

## **GOVERNOR PHIL SCOTT ANNOUNCES OPENING OF ANOTHER SECTION OF THE LAMOILLE VALLEY RAIL TRAIL**

**07 SEPTEMBER 2021**

Montpelier, Vt. - Governor Phil Scott and the Vermont Agency of Transportation (AOT) today announced the opening of an additional 6.3 miles of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT) between Sheldon and Highgate. This section of trail begins at the intersection of the LVRT and the Missisquoi Valley Rail Trail and extends westerly approximately 6.3 miles to its intersection with Gore Road in Highgate Center. This new section of the LVRT is now open to the public.

“Outdoor recreation is key to Vermont’s economy and quality of life, and this new section of trail offers exciting new opportunities,” said Governor Scott. “There is no better time than now to get outside and enjoy all the Green Mountain State has to offer, and I hope many Vermonters and visitors get the chance to enjoy the benefits of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail.”

With the completion of this section, there is now a 12.6-mile segment that starts at the intersection of the LVRT and Bridge Street in Sheldon and extends westerly to its intersection with South River Road in Swanton.

The Vermont Association of Snow Travelers (VAST) had previously completed approximately 33 miles of trail. Funding was 80% federal dollars through AOT, with the remaining amount from town assistance, private donations, and VAST’s own investment. Governor Scott’s proposal for funding to accelerate the completion of the LVRT was approved in 2020. The Governor’s FY2021 budget allocated a total of \$2.8 million and was matched by \$11.3 million in federal funds for the construction of the LVRT. Since August 2020, AOT has expanded the trail to include 45 miles of completed trail for public use.

“The completion of this 93-mile recreational trail in the fall of 2022 will stimulate tourism opportunities for Vermonters and visitors to our state,” said Transportation Secretary Joe Flynn. “The business and community development opportunities are limited only by the imagination of Vermont entrepreneurs and the creative communities that the trail traverses. We are excited to work with the broad array of stakeholders in coming months as we launch a strategic management planning process to assure that maximum benefit is derived from the investments in developing this recreational and transportation resource.”

Construction of the LVRT will be accelerated during the next two construction seasons as AOT builds the remaining 49 miles of trail. The remaining work includes three segments of trail and a major bridge. Construction of the bridge is scheduled to begin during this construction season. The remaining segments of trail are scheduled to be advertised and awarded through October 2021 and included below in order of the anticipated advertised date:

**West Danville to Hardwick** (17.85 miles) starting at the intersection with Channel Drive and extending westerly to the intersection with Maple Street

**Cambridge to Sheldon** (18.37 miles) starting at the intersection with VT Route 109 and extending westerly to the intersection with Bridge Street

**Hardwick to Morrisville** (12.44 miles) starting at the intersection with North Main Street and extending westerly to the intersection with VT Route 15A

The trail is anticipated to be completed by the end of fall 2022. When the 93-mile trail is completed, the LVRT will be the longest rail trail in New England.