

Kara Runsten, MVP Program Manager
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

April 7, 2022

Re: Main Streets Regional Pocket Forests Pilot Project

Dear Ms. Runsten,

I am writing on behalf of the Devens Enterprise Commission in support of The DEC and Ayer's Regional Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Grant Application to fund the project: "**Main Streets Regional Pocket Forests Pilot Project**". This project builds on the both communities ongoing efforts to protect, restore, and enhance local natural features in support of long-term climate resilience and community health, and will enable the Devens Regional Enterprise Zone to continue o integrate the natural and built environments by planning, designing, and piloting pocket forests for strategically valuable locations that emphasize equitable outcomes for Environmental Justice (EJ) and Climate Vulnerable (CV) populations.

The DEC strongly supports this grant application, including its intent to add accessible green space, support public mental and physical health, and create multiple and intersecting environmental benefits. The DEC was created by MGL Chapter 498 of the Acts of 1993 to oversee the unified permitting and sustainability efforts associated with the redevelopment of the former Fort Devens in North Central Massachusetts. Part of our mission is to serve as a model of sustainable development for the Commonwealth, and this project fits nicely into that mission.

The DEC supports the overall proposal and will join the efforts to educate and engage the community around the value and potential of pocket forests to support long-term sustainable development and innovation toward an Eco-Municipality model, building on our Devens Forward Climate Action and Mitigation Plan, and our LEED for Municipalities and STAR Community ratings. With climate impacts continuing to increase in frequency and intensity, community preparedness and relationship-building are more important than ever for ensuring resilient, healthy, and thriving communities into the future. We believe this project will increase our community's capacity to achieve these goals and look forward to being part of the team.

Sincerely,

William P. Marshall

William P. Marshall
Devens Enterprise Commission



DEVENS ENTERPRISE COMMISSION

33 Andrews Parkway • Devens, MA 01434 • Phone: (978) 772-8831 • Fax: (978) 772-1529