



**BLACKSTONE RIVER VALLEY NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR, INC.**



**2016  
ANNUAL  
REPORT**

**WATER POWERED!**



One valley...One environment...One history...All powered by the Blackstone River watershed.

So nationally significant, it was named the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor.

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS, 2016

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Pawtucket, RI
- Donna M. Williams  
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Grafton, MA
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- Allen Fletcher, Worcester, MA
- John Gregory, Lincoln, RI
- Jeannie Hebert, Whitinsville, MA
- Richard T. Moore, Uxbridge, MA
- Dennis Rice, Whitinsville, MA

#### STAFF

- Charlene Perkins Cutler  
Executive Director
- Megan DiPrete  
Deputy Director & Community Planner
- Stephanie Begin  
Administrative Assistant
- Suzanne Buchanan  
VIP Program Coordinator
- Bonnie Combs, Marketing Director
- Devon Kurtz  
Director of Audience Engagement



### Chairman's Message

Over the past 18 months, Blackstone Heritage Corridor, Inc. (BHC) has been engaged in a dynamic strategic planning process to develop the first planning document for our nonprofit. We wanted to engage our partners in the process in order to ensure a comprehensive and realistic outcome. The Board of Directors created three mission-area subcommittees and more than 50 partners contributed their time, expertise and collective passion for the National Heritage Corridor.

I wish to thank Anne Conway (chair) and the Historical and Cultural Resources Subcommittee, Donna Williams (chair) and the Environment Subcommittee, and my colleagues on the Economic Development and Community Revitalization Subcommittee for their efforts. Everyone worked very diligently and kept the project on schedule. We benefited greatly from the clarity of Dick Gregory's thinking, the thoroughness of Harry Whitin's review, and the excellence of Donna Williams' editing skills.

Most of all, the strategic planning process reinvigorated BHC and its partners. It was a chance to review the great work of the past 30 years, celebrate how far we've come together, and take an honest look at what continues to need our collective focus in the future.

As *Surging Toward 2026, A Strategic Plan* states, "Every great work is created first in the imagination. We imagine a future which will retain and enhance the Blackstone River Valley's history and culture for residents and visitors alike. We imagine a future in which people from all walks of life will want to work, play and raise their families in the Valley. We imagine a future where thoughtful, sustainable economic development is the rule. We imagine a future of clean air and water for the use and enjoyment of all."

You are invited to join us in working for that bright future for the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor.



Michael D. Cassidy  
Chair, Board of Directors

### Mission

**The Blackstone Heritage Corridor works with community partners to preserve and promote the Valley's historical, cultural, natural and recreational resources for current and future generations.**

#### BHC'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION



Senator  
Ed Markey  
MA



Senator  
Jack Reed  
RI



Senator  
Elizabeth Warren  
MA



Senator  
Sheldon  
Whitehouse, RI



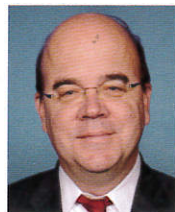
Congressman  
David Cicilline  
RI



Congressman  
Joseph Kennedy,  
III, MA



Congressman  
Jim Langevin  
RI



Congressman  
Jim McGovern  
MA

BHC matched **\$642,373** in federal funding to the National Heritage Corridor with **\$1.4 million**, creating an impact of more than **\$2 million** in the region and more than tripling the return on the federal investment. In 2016, 91% of all expenditures went directly into programming.



## PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS 2016

GO!

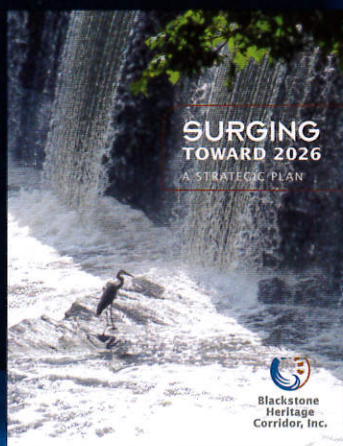


2nd Annual Blackstone Heritage Corridor GO! The entire month of September **80,000** people enjoyed **75** free experiences and special events celebrating the history, nature and wonderful stories of the National Heritage Corridor.



### Surging Toward 2026

BHC spent 2016 in a strategic planning process involving the Board of Directors, staff, and three subcommittees comprised of more than 50 partners. This is the first formal planning document for the new nonprofit. *Surging Toward 2026 – A Strategic Plan* will be the rationale for BHC's work plan for annual budgets and federal contracts, will aid in creating grant applications/solicitations for corporate and foundation funding, and will justify support for partner projects for the next ten years. It is available in print and on [BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org](http://BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org).



### Volunteers-in-Parks Program

**1,283**

volunteers did work in natural resource protection, interpretation, promoting recreational resources and administration.



**43** volunteers have been with the program **more than 10 years**,

**11** of whom have been VIPs for **more than 20 years**.

**33** group projects did cleanups, reclaiming canal locks, historic preservation, landscaping at historic sites.

Began **Corporate Day of Service Program**, attracting VIPS from Alex And Ani, Columbia Threadneedle Investments and Whole Foods Market of Bellingham.

**13,431.25** hours donated, valued at \$23.56 per hour.

Generated a total in-kind contribution of **\$316,440.25**.

### Trash Responsibly and Fish Responsibly

Assisted with **25** clean-ups in communities throughout the National Heritage Corridor.

Created **new ways to remove even more trash** from our environment - Identified ways to **recycle Styrofoam, monofilament fishing line and six-pack rings**.

**10** groups received Trash Responsibly™ and Fish Responsibly program presentations.



### Grant Projects Completed in 2016

**12** projects, total of **\$206,053** in grants, matched with **\$534,600** in in-kind contributions.

#### Bay State Trail Riders Association \$13,403

Cleaned and improved nearly 5.5 miles of trails in the Douglas State Forest, including cleaning out drainage swales, removing overgrown brush and installing more than 250 tons of processed gravel as a trail surface.

#### Town of Blackstone \$11,500

Led cleanup along a vulnerable portion of the historic Blackstone Canal, removed dozens of large trees and commissioned an engineering study to evaluate the integrity of the historic 7-Span Viaduct.

#### Blackstone River Coalition \$80,000

Water quality monitoring along the Blackstone River and its tributaries for the past two years produced one of the richest sources of data on this watershed. Working with environmental agencies in both Massachusetts and Rhode Island, EPA and the Narragansett Bay Commission, the data was made widely available to state, federal and non-profit organizations.

#### Blackstone Valley Historical Society, \$5,000

Computer software and other materials were acquired to catalogue their collection of historic resources and make the content of materials searchable and more easily accessible.

#### Blackstone Tourism Council \$7,200

Supported an environmental educator who travelled on the vessel Explorer's weekend trips, describing the historical and present day chemistry of the river, and the evolution of fish species and other wildlife in the river and along the riverbanks.

#### City of Pawtucket \$15,000

Interpretive signage was created about the arch structure of the new I-95 bridge, historical events and the role of landscaping to help clean soils that had been contaminated by industry long ago.

#### Save the Bay \$4,700

Woonsocket Chillin' and Skillin' Program allowed urban youth to become exposed to the riverine ecosystem of the Blackstone River and its ultimate outfall, Narragansett Bay, through classroom and field trip environments on the water.





## DO YOU KNOW YOUR BICYCLE ABC'S?

DO AN ABC QUICK CHECK BEFORE YOU RIDE!



## 97 = impact of \$740,750:

### Town of Uxbridge \$1,250

Signage was created and installed at the historic Uxbridge Town Hall, part of a larger project to enhance the façade, install landscaping and pervious surfaces, and make interior repairs to the building.

### Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council \$8,000

Provided nearly a dozen intriguing guided bicycle and paddling tours through one of the region's most industrialized river corridors on the region's second American Heritage River.

### Visitor Center Support \$60,000

Continued operating support for visitor centers at the Museum of Work and Culture in Woonsocket, the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council in Pawtucket, and the Riverbend Farm Visitor Center at Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park in Uxbridge.

## Community Planning and Environmental Review

As heir to the former Commission, BHC has a long record of interest in and review of activities related to the preservation of the historical, cultural, natural and recreational resources of the National Heritage Corridor. As such, BHC is routinely involved in projects throughout the 25 cities and towns in the region:

**60** projects in **24** of the Corridor's 25 cities and towns.

Reviewed **comprehensive plans, master plans and open space plans for 5** towns

Helped develop and **support grant applications in 4** communities.

Reviewed **projects and plans in 13** communities, including some large projects having regional impacts.

Worked with **8 non-governmental stakeholder groups** spearheading projects in **15** communities.

Participated in **project reviews and implementation in 11** federally-regulated projects including the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's hydropower licensing, the Surface Transportation Board and the EPA's Superfund Redevelopment Initiative.

Worked with **state and regional agencies on 16** different projects including some with regional impacts.

Projects with regional impact included Boston Surface Rail Co. (proposal to initiate new passenger rail service between Providence and Worcester), the Clear River Energy Center (proposal to construct a large power generating plant in Burrillville), several hydropower-generating dam permit applications, and bicycle infrastructure (including efforts to design and fund new sections of the Blackstone River Bikeway and provide infrastructure to support the bikes, including bike racks and fix-it stations).

## Blackstone Heritage Corridor Visitor Center @ Worcester

After more than a decade of engaging partners and planning for a gateway to the National Heritage Corridor in Worcester, work has finally begun on the Blackstone Heritage Corridor Visitor Center @ Worcester. This year **hundreds of yards of PCB contaminated soil and over 4,000 cubic yards of additional low level contaminated soil** were removed from the former Washburn Moen site and disposed of in an environmentally-appropriate manner. Additionally, roughly **30,000 cubic yards of site soils were regraded to "terrascapes"** the future Visitor Center property. The site grading was carefully engineered to balance the soils along the parking lot areas and to form the hill to the north of the property. The terrascapes **hill design provides a visual and sound barrier** to Route 146.

Additionally, about **600 feet of the historic canal wall was restored**, including more than **50 feet of the wall** which was in such poor condition that it was **completely rebuilt to a 15-foot height using original canal stone**.

BHC completed the exhibit design phase in 2016 and began funding efforts for exhibit manufacture and installation. The Visitor Center is scheduled to be complete in July, 2018.



## Marketing and Public Relations

Continuing BHC's branding efforts, another **photo contest** was held for the 2017 Calendar and more than **125 submissions** were received. BHC also created an updated the map of the entire National Heritage Corridor and included a **new watershed map**.

**Over 150** articles and **photographs** were published regarding BHC and its work in 2016, including **10 front page newspaper placements** and **3 television broadcasts**.

Staff provided a consistent presence for BHC at a **plethora of public events** throughout the year, including the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce Business Expo and the Big E, and generated an **abundance of audience-specific handouts**.





## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

For the year ending September 30, 2016

### ASSETS

Cash & Cash Equivalents	\$	447,835
Grants Receivable		398,208
Prepaid Expenses		4,897
Inventory		6,650
Fixed Assets, net		189,668
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>1,047,258</b>

### LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

#### Liabilities

Accounts Payable & Accrued Expenses		25,752
Grants Payable		58,038

#### Net Assets

Unrestricted		321,531
Temporarily Restricted		641,937
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>1,047,258</b>

### SUPPORT & REVENUE

Grants	\$	518,352
Contributions		15,453
Sponsorships & Program Revenue		1,180
Greenway Challenge Revenue		5,275
Miscellaneous Income		9,177
Grants Forfeited by Partners		5,630
<b>Total Support &amp; Revenue</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>555,067</b>

### EXPENDITURES

#### Program Services

Program Expenses	\$	625,771
Greenway Challenge Expenses		9,278
General & Administrative		58,801
Fundraising		3,927
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>697,777</b>

### CHANGE IN NET ASSETS

(142,710)

Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$	1,106,178
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### NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR

\$ 963,468

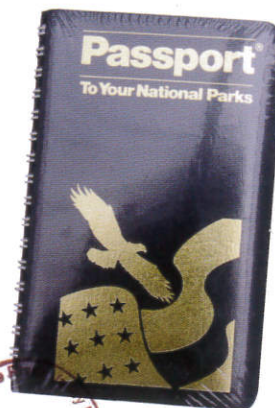
## Partnership with the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park

In 2016, BHC moved to the geographic center of the National Heritage Corridor, building out a portion of the Linwood Mill, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The office supports both BHC and the new Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park staff, and hosts an NPS Passport stamping location for both. Both staffs continue to work very closely together.

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The Volunteers-in-Parks Program, coordinated by BHC, offered the Park assistance with maintenance at the Capt. Wilbur Kelly House, manpower at the Biodiversity Festival, and cleanups in North Smithfield, Whitinsville, and Hopedale.

BHC and the Park jointly celebrated the 100th Anniversary of the National Park Service and recognized the accomplishments of long-time volunteers with the VIP Program. BHC also participated in the strategic planning efforts for the new Park.



## BHC's New Digs!

At the end of April, BHC moved into its new 4,300-square foot office at the Linwood Mill in Whitinsville, MA. Located in the geographic center of the National Heritage Corridor, the new site hosts the Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park as well as BHC.





**WE ARE VERY GRATEFUL FOR THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF ALL OF THE CORRIDOR KEEPERS IN 2016:**



**COLLEGE OF THE Holy Cross**

**Fletcher Foundation**

**Stoddard Foundation**

**Up to \$249**

- Alternatives Unlimited
- Mary Ann Asermely
- Charles and Jeannette Baldelli
- Joe Barbato
- John Barry, III
- Gary R. Beauchamp
- Christine Beauvais
- Jane and Michael Becker
- Nancy and Raymond Benoit
- Paul Bernier
- Robert D. Billington
- Thomas and Donna Bik
- Jacqueline Blinkhorn
- Suzanne Buchanan
- Frank Callahan
- Anthony and Esther Caran
- Deb and Charles Cary
- Claire and David Chenevert
- Susan Ciaramicoli
- Peter and Anne Conway
- Orlando Corona
- Jeffrey and Joyce Dore
- Erik & Michelle Eckilson
- First American Realty
- Michael Fitzpatrick
- Gaudette Insurance
- Gerald Gaudette, III
- Patricia Glodis
- Arline and Lauren Gilpin
- John Gregory
- Andrew Hollis
- Jon and Marjorie Hollman
- Philip Johanson
- Terrence Karaniuk
- Alan Keeler

- Alan Kolbe
- Neville Lassotovitch
- Marion Malkasian
- Elizabeth and James Martin
- William and Janet McGinnis
- Paul C. Mowrey
- Dana & Nancy Newbrook
- Richard Nolan
- Paul and Helen Papineau
- Eugene Peloguin
- Bernard and Lynne Plante
- Marsha R. Platt
- Polar Beverages
- Claire Quintal
- Rainbow Print Group
- Dennis and Kelley Rice
- Janet and Conrad Robidoux
- Sharp Family Living Trust
- Table Talk Pies
- James Watkins, Jr.
- Nancy Wegimont
- John Whitin
- Whitin Community Center
- Wormtown Brewery

**\$250+**

- BETA Corp.
- Michael & Jane-Ellen Cassidy
- Coastway Community Bank
- Jeannie Hebert
- Narragansett Bay Commission

**\$500+**

- Justine Brewer
- Simon Brewer
- Charlene & Doug Cutler
- Megan DiPrete
- Gary Furtado
- Richard H. Gregory, III
- Todd Helwig
- Millbury Credit Union
- Richard T. Moore
- In honor of Joanne Moore
- Harry Whitin
- Donna & Ted Williams

**\$1,000+**

- Cabot Creamery
- Collette Vacations
- Allen Fletcher
- Greater Worcester Foundation
- Mirrick O'Connell
- Navigant Credit Union
- James Pepper
- Pfizer Foundation
- UniBank

**\$5,000+**

- Fletcher Foundation

**\$15,000+**

- Amica Insurance
- College of the Holy Cross
- Stoddard Foundation



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BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org

