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November 30, 2018

James Bennett  
City Manager  
Biddeford City Hall  
205 Main Street  
Biddeford, ME 04005

Dear Jim,

Please consider this the official annual request for the City of Biddeford to appropriate \$5,000 for 2019-2020 membership fees to support the Eastern Trail Management District (ETMD). An invoice is enclosed for your records. Biddeford is one of twelve charter communities that represent the original membership of the ETMD.

We are pleased to report that by the end of 2018, we have completed 35% of our ultimate goal: to build an entirely off-road recreational/transportation greenway over the 65 miles from Casco Bay to Kittery and are well on our way to raising the funds to continue that effort. Similar trails across the country have proven themselves as economic development engines, tourist attractions, transportation options, and off-road routes to schools, parks and other destinations. Studies show that people want to live and work near community trails.

The ETMD is proud to report the following major activities for 2018:

- The funding goal to close the critical 1.6-mile gap between the South Portland and Scarborough off-road sections of trail has been met thanks to a major collaborative effort. Final design is almost complete, permits are being applied for and an all out campaign has begun to complete closing this gap. Pending regulatory approval, construction is anticipated to begin in 2019.
  - ETMD, together with the Eastern Trail Alliance (ETA), raised and contributed an additional \$77,000 this year.
- ETMD met with the Cities of Saco and Biddeford, East Coast Greenway and Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System (PACTS) in October and November to identify next steps in moving forward to connect the existing off-road Saco-Biddeford sections. Next meeting is scheduled in December.
- The towns of Kennebunk and Wells have completed the survey work on seven of their combined eleven miles and MaineDOT has accepted the final report. Funding for the first seven miles was through the Private Public Partnership program where each municipality contributed 30% and Maine DOT supplied the 40% balance.
  - ETMD, together with ETA, raised \$36,500 so far this year toward completing the last four miles of the survey.
- ETMD met with the Town of North Berwick, Pratt & Whitney, Hussey Seating and Pike Industries in May and November and identified next steps toward moving forward with their three miles of trail.
- ETMD will meet with the Town of South Berwick in December to determine next steps toward moving forward with their five miles of trail.
- ETMD/ETA Trustee Jim Bucar updated the initial Economic Impact Study. Results show a significant increase in trail users over the 22 miles of existing off-road trail and dollars spent. Over 251,000 users were recorded with an average spending of \$200 per person. This report is an incredible resource for ETMD and the municipalities to use in quantifying the many benefits of an off-road trail. ETMD will send a hard copy to municipalities once funding for printing is secured. An on-line

copy is available now here:

<https://www.eastertrail.org/documents/ETEconomicImpactStudy2018.pdf>

- Unitil, the corridor owner, has sent a letter of intent and support to move forward with the CoLocation Agreement for the balance of 18+ miles from Kennebunk through South Berwick.
- Trademark status is now complete for the name "Eastern Trail".
- ETMD has one complete Connection Agreement plus one pending in Arundel, and one in process in Saco for connections to the Eastern Trail.
- The ETMD Executive Director and Board members continue to work with the East Coast Greenway, Unitil, Maine Department of Transportation, Southern Maine Planning and Development Commission and Portland Area Comprehensive Transportation System to seek funding and direction in planning the balance of the off road route.

In the upcoming year, the ETMD plans to focus on these crucial work tasks:

1. Continue fundraising efforts for the Scarborough-South Portland Close the Gap campaign to cover any unforeseen additional costs that may appear during final design and construction.
2. Expand the campaign to raise funds to "Blaze the Trail South" from Kennebunk through South Berwick including applying for grants and exploring private funding to assist the municipalities efforts. Work with Wells and Kennebunk as they move to negotiate the co-location agreement with Unitil to span this corridor to support the funding process.
3. In addition to the proceeds from the ETA's 2018 Annual Appeal, proceeds from four events ETMD/ETA has planned between April and September will go directly to these projects.
4. Continue to work with Saco and Biddeford to find solutions in closing the gap between their off-road trail sections.
5. Increase outreach efforts in all twelve communities along the trail including presentations to municipalities, Chambers of Commerce, Rotary Clubs, Parks & Rec, Continuing Education programs to raise awareness and gain support for completing the off road sections of trail.
6. Continue efforts to bring all prodigal ETMD members back into the fold, thereby increasing our political and grant-writing power and reducing the ETMD annual dues across the board.
7. Recruit corporate, individual and foundation sponsors to support funding for the expansion of the Trail via donations or event proceeds.
8. Provide the administrative support to promote the Eastern Trail to the public, target use groups including tourist markets, as well as lobby MDOT and the State Legislature for continued support and funding for ET trail expansion.
9. Manage current trail conditions and events.

From 2001 to 2018, member communities and the Eastern Trail Alliance have provided \$875,250 in membership fees. These funds are dedicated to promoting and securing funding for the completion of the off road trail, managing the existing trail events, maintenance and administration, including the huge volume of preparation and recordkeeping required by the MaineDOT for each of the projects that it has funded. In return, over \$15 million in state and federal funds have been committed to the development of the ET.

As one of three "Trails of Statewide Significance" recognized by the Maine DOT, the Eastern Trail has become a tourist destination and community resource. As the southern-most section in Maine of the East Coast Greenway and U S Bike Route 1, the Eastern Trail has achieved local, regional, state-wide and national recognition. We welcome and thank you for your continued support, and look forward to reporting the completion of more of the Eastern Trail, as well as exciting new projects in the works, in the coming year.

Sincerely,



Bill Reichl, President - ETMD



Carole Brush, Executive Director - ETMD