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ValleyBike Share Secures First Sponsors in Northampton

ValleyBike Share, a regional bike share program, has made major headway with the signing of its first sponsors in Northampton. Mayor David J. Narkewicz announced today that New England Treatment Access (NETA) will sponsor three bike share stations, and Florence Bank, Cooley Dickinson Health Care, and Smith College will each sponsor one bike share station in Northampton. “We are proud of these great community partners for making major commitments to support sustainable transportation options and to promote healthy walking and bicycling,” said Mayor Narkewicz.

The ValleyBike Share sponsorship program will support roll-out and operating costs not covered by user fees and previously awarded state and federal grants for capital costs. NETA will sponsor the Pleasant Street, Main Street, and State Street stations, Florence Bank the Florence center station, Cooley Dickinson Health Care the station at the hospital, and Smith College the John M. Greene Hall station. This leaves one station in Northampton (in the Jackson/Barrett Street area) that still needs a sponsor.

Northampton and ValleyBike Share have previously been informed that they will receive a federal grant to fund the capital cost of the system. Private sponsorship of Northampton’s seven bike share stations, along with user fees, will cover the operating costs. The cost per person mile traveled is lower with bicycle share than with traditional single-occupancy vehicles (i.e., private car).

“We are proud to be in Northampton and support Northampton’s efforts to encourage people to walk and bicycle,” said Leslie Laurie, NETA Regional Director. This donation is made possible through NETA CARES, the organization’s commitment to charitable work and making our community a better place for all. “Our past donation helped the city redesign Pleasant Street for improved walking and bicycling, so it is only fitting that our current donation will move these efforts to the next step.”

John F. Heaps, Jr., President and CEO of Florence Bank announced “Florence Bank is pleased to sponsor a bike share station in Florence and support an initiative that promotes health and wellness in our community.”

Laurie Fenlason, Smith College Vice President for Public Affairs and Strategic Initiatives said “Smith is pleased to support such a visible investment in our community’s sustainability as well as in its health and economic development goals.”

Cooley Dickinson Health Care is sponsoring a station at the hospital. They are also sponsoring an additional station in Amherst. "As the community's health care provider, Cooley Dickinson Health Care is proud to be one of the first sponsors of the new ValleyBike Share program," said Joanne Marqusee, President and CEO of Cooley Dickinson. "Supporting programs like these in our region that improve the health of our community by facilitating a healthier life style and environmental sustainability is an important part of our mission."

ValleyBike Share will be made up of separate municipally owned bike share programs in Northampton, Amherst, Holyoke, South Hadley, and Springfield, but coordinated together as a buyers club for savings on procurement and management. Northampton has agreed to coordinate grants and contracts and the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) will coordinate the overall program.

"We are excited that Northampton has been so successful in attracting sponsors for many of the city's bike share stations, and we look forward to continuing to work with the city toward a successful ValleyBike Share launch in 2017. We encourage businesses and institutions around the Pioneer Valley to consider sponsoring one of the remaining available bike share stations in Holyoke, Springfield, Amherst or South Hadley", said Christopher Curtis, bike share coordinator and Chief Planner at Pioneer Valley Planning Commission.