

Patrick Administration Announces Open Space Investments to Expand Growth and Opportunity in Greater Boston

EAST BOSTON – Tuesday, December 3, 2013 – Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary (EEA) Rick Sullivan today announced more than \$2.8 million in investments for parks and recreational spaces in Boston and five surrounding communities. Secretary Sullivan made the announcement in East Boston, where a \$400,000 Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC) grant will help make improvements to LoPresti Park.

“The Patrick Administration is committed to improving our parks and open spaces across the Commonwealth,” said Secretary Sullivan. “In addition to preserving open space, improving recreational opportunities and protecting the Commonwealth’s natural resources, these investments will create economic growth across the region.”

In addition to Boston, four other communities, Chelsea, Malden, Medford and Somerville, received \$400,000 PARC grants. The PARC Program (formerly the Urban Self-Help Program) was established in 1977 to assist cities and towns in acquiring and developing land for park and outdoor recreation purposes. Any community with an up-to-date Open Space and Recreation Plan is eligible to apply for the program.

A Gateway City Parks grant of \$850,000 was awarded to the Lynn Common Renovation project. EEA created the Gateway City Parks Program in 2009 to develop and restore parks in urban neighborhoods. The program is designed to be flexible and provide municipal officials with a menu of funding options for all phases of park development. Twenty-six Massachusetts cities are eligible for the program, which targets communities with populations greater than 35,000 and median household incomes, per capita incomes and educational attainment levels below the state average.

Strengthening the Patrick Administration’s commitment to urban park investments, Secretary Sullivan announced a new grant program that will build a playground or spray park in each of the Commonwealth’s 54 cities. The Our Common Backyards grant program will help cities create or renovate parks in the neighborhoods that need them most. Each city is eligible to receive up to \$200,000 in grant assistance. The Our Common Backyards grant application will be available on Comm-pass and the EEA website soon.

MUNICIPALITY	GRANT PROGRAM	TOTAL GRANT AWARD	PROJECT NAME
Boston	PARC	\$ 400,000	LoPresti Park: The project will include renovations to the main entrance, spray pool, youth basketball half

			court, two full size basketball courts, seating, trees, paving..
Chelsea	PARC	\$ 400,000	Voke Park Renovations: The project includes the rehabilitation of the maintenance/storage building, upgrading the bocce court, adding shading and seating, pruning overgrown vegetation, making baseball field improvements, replacing the floor of the water spray area, and redesigning the entrance.
Lynn	Gateway City Parks	\$ 850,500	Lynn Common Renovations: The first phase of improvements to Lynn Common will restore a historic gazebo on the Common and make it accessible, plant new trees, shrubs, and lawn, as well as provide new paths, benches, lighting, and other improvements.
Malden	PARC	\$ 400,000	Roosevelt Park Renovations: The project includes the installation of a synthetic, multi-purpose field that will accommodate two softball fields, as well as a large rectangular playing area for soccer and football and a rain garden.
Medford	PARC	\$ 400,000	McNally Park: The project will include the construction of a new softball field, creation of a play area with two structures, a series of exercise/workout stations, passive garden including

			lawn and shade structure, specimen tree garden, accessible community garden, and access circulation system.
Somerville	PARC	\$ 400,000	Symphony Park: The project will include a walking path around the footprint of an old building, seating, lawn/picnic space, low-impact exercise stations, flower beds, community garden plots, water features, and educational signage.

Since taking office, Governor Deval Patrick has made a historic investment of more than \$300 million in land conservation focused on three goals: investing in urban parks, preserving working farms and forests and protecting large natural landscapes for habitat. This investment has resulted in the permanent protection of more than 110,000 acres of land and the renovation or creation of more than 170 parks. The new parks and open space created are within a ten minute walk of 1.5 million residents – about a quarter of the Commonwealth’s residents.

According to a report by The Trust for Public Land, outdoor recreation generates \$10 billion in consumer spending, \$739 million in state and local tax revenue and \$3.5 billion in wages and salaries each year in Massachusetts. This report also found that the state’s Gateway City Parks investments will create nearly 500 jobs and \$26.5 million in local wages and salaries.

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