

\$7 million project will create shared-use path from Mattapoissett Neck Road to Depot Street

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) has announced that DW White is the apparent low bidder for its upcoming project to build a shared-use path in Mattapoissett. The path will accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians and will extend from Mattapoissett Neck Road to Depot Street.

This new path will be the next phase of the connection that currently exists heading west through Mattapoissett and Fairhaven, terminating at the Fairhaven/New Bedford Harbor. Bids from ten contractors for this project were opened on Tuesday, January 8, with the lowest bid from DW White being \$6,645,395.44. As per policy, MassDOT will now review the bid prior to issuing the Notice to Proceed for work.

“We are pleased to see this multimodal infrastructure project continuing to move forward,” said Highway Administrator Jonathan Gulliver. “I would like to thank the many stakeholders that have transformed this idea into a reality, such as the Town of Mattapoissett, the local elected officials, and the Mattapoissett Bike Path Committee and their Friends Committee. We look forward to continuing to work together to deliver this important project.”

Since 2015, the Baker-Polito Administration has constructed or funded 150 miles of paved trails, adding to the current statewide inventory of 565 miles of paved trails. Over 30 miles of trails spanning over a dozen projects were completed across the Commonwealth in 2018.

“I am excited to see the project reach another important

milestone for a connected bike path through Mattapoisett; this next phase of construction is the culmination of years of planning work undertaken by community members and professionals many of whom have volunteered their time,” said Representative Bill Straus. “I want to thank Governor Baker for making the project a priority, and I want to offer special thanks to all of the local advocates and members of town meeting who continue to support the path.”

In 2017, Governor Baker established an Interagency Trails Team which is led by the Governor’s office and is comprised of staff from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs and the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). The purpose of the team is to help develop a unified vision for a trails network and translate that into strategic investments, policy innovation to facilitate the development of trails, and an enhanced relationship with municipal partners.

The Baker-Polito Administration in fall 2018 also announced the MassTrails Program, an interagency initiative that will provide funding and resources to municipal and public entities in order to expand and connect networks of off-road, shared-use pathways and recreational trails for all users across Massachusetts.

The MassTrails Program will provide a total of approximately \$5 million in matching grants through the first round of funding in Fiscal Year 2020 and will also offer technical assistance and resources to individuals, municipalities, non-profits, and other public entities to design, construct, and maintain high-quality Massachusetts trails. The grant application for the MassTrails Program is now available and more information can now be found on the new public website: <https://www.mass.gov/welcome-to-masstrails>.

MassDOT’s 5-year Capital Investment Plan (CIP) sets aside \$180

million for multi-use pathways as well as \$60 million for high-priority projects through the statewide Pedestrian and Bicycle Plans that are currently being completed.