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For immediate release: Tuesday, September 19, 2017

Northampton Awarded \$50,000 State Grant to Extend the MassCentral Rail Trail

Today Mayor David J. Narkewicz announced that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts awarded the City of Northampton a \$50,000 Recreational Trails Program grant to improve and extend the MassCentral Rail Trail in Leeds.

“This is one of the most beautiful sections of rail trail in Northampton, with great views of the Mill River” said Mayor David J. Narkewicz. “The project is done in coordination with Williamsburg’s trail improvements on their side of the town line.”

Recreational Trails Program grants are awarded for the construction and maintenance of a variety of trails that include hiking trails, bikeways, snowmobile and off-road vehicle trails throughout the Commonwealth. The grants can be used to improve long-distance trails and rail trail development, ATV trail maintenance, as well as the creation or maintenance of municipally-owned trails. Additionally, each recipient matches their grant with a minimum twenty percent in funding or in-kind services.

Director of Planning and Sustainability Wayne Feiden remarked, “The City is meeting the 20% match with staff assistance and volunteer work and is pursuing additional grants to obtain full funding for completing the MassCentral Rail Trail extension.”

Last year, using Federal Land and Water Conservation and Community Preservation Act funds, Northampton extended and improved almost a 1/2 mile of rail trail in Leeds, leaving less than 1/3 of a mile to the Williamsburg town line. This funding will allow some improvements to that last section of trail, while the city continues to look for outside funding to complete it.

The next milestone in growing the multiuse trail network is the planned October opening of the trail railroad underpass between King Street and Woodmont Road.