



Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Governor Charles D. Baker
Lt. Governor Karyn E. Polito
Secretary Matthew A. Beaton

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State Officials Celebrate Opening of Ferrous Park in Lawrence *4.5 Acre Park is Located on Former Brownfield Site*

LAWRENCE – June 29, 2016 –Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Matthew Beaton joined state and local officials to celebrate the opening of a 4.5 acre park on the Ferrous site, a former brownfield in Lawrence at the union of the Spicket and Merrimack Rivers. EEA’s Gateway City Parks Program provided \$2.75 million to fund the land acquisition, design, and construction of the new park.

“Urban parks are vital to ensure a high quality of life for those living in the Commonwealth’s cities,” **said Governor Charlie Baker**. “We are proud to be able to provide the City of Lawrence and other Gateway Cities with the resources to create beautiful open spaces for their residents.”

“The creation of Ferrous Park is a great example of how the state can work with our municipal and private partners to ensure the success of important local projects, while revitalizing areas like the City of Lawrence’s North Canal District,” **said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito**.

Ferrous Park will be used for passive recreation, educational and interpretive programs and events. The park is a model for urban ecological restoration, as it is located on the site of a former foundry that ceased operation in 2001.

“Not only does Ferrous Park provide the residents of Lawrence with great opportunities for outdoor recreation, the park both restores the site’s ecology and reduces pollution in the Merrimack River,” **said EEA Secretary Matthew Beaton**. “The Baker-Polito Administration is dedicated to protecting our natural resources and providing access to open space to all Commonwealth residents, regardless of zip code.”

Creation of the park from acquisition through construction was managed on behalf of the City of Lawrence by Groundwork Lawrence. The Ferrous site is now owned by the City, with Groundwork holding an easement to ensure that the park is forever a recreational resource for Lawrence residents. The park design team was led by Stephen Stimson Associates and included the D.I.R.T. studio, Nitsch Engineering and RSE Associates. Argus Construction was the general contractor.

“I want to thank Governor Baker and his administration for their work on this project, and I want to thank our State Delegation for advocating for this grant on behalf of the City of Lawrence,” **said Lawrence Mayor Daniel Rivera**. “This new open space sits at one of the main entrances to the City. What was once an eyesore is now an area that residents can go to daily to walk, run, fish or take in the scenery. It is something that we should be proud of—something that makes Lawrence better.”

“The Ferrous site was not just a wish for an open and safe park,” **said Groundwork Lawrence Executive Director Heather McMann**. “There was a need that persisted for over twenty years to transform a polluted brownfield into the capstone of the Spicket River Greenway. To make our cities, our neighborhoods, and our lives better. And to get what we all deserve: a great place to live, work and play.”

Since 2001, trees and other vegetation have grown on the Ferrous site, creating a true “urban wild” on this riverfront site, a habitat the park design worked hard to enhance. The sand once used for castings in the foundry forms a hill about 25 feet high, one of the more prominent features of the new park. The design also includes a rain garden and other green infrastructure to treat and recharge stormwater from the adjacent industrial site, addressing the direct discharge of untreated runoff into the Merrimack River that occurred previously.

The site is located the union of the Spicket and Merrimack Rivers, and is within the North Canal Historic District. The Ferrous Site is also a capstone for the Spicket River Greenway, a walking path along the Spicket River previously funded by the Gateway City Parks Program that connects a series of parks in the Arlington neighborhood, a low-income, minority community.

“I join my fellow colleagues of the Lawrence legislative delegation in celebrating the transformation of the old Ferrous Site and encourage residents from across the City to take advantage of all this beautiful park has to offer,” **said State Representative Diana DiZoglio (D-Methuen)**.

“It’s a great feeling to play a role along with Mayor Dan Rivera, Lawrence’s State House delegation and state environmental officials in seeing this property in the North Canal Historic District transformed into a wonderful resource for residents to recreate or just enjoy the scenery,” **said State Senator Barbara L’Italien (D-Andover)**.

“I can’t thank my colleagues in state government, especially in Governor Baker’s administration, enough for their support and efforts in making such a beautiful green space for Lawrence,” **said State Representative Frank A. Moran (D-Lawrence)**. “At its core, the Ferrous site is truly a joint effort for the collective benefit of all Lawrence residents.”

“More than a decade ago, I as a city council president was a part of the decision to approve the demolition on that very spot (Ferrous Park), **said State Representative Marcos Devers (D-Lawrence)**. “Now we can see the beautiful utilization of that space. A great contrast that makes me feel proud of the decision that we (city councilors) made in 2003.”

EEA’s Gateway City Parks Program funds the creation or restoration of significant urban parks and trails in the Commonwealth’s 26 Gateway Cities. Investments are typically focused on sites and projects that are difficult to achieve through other programs, and that contribute to broader revitalization efforts.

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