

Short List of Greenways Funding in Massachusetts

Greenway and Placemaking Funders

1. Boston Society of Architects Foundation [Grants](#)

- Annual grants support projects and programs that support the BSA Foundation's vision that by 2030 Boston is a model of a resilient, equitable, and architecturally vibrant city and region. Anyone interested in proposing a new idea or enhancing an existing program or project related to architecture, landscape, engineering, and/or community development and the built environment is invited to apply. Applications are due in the fall. Grants generally range in size from \$500 to \$3,000, though proposals for projects with funding needs from the Foundation of up to \$5,000 are accepted.

2. Commonwealth Places through [MassDevelopment and Patronicity](#)

- Creative funding program that is a partnership between MassDevelopment and crowdfunding platform Patronicity. Nonprofits and municipalities can apply for match funding for projects that activate new or distressed public places and community spaces. Application timelines and requirements are reviewed on a rolling basis. They suggest submitting an expression of interest form no later than December and a full application by January of the year applicants seek funding.

3. Community Preservation Act ([CPA](#))

- The CPA helps [communities in Massachusetts that have adopted the act](#) preserve open space and historic sites, create affordable housing, and develop outdoor recreational facilities. It is funded through a local option surcharge on property tax bills and a state match on those surcharges. Application timeline and requirements vary by [municipality](#). Grants for open space range in size from thousands to hundreds of thousands depending on the community and the project.

4. Department of Conservation and Recreation [Partnership Grants](#)

- Donations to DCR of funds for park improvements on properties managed by DCR. DCR manages all partnership matching funds projects. DCR is currently accepting applications. DCR provides a dollar for dollar match to successful applicants, and will consider 2:1 match on contributions of up to and including \$25,000 and a 1:1 match on contributions above \$25,000.

5. [Housing Choice funding](#)

- Exclusive infrastructure improvement grants for capital projects in [Housing Choice designated](#) municipalities that have produced certain rates or amounts of new housing units in the last five years and adopted best practices for housing production have exclusive access to apply. Applications are due in July. Grants range from \$50,000 - \$250,000.

6. [MassTrails](#)

- MassTrails provides grants to support recreational trail and shared use pathway projects across the Commonwealth. Eligible grant activities include project development, design, engineering, permitting, construction, and maintenance of recreational trails, shared use pathways, and the amenities that support trails. Grant applications are due in February and awards are announced in the summer. Grant amounts are dependent on the project and its needs, but generally range from \$10,000 to \$100,000 with grants of up to \$300,000 awarded to high priority projects. MassTrails requires a minimum of a 20% match on the project cost. (For example, for a \$125,000 project, to receive a \$100,000 MassTrails Grant requires a minimum of \$25,000 match.)

7. [Nellie Leaman Taft Foundation](#)

- The Nellie Leaman Taft Foundation's environmental funding is focused on promoting greater human well-being by supporting grassroots and other efforts to promote clean air, protect water resources and coastal areas, and preserve open space resources including recreational space and natural areas in urban, rural, and wilderness locations. The Foundation makes grants that benefit residents of greater Boston inside the Route 495 beltway. Preliminary applications are due in April. Grants range from \$5,000 to \$15,000.

8. **New England Grassroots Environment Fund (NEGEE) Seed and Grow Grants**

- Seed grants are quick project-focused grants of \$250 to \$1,000 dedicated to help volunteer groups launch and build their newly evolving project(s). Applicants can apply anytime. Grow grants are competitive group development grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$3,500 dedicated to help established groups increase capacity, collaborate, and leverage impact. The deadline for applications are in March and September. Grants are available to organizations with budgets under \$100,000.

9. **State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP)**

- State Transportation Improvement program is a list of projects prepared yearly by the Office of Transportation planning. It is a combined effort between MassDOT and many state agencies that work together to design and build highways and transit projects. Municipalities must pay for 25% design. After that, MassDOT pays for the rest of design work. Funding for construction for STIP projects is generally in the millions.

10. [The MassWorks Infrastructure Program](#)

- Provides a one-stop shop for municipalities and other eligible applicants seeking public infrastructure funding to encourage economic development. The MassWorks Infrastructure Program provides grant funding for publicly owned infrastructure including: sewers, utility extensions, streets, roads, curb-cuts, parking facilities, site preparation, demolition, pedestrian and bicycle ways, streetscape, and water treatment systems. Applications are due in August. There's no minimum or maximum grant amount. Generally about \$80 million awarded a year to approximately 30-40 projects, for an average of \$2 million per project, going up to \$3.5 million. No matching funding is required.

11. [Solomon Foundation](#) in partnership with [the Barr Foundation](#)

- In partnership with the Barr Foundation, the Solomon Foundation provides early stage planning and technical assistance for greenways projects and funds preliminary design studies, general operating support for a limited number of organizations that provide regional leadership around greenway planning and design, and public engagement strategies including pilots, activations, surveys, external assessments, civic gatherings, and other work intended to introduce people to a greenway, to animate public spaces and discourse, and test feasibility. Grant requests for funding are accepted on a rolling basis. Technical assistance grants to fund preliminary design generally range from \$2500 - \$20,000, capacity building grants for general operating support generally ranges from \$1000 to \$10,000, and public engagement funding generally ranges from \$500 to \$5,000.

Technical Assistance for Planning and Design

1. **Community Outreach Group for Landscape Design ([COGdesign](#))**

- COGdesign provides pro bono landscape design to under-resourced community groups in greater Boston with the goal to create together beautiful, resilient green space that meets neighborhood needs. With assistance from community leadership, COG designers promote public participation in the planning and design process. Applications due in the fall.

2. **Metropolitan Area Planning Council Technical Assistance Program ([MAPC TAP](#))**

- MAPC's technical assistance program serves the 101 cities and towns in our region and aims to advance the implementation of projects that align with the goals and objectives in the MetroFuture regional plan and the priorities identified in the MAPC Strategic Plan. There is additional funding from the Barr Foundation for advancing equitable transit-oriented development (e-TOD), climate adaptation planning, and policy education and research focused on advancing a sustainable, climate-friendly region. MAPC is actively looking to create a pipeline of projects particularly in the e-TOD. Support can include visioning, zoning recommendations, drafting zoning language, market analysis, buildout analysis, housing plans, preventing displacement, multi-modal recommendations, parking analyses, public health implications and more. MAPC issues direct calls for applications twice a year, generally in the fall and spring. Additionally, MAPC also accepts applications on a rolling basis.

3. **[Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program](#) of the National Parks Service**

- Supports community-led natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation projects across the nation. Our conservation and recreation planning professionals partner with community groups, nonprofit organizations, tribes, and government agencies. This partnership assists local communities in realizing their conservation and outdoor recreation vision and goals by providing a broad range of services and skills. Focus areas include building healthy communities through parks, trails, and outdoor opportunities, conserving natural lands, rivers, and watersheds, engaging youth in outdoor recreation and stewardship, strengthening the organizational capacity of project partners, and supporting National Park Service and community

networks. Applications are due in June. Applicants are encouraged to contact them as early as possible before the deadline to discuss the proposed project. *No monetary grants are made.*

4. **Rails to Trails Conservancy [Grants](#)**

- Through its grant programs, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) emphasizes strategic investments that support significant regional and community trail development goals. Many of the funded projects are small in scope and scale and can be hard to finance within traditional funding streams. These projects are essential to building, maintaining and managing the trails that so many of us love and that communities rely upon for recreation, transportation and economic vitality. Through these relatively small investments, they help complete and connect trails, improve the trail user experience and support local organizations dedicated to new and existing trails across the country. Grants range in size from a \$3,000 to \$60,000.

5. **[Solomon Foundation](#) in partnership with [the Barr Foundation](#)**

- In partnership with the Barr Foundation, the Solomon Foundation provides early stage planning and technical assistance for greenways projects. This can include site walks, help with preliminary planning and design, support identifying other resources and with grant writing. Requests for technical assistance are considered on a rolling basis.

Many thanks to Michelle Moon at [Civic Space Collaborative](#) and to the [Mystic River Watershed Association](#) for sharing their deep knowledge of greenways funding in the state and advising on this list.