

City of Northampton

MASSACHUSETTS

In the City Council, July 11, 2024

Upon the Recommendation of: Councilor Jeremy Dubs

Councilor Alex Jarrett
Councilor Deborah Klemer

R-24.112 A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF FINISHING THE MASS CENTRAL RAIL TRAIL

WHEREAS, over the last two decades, this body has deliberated and adopted legislation to increase safety on our public ways by making them more accessible, walkable, and cyclable; and

WHEREAS, the City of Northampton has expanded its shared use paths to create a network that connects to the Mass Central Rail Trail (MCRT) to further facilitate access to this path and safe transportation for non-motor vehicle travel; and

WHEREAS, completion of the Mass Central Rail Trail is consistent with these efforts, and that completing this 104-mile shared use path will enhance non-motor vehicle access to our city and will solidify Northampton's position as one of the region's premier destinations for business, arts, entertainment, and general enjoyment; and

WHEREAS, Northampton recognizes the importance of community initiatives that contribute to the well-being and prosperity of our residents; and

WHEREAS, the MCRT Coalition, under the guidance of the <u>Norwottuck Network</u>², has embarked on a vital project to push for the completion of the entire Mass Central Rail Trail from Boston all the way through to Northampton, Massachusetts. Sixty miles are currently open, with 94.5 miles protected and many miles under construction. Northampton's portion is complete, but gaps start in Belchertown and to the east; and

WHEREAS, the MCRT Coalition's mission aligns with our city's strategic priorities, particularly in promoting the health and safety of our citizens, fostering economic development, and addressing key community objectives for the overall well-being of our citizens; and

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¹ https://www.masscentralrailtrail.org/

² https://www.norwottucknetwork.org/

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WHEREAS, the completion of the Mass Central Rail Trail project mitigates traffic, and facilitates bike-to-school programs, community health and safety, economic development, increased tourism, climate resiliency, and historic education opportunities, all of which resonate with our city's values and goals; and

WHEREAS, the MCRT Coalition has demonstrated a commitment to fostering partnerships, collaborating with entities such as MassDOT, Mass Department of Conservation and Recreation, MassTrails, the Mass Office of Outdoor Recreation (MOOR); and

WHEREAS, we acknowledge the desirability of living in proximity to completed rail trails and recognize the project's potential to provide safe and enticing outdoor opportunities for our residents of all ages and abilities; and

WHEREAS, the completion of the Mass Central Rail Trail project contributes to economic development in isolated rural communities and positions our city, located at the west end of the trail, as an attractive destination for national and international bicycling and walking tourists.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Northampton City Council recognizes and stands by the more than twenty years of planning by our elected and appointed officials that completion of the MCRT is consistent with a safer, greener, and more welcoming community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the completion of the Mass Central Rail Trail project aligns seamlessly with our city's vision for a thriving and interconnected community, creating a lasting legacy for future generations; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Administrative Assistant to the City Council shall send a copy of this resolution to Mayor Gina-Louise Sciarra, Mass DOT, Mass Department of Conservation and Recreation, Mass Office of Outdoor Recreation, State Representative Lindsay Sabadosa, State Senator Jo Comerford, Pioneer Valley Planning Commission, the Daily Hampshire Gazette and other local media outlets.

	In City Council, July 11, 2024
al Reading on Roll Call Vote of 8 Yes,	0 No, 1 Absent (Councilor Maiore)
Lours Hrutster	, Clerk of Council
	al Reading on Roll Call Vote of 8 Yes,

Rules suspended, passed final reading and enrolled. I hereby certify that the above Order was adopted by the Northampton City Council on July 11, 2024

Per Charter Section 3-6, non-binding resolutions are not required to be presented to the Mayor for approval.

Attest:	Laura Krutzler		, Clerk of Counci
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