that improve our quality of life by providing great access to parks, reservations, forests, and other public properties throughout Massachusetts,” said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito. “The MassTrails Grants Program serves as a critical funding source for our many local partners who are working to improve infrastructure, create new segments, and enhance existing trails for the public to enjoy.”

MassTrails Grants focus on the improvement of existing trails, the construction of new trails, and the maintenance of the statewide trail system. This year's projects include:

- The installation of trail facilities and amenities and facility landscaping;
- The completion of trail design and engineering plans;
- The installation and maintenance of directional and interpretive trail signage;
- The development and creation of GIS mapping and trails guides;
- The purchasing of trail maintenance equipment; and,
- The upgrading of existing trails to accessible trail standards.

“Local trails are excellent resources that not only enrich our lives by providing increased opportunities to explore nature, but also enable us all to commit to healthy, active lifestyles,” said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Kathleen Theoharides. “The MassTrails Grants Program is a great example of the Baker-Polito Administration’s dedication to investing and enhancing the Commonwealth’s natural, cultural, and recreational resources, and we look forward to celebrating the completion of these 55 projects.”

“The MassTrails Grant Program invests in path improvements and construction which allow for more access to important destinations, giving residents safe, healthy, and low carbon travel options as well as options for active recreational activities,” said Massachusetts Department of Transportation Secretary and CEO Stephanie Pollack. “Now more than ever, the public is seeking transportation options due to the pandemic and this funding creates, enhances, and maintains networks of multimodal, shared-use pathways which help people get to where they need to go while reducing their carbon footprint and lowering pollution.”

Funding for MassTrails Grants comes from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation’s (DCR) capital budget, and from the motor fuel excise tax on off-road vehicles including ATV’s and snowmobiles, which is provided by the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Federal Surface Transportation Act, in coordination with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT). All MassTrails Grant applications have been reviewed in consultation with an inter-agency [MassTrails Team](#) and the Massachusetts Recreational Trails Advisory Board (MARTAB).

“The Baker-Polito Administration continues to foster public-private partnerships in an effort to attain mutual goals that directly benefit the public,” said DCR Commissioner Jim Montgomery. “The 2020 MassTrails Grants Program will assist our partners in protecting and enhancing many of the Commonwealth’s natural and recreational resources, including closing gaps within the state’s network of trails, strengthening infrastructure, and making significant improvements.”

“These grants support our tremendous inventory of remarkable open spaces and the communities that host them. North Reading now has significant state support to examine converting an abandoned rail-line into a rail trail,” said State Senator Bruce Tarr (R-Gloucester). “Funding from MassTrails not only advances this opportunity, but it also helps bring more recreational access for people across the state to enjoy outdoor spaces and improve our quality of life.”

“Visitors from all around the world come to Western Massachusetts for its beautiful outdoor recreational opportunities all of which improve our quality of life and are important parts of our communities,” said State Senator Adam Hinds (D-Pittsfield). “The MassTrails Grants Program provides critical funding for improving and supporting our public trails for all to enjoy.”

Additionally, each recipient matches awarded grants with a minimum of twenty percent in funding or in-kind services for the designated project. This year’s total investment, including matching funds, is approximately \$7 million. In order to meet their funding obligation, an organization is able to utilize a variety of methods to fund at least twenty percent of the project’s total cost to receive the grant. Methods include in-kind labor and professional services, material

donations, use of equipment, or a cash match. Funding is made available to registered non-profits and municipal, state, and federal agencies.

“I would like to thank the Baker-Polito Administration for supporting local trail programs through the 2020 MassTrails Grants Program,” said State Representative Frank Moran (D-Lawrence). “I am joyful to learn that Groundwork Lawrence has been awarded this grant which will allow them to continue their work in increasing access to the Merrimack River Trail for all residents of the Commonwealth. The 17th Essex District will benefit substantially from this grant, given that it will bring more connectivity to all three communities: Lawrence, Andover and Methuen.”

“Funding and maintaining our local trails and paths, especially at a time when it can be hard to get out of the house, is crucial to communities we serve,” said State Representative Josh Cutler (D-Pembroke). “Thanks to grants like MassTrails and the Baker Administration, Hanson can help foster outdoor recreation for its’ citizens to enjoy.”

“The people of Clinton take great pride in the town’s surrounding natural beauty,” said State Representative Harold Naughton (D-Clinton). “The parks and trails are treasured by locals and visitors alike, and I am thrilled that the Commonwealth is investing in the spaces that make our community such a special place to live.”

“I am excited to learn that Ashland has received a grant through the Department of Conservation and Recreation’s MassTrails program,” said State Representative Jack Patrick Lewis (D-Framingham). “I am grateful to the Baker-Polito Administration and Commissioner Montgomery for their further support to enhance and expand Ashland’s vibrant trails.”

MassTrails Grant projects are located within the following municipalities: Ashland, Adams, Arlington, Ashburnham, Athol, Barnstable, Becket, Belchertown, Bourne, Braintree, Brookline, Chelmsford, Cheshire, Clarksburg, Clinton, Concord, Dalton , Dartmouth, Egremont, Fitchburg, Florida, Franklin, Great Barrington, Greenfield, Groton, Hanson, Hatfield, Hawley, Hinsdale, Holyoke, Hopkinton, Lanesboro, Lawrence, Lee, Lenox, Lowell, Mattapoisett, Medfield, Monterey, Mount Washington, Natick, Needham, New Ashford, New Bedford, Newburyport, Newton, North Adams, North Reading, Northampton, Northfield, Peabody, Pittsfield, Plainfield, Plymouth, Sandisfield, Savoy, Sheffield, Southampton, Springfield, Sturbridge, Sudbury, Templeton, Townsend, Tyringham, Wareham, Washington , Williamstown, Windsor, and Yarmouth. A full list and brief description of each of the 55 projects receiving a grant can be found on the MassTrails Grants [webpage](#).

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