

**A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF COMPLETING THE
MASS CENTRAL RAIL TRAIL**

WHEREAS: The first section of the Somerville Community Path was completed in 1985 in Davis Square by the MBTA, with the support of the Somerville municipal government and community; and

WHEREAS: The City Council has worked with the Mayor, citizen advocates, the MBTA, the MAPC, and Mass DOT to expand the Community Path by sections in 1994, 2007, 2014 and, finally, in 2023 when the entire Community Path was completed and opened publicly; and

WHEREAS: The City of Somerville has developed comprehensive plans to create a network of safe bike lanes, neighborways and shared use paths to create a non-motorized network that connects to the Somerville Community Path; and

WHEREAS: The Somerville Community Path is the eastern end of the Mass Central Rail Trail (MCRT) , a partially completed rail-trail greenway that extends from Boston to Northampton through 26 municipalities; and

WHEREAS: The MCRT Coalition, under the guidance of the Norwottuck Network, has embarked on a vital project to push for the completion of the entire Mass Central Rail Trail from Boston to Northampton, noting that 63-miles are currently open, with 94.5 miles protected and many miles being planned and under construction by various entities; and

WHEREAS: The completion of the Mass Central Rail Trail project will mitigate traffic and facilitate bike-to-school programs, community health and safety, economic development, increased tourism, climate resiliency, and historic education opportunities; and

WHEREAS: The MCRT Coalition’s mission aligns with Somerville’s strategic priorities, particularly in promoting the health and safety of all of the Commonwealth’s citizens, fostering economic development throughout Massachusetts, and addressing key community objectives for the overall well-being of our citizens; and

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

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

WHEREAS: The completion of the Mass Central Rail Trail project contributes to economic development in isolated rural communities and positions of our city, located at the east end of the trail, as an attractive destination for national and international bicycling and walking tourists; **NOW THEREFORE BE IT**

RESOLVED: That the Somerville City Council supports the completion of the MCRT, which will foster a safer, greener, and more welcoming community; and **BE IT FURTHER**

RESOLVED: That the City Council believes the MCRT project is wholly aligned 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 City Clerk will provide a copy of this resolution to MassDOT, Mass Department of Conservation and Recreation, Mass Office of Outdoor Recreation, our State Representatives and Senator, and the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC).