



# FRA CONNECTOR

Volume 10 • September 2026

## ANNUAL FOOD TRUCK FESTIVAL SATURDAY - SEPTEMBER 19 - 12PM-5PM

by Meagen Donoghue

This year's Fitchburg Food Truck Festival will be held September 19, 2026, from 12–5 p.m. While the festival is traditionally held in the spring, this year's event was moved to the fall due to scheduled construction at the usual location. The fun, food, and unique vendors will be just as great!

The festival is a collaborative effort between the Fitchburg Redevelopment Authority, InTown Fitchburg, and Woo Trucks, and we are grateful to this year's sponsors for helping make the event possible:

**Bin There Dump That**  
**BCAD, Inc.**  
**Rollstone Bank**  
**Fitchburg Fiber**  
**Pedro's Potties**  
**Leonardo DRS**



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We hope to see you September 19 at 166 Boulder Drive  
— rain or shine!

# IN MEMORANDUM

by Meagen Donoghue

It is with great sadness that the Fitchburg Redevelopment Authority recognizes the passing of Dr. Laura Bayless, a valued former member of the FRA Board of Directors and a dedicated member of the Fitchburg community.



Dr. Bayless served the Fitchburg Redevelopment Authority with distinction, bringing to the Board her thoughtful leadership, extensive experience in higher education, and deep commitment to Fitchburg. During her tenure, she served as Board Treasurer and as the FRA's Urban Renewal Plan Liaison. In that capacity, she played an important role in the development and presentation of the 2040 Fitchburg Downtown Urban Revitalization and Development Plan, working closely with FRA staff and fellow Board members. She and Executive Director Meagen Donoghue presented the plan to the Fitchburg City Council in February 2022, where it received unanimous approval.



Dr. Bayless also made a significant contribution to the formal adoption of Amendment 9 to the FRA's Urban Renewal Plan. On May 3, 2022, she made the motion to approve the final draft of the 2040 Plan Amendment, which was unanimously adopted by the Authority.

Beyond her official responsibilities, Laura was a thoughtful, compassionate, and collegial presence on the FRA Board. She brought a calm perspective to complex discussions and had a genuine interest in the future of Fitchburg, particularly the connections among economic development, education, community, and opportunity.



Dr. Bayless's service to the FRA was part of a distinguished career at Fitchburg State University, where she served as Vice President for Student Affairs. Her commitment to students, the university, and the broader Fitchburg community was evident throughout her professional and civic life.

The Fitchburg Redevelopment Authority is grateful for Dr. Bayless's service, friendship, and commitment to our community. Her wisdom, kindness, and unwavering belief in Fitchburg will be deeply missed, and her contributions to the Authority and the city will remain part of the FRA's history.

May her memory be a blessing.

# FROM MEXICO TO CANADA: PAST FRA BOARD MEMBER JAY ROY COMPLETES A LIFE-CHANGING JOURNEY

by Meagen Donoghue

At the Fitchburg Redevelopment Authority, we like to celebrate not only the accomplishments of our current board members, but also those who have previously served on the FRA Board and contributed their time, talents and perspective to the work of our organization. Former FRA board member Jay Roy recently accomplished something extraordinary—completing a more than 2,600-mile journey along the Pacific Crest Trail from the Mexican border to Canada. For Roy, a longtime dream has officially become a reality.

Roy recently reached the Canadian border after completing his journey along the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT), a more than 2,600-mile trek stretching from the Mexican border through California, Oregon and Washington. He began the adventure in April 2, with the goal of walking north until he reached Canada.

The journey was about far more than putting one foot in front of the other. Over the course of five months, Roy faced mountains, deserts, wildfire closures, changing weather, exhaustion and the inevitable mental challenges that come with spending months on the trail. When sections of the PCT became inaccessible because of wildfires, he adapted his route and continued north. His determination ultimately carried him to the Canadian border.

Roy, a Fitchburg firefighter and travel and adventure photographer, documented much of the experience along the way, sharing the scenery, challenges and unexpected moments with those following his journey. His hike also became an opportunity to give back, as he launched a fundraiser pledging to donate \$1 for every mile completed to Camp Sunshine, a Maine organization that provides experiences for children with life-threatening illnesses. For those who know Roy in Fitchburg, his willingness to take on a challenge is hardly surprising. During his time on the Fitchburg Redevelopment Authority Board, he contributed his time and perspective to the city's ongoing redevelopment efforts and was a valued member of the FRA team.





Now, after thousands of miles, countless steps and five months of perseverance, Roy has reached the end of the trail—and accomplished a life goal that began long before he ever took that first step at the Mexican border.

For Roy, the journey may have ended at Canada. But the example he leaves behind is much bigger: dream big, keep moving forward, adapt when the path changes, and never underestimate what you can accomplish.

The FRA congratulates Jay on this incredible accomplishment and is proud to celebrate not only the work he did as a former board member, but the remarkable personal milestone he achieved beyond the boardroom.

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## URBAN RENEWAL HOUSING GRANT

We are so proud and honored to give the Urban Renewal District Housing Grant to Nick Pellitier's PProps Development Group for the 8 new beautiful units created at 329-335 Main Street!



# SMALL BUSINESS INTERNET GRANT

Congratulations to FATV for being awarded the Small Business Internet Grant! We wish them much success in their technology upgrade!



## FRA GRANT PROGRAMS

Attention small business owners (under 10 employees) and developers—did you know the FRA offers mini grants to help launch your project or close financing gaps?

### Available Programs:

1. **Urban Renewal District Housing Grant** – Up to \$50,000 (\$5,000 per unit, max 10 units) in reimbursable funds for projects within the Urban Renewal District.
2. **Small Business Internet Grant** –
  - Up to \$100 for internet-only service
  - Up to \$1,000 for bundled services (internet, Wi-Fi, phone, etc.)
  - Available to small businesses (under 10 employees) within the District, including those upgrading existing service.
3. **FRA Design Grant Program** – Up to \$2,000 for build-out design work, available to small businesses (under 10 employees) and developers citywide.

### Let's stay in touch...

[www.fitchburgredevelopment.com](http://www.fitchburgredevelopment.com)

166 Boulder Drive, Suite 104

Fitchburg, MA 01420

978.345.9602

### Follow us...

