



## The Blackstone Heritage Corridor Legacy Campaign: Reimagining Our Future

### The 25 communities of the Blackstone Heritage Corridor

#### Massachusetts

- Auburn
- Blackstone
- Douglas
- Grafton
- Hopedale
- Leicester
- Mendon
- Millbury
- Millville
- Northbridge
- Sutton
- Upton
- Uxbridge
- Worcester

#### Rhode Island

- Burrillville
- Central Falls
- Cumberland
- East Providence
- Glocester
- Lincoln
- North Smithfield
- Pawtucket
- Providence
- Smithfield
- Woonsocket



The Blackstone River Valley of Massachusetts and Rhode Island is the "Birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution." America's first textile mill could have been built along almost any river on the eastern seaboard. But in 1790 the forces of capital, ingenuity, mechanical know-how and skilled labor turned

the Blackstone River into **the power that kicked off America's industrial engine.**

Four decades ago, Congress recognized this national significance of our history, culture and natural resources by creating a space later named as the *John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor*.<sup>1</sup> Today, we are the **Blackstone Heritage Corridor**, and are entrusted with preserving and promoting this national legacy.

The Blackstone River, the **backbone of the corridor**, is so much cleaner today than it has been in many years, with **dramatic reductions in pollution**. Canoe and kayakers now have 17 locations to access the scenic beauty of the river.

The well-traveled, multi-use trail used for biking and hiking between Worcester and Providence is **almost completed**. We want to coordinate efforts to finish this project that was identified as a **community priority**. The natural treasures of the Corridor are tremendous assets to the quality of life here. Our programs provide cherished experiences for all: families and visitors, including people with disabilities and veterans.



<sup>1</sup> In 1999 the corridor was renamed to honor the advocacy of the late Senator John H. Chafee.

## Honoring Our History

The Blackstone Heritage Corridor shares **inspiring stories of cultural evolution** in partnership with dozens of local organizations and communities. Through signage, interpretive panels, brochures, exhibits and five heritage centers, we honor the past as we look to the future.

We were a driving force for the creation of the *Blackstone River Valley National Historical Park*, one of our country's newest national parks. This unique park **celebrates the story of innovation** that literally changed how people worked and lived from the earliest days of the country to the present day.

We are the **only federally-designated partner to the new park**. We created and continue to lead its award-winning volunteer programs.

## Forging Our Future

In a 2021 survey we conducted, you shared a top priority: completing the multi-use trail. Other goals included more support of our local partners, improving signage throughout the corridor, and creating more opportunities to contribute through volunteering. With that critical feedback, we envisioned how to reimagine the important work of the Blackstone Heritage Corridor and invite you to participate.



- ***Champion for Completion of the Multi-Use Trail – Cost: \$350,000***

Even before the national park, the biggest dream has been to complete the multi-use trail from Worcester to Providence, following the course of our beloved Blackstone River. The popularity of the finished sections, largely in Rhode Island, show how important this space is to all of us. And as we learned from recent years, outdoor spaces have become more vital than ever for our physical and mental health. Too many miles are yet to be completed. It will take sustained advocacy by a passionate public, under the direction of a part-time dedicated coordinator, to motivate state governments to deliver on their promises to complete the project so the trail is complete.

- ***Keep the Corridor History and Stories Accessible – Cost: \$365,000***

After four decades, it is critical to replace, update, unify, and add to signs, information panels, digital materials, and heritage center exhibits that provide access for visitors to engage in our stories and history. The corridor provides access to hundreds of opportunities and we must improve the tools to share this important information for visitors with the help of a part-time project manager.

- ***Grow volunteer opportunities to support the Corridor – Cost: \$90,000***

Through our award-winning *Volunteers in Parks* program, we've recruited, trained, and placed hundreds of volunteers each year who are serving as guides, docents, and stewards at dozens of cultural and historic sites, and natural areas. By placing more volunteers at these important locations, we provide more access and support for visitors. We can do this by investing in new tools, uniforms, and training to provide more meaningful ways to be part of the corridor.

- ***Increase collaborative community partner resources – Cost: \$99,000***

The Blackstone Heritage Corridor has successfully served as the critical hub for the Corridor by managing resources in the most effective way for our community partners. There are over 60 nonprofit organizations working separately to protect the beautiful and historic Blackstone River Valley, not to mention municipalities and businesses. The impact to our communities is boundless when we put our actions and resources together. By expanding our community partner grants program, we can help our partners create and improve amenities and storytelling to enhance the historic, natural, and recreational treasures of the Blackstone Valley for even more access and enjoyment.

- ***Invest in the Blackstone Heritage Corridor – Cost: \$435,000***

As our federal support decreases, we are looking to replace that funding gap, and increase our own investment in expanding the important services needed to sustain all of the resources in the corridor. Our strategy is to hire a full-time development director and administrative support to manage much needed fundraising and amplify the impact of our critical services of preserving, promoting, and celebrating the Blackstone River Valley.

## Reimagining Our Future

The investment for these projects includes approximately \$500,000 total in one-time costs and just \$280,000 in increased annual operating expenses per year, for a total of \$1,340,000 over a four-year period.

Number of donors	Total needed per donor	Annual Support (2023 – 2026)
1	\$120,000	\$40,000
2	\$90,000	\$30,000
5	\$45,000	\$15,000
8	\$25,500	\$8,500
10	\$15,000	\$5,000
10	\$10,500	\$3,500
15	\$7,500	\$2,500
15	\$4,500	\$1,500
15	\$3,000	\$1,000
Numerous	\$1,500 or less	\$500
<b>Join us!</b>	<b>\$1,340,000</b> <b>total three year goal</b>	

We can accept gifts of cash via online credit card at [www.PreservetheCorridor.org](http://www.PreservetheCorridor.org) or mail a check to:

Blackstone Heritage Corridor  
Attn: The Legacy Campaign  
670 Linwood Avenue  
Whitinsville, MA. 01588

Securities and bequests are also welcomed.

### Contact Information

Devon Kurtz, Executive Director  
[dkurtz@blackstoneheritagecorridor.org](mailto:dkurtz@blackstoneheritagecorridor.org)  
508-234-4242 Ext. 100

### Our Mission

Blackstone Heritage Corridor, working with community partners, provides strong leadership to preserve, promote, and celebrate the Valley's historic, natural and recreational resources for current and future generations.