



MAYOR DAVID J. NARKEWICZ

**City of Northampton
Office of the Mayor
210 Main Street Room 12
Northampton, MA 01060-3199
(413) 587-1249 Fax: (413) 587-1275D
mayor@northamptonma.gov**

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Northampton Receives \$110,710 in Accessibility Grants

NORTHAMPTON - Today, Mayor David J. Narkewicz announced that the City of Northampton received two grants to improve accessibility in the city, \$95,710 from the Massachusetts Office of Disabilities and \$15,000 from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and the Massachusetts Association of Health Boards.

“We are committed to improving accessibility to all populations in Northampton,” said Mayor Narkewicz. “The COVID-19 pandemic has brought into tragic focus the unequal health outcomes of our residents with disabilities, our aging residents, and our traditionally underserved residents. We know these folks are all at greater risk of COVID-19, heart disease, strokes, diabetes, and other health challenges, so now more than ever we need to address their needs.”

The \$95,710 grant will fund assisted listening systems at the City Hall Hearing Room, City Council Chambers, and the Great Room at the Senior Center. Assisted listening systems will provide enhanced sound for all, and accommodations for those with hearing loss and impairments. A \$2,000 match from the city’s disability revolving fund, funded by fines from parking in handicap-accessible parking spaces without proper tags, helped leverage this grant.

The \$15,000 grant will fund a study of how to improve accessibility to the city’s Connecticut River Greenway, especially to the new beach there that formed just a few years ago. The city saw a dramatic increase in public use of river swimming areas, including at the Connecticut River Greenway. This project will help the city manage the use to serve all populations. The project is in conjunction with a larger Community Preservation Act funded project to examine five river swimming areas, four on the Mill River and one on the Connecticut River.

Both projects were recommended during the city’s Americans with Disabilities Transition planning and were recommended by the city’s Disability Committee. These proposed projects will be managed

by the Northampton Office of Planning & Sustainability, which hosts the city's ADA Coordinator and the city's Community Development program.

For more information, please contact the Mayor's Office at 413-587-1249 or mayor@northamptonma.gov.