

***** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE *****

Catskill Mountain Railroad Awarded \$4.485 Million Dollars

The Catskill Mountain Railroad has recently been awarded three grants totaling \$4.485 million dollars by the New York state Department of Transportation. The grants are for three separate projects planned by the railroad which come from the Passenger and Freight Rail Assistance Program (PFRAP) which were applied for in 2023.

The projects and funding are the Basin Road Rail Terminal with a grant of \$667,000.00, An Engine House with Connecting Track for \$1,518,000.00, and a Clean Diesel Upgrade to the railroads present locomotive to reduce emissions for \$2,300,000.00.

Having been given a five year permit last year by the Ulster County Legislature the funding will help achieve a number of the requirements that were part of the Request For Proposals (RFP) which the county wanted to see the railroad accomplish.

With the CMRR being named the Best Attraction in Ulster County by the Ulster County Regional Chamber of Commerce, and have brought a record ridership of 51,610 people in 2023, the funding will help create a longer ride and new terminus at Basin Road that will link to the Ashokan Rail Trail and build a much needed Engine house and Maintenance Facility which will be required to maintain the newly Upgraded Clean Diesel Locomotive.

Jeff Collins, Ulster County Legislator, District 23

"Extending the Catskill Mountain Rail Road to connect to the Ashokan Rail Trail in Hurley will enhance both the railroad and the trail for our residents and the visitors to Ulster County. By also upgrading the locomotive engine to meet modern emission standards, the CMRR has shown its commitment to protecting the environment. This project will also support the Town of Hurley's Route 28 Overlay District as an important gateway to the Catskill Park."

Manna Jo Greene, Ulster County Legislator, District 19

"This grant is well deserved and will allow the Catskill Mountain Railroad, which is run mainly by dedicated volunteers, to significantly reduce pollution from burning petroleum-based diesel to using much cleaner biodiesel, which itself is a recycled product,". "The Railroad provides a wonderful experience for Ulster County residents and visitors, as does the Ashokan Rail Trail, which is also maintained by volunteer trail supporters. This funding creates a valuable opportunity for everyone to work together to maximize the benefits to the County and visiting tourists, while reducing climate impacts and protecting our health and environment."

Chris Hewitt, Ulster County Legislator, District 21

"This significant funding from NYSDOT is a crucial step towards investing in sustainable transportation systems that benefit both people and the environment," said Legislator Chris Hewitt, Chair of the county's Energy, Environment and Sustainability committee. "CMRR can now move forward with their goals of upgrading their engine to meet modern emission standards." "They are now in a position to upgrade their outdated engine by investing in clean, modern technologies that reduce emissions significantly," "Any step that we can take to invest in our transit infrastructure puts us on a path towards a cleaner, healthier, and safer future for our communities."

Joseph Maloney, Ulster County Legislator, District 2

As a legislator supporting the railroad, I commend the CMRR team for their dedication, securing vital investments. The NYS DOT endorsement aligns with our vision to integrate the railroad into our community and connect it to the Ashokan rail trail, paving the way for a prosperous future."

Laura Petit, Former Ulster County Legislator

"I'm thrilled to hear that Catskill Mountain Railroad has received funding to continue its journey in saving an important piece of Ulster County's history. " Petit, former UC Public Works Chair said, "Not only will this funding improve the safety and connectivity of the County's transit network, but it will update their 1950's engine emissions to meet our County's climate goals."

Miriam Gibbons, President, Kingston Uptown Business Association

As President of the "Kingston Uptown Business Association we are proud of the Catskill Mountain Railroad and their dedication to extend the rail line. The initiative aimed at revitalizing the local economy and enhancing the vibrancy of our business district, further solidifying the dedication to fostering growth and prosperity within our community."

Pasquale Iovieno, FAI LLC the owner of the Basin Road site

As local business owners that have been in Ulster County for over 40 years employing many local people. It brings the Iovieno family great joy to help CMRR achieve their goals and stimulate the local economy at the same time. We are very proud to be a part of this amazing and meaningful tourist attraction.

Ernie Hunt, President of the CMRR

“We wish to thank NYSDOT for their strong endorsement of our plans to extend the CMRR and build a terminal at Basin Road and connect to the Ashokan Rail Trail. This connection will combine the CMRR and the Ashokan Rail Trail to be a regional attraction for Ulster County and allow the City Kingston to be directly connected to the trail via the CMRR. The CMRR also thanks NYSDOT for its strong endorsement of the CMRR’s commitment to sustainability in reducing emissions in its locomotive and by getting more people to take the train instead of a car to the Ashokan Rail Trail. It also indicates NYSDOT’s commitment to Rail with Trail from Kingston to the Ashokan Reservoir which was submitted as part of the grant application: [CMRR Stony Hollow to Basin Road Extension \(catskillmountainrailroad.com\)](http://www.catskillmountainrailroad.com) The CMRR also wishes to thank the Towns of [Hurley](#), [Ulster](#) and [Kingston](#) for their support of this plan through resolutions they passed supporting it”.

“We are very excited about this award and look forward to working with the County on these grant opportunities, which will need the County’s active support (but not funding) to implement, including getting our permit extended to Basin Road.”

Harry Jameson, Chairman of the CMRR

“As a founding member of the CMRR, which started 41 years ago, we have worked very hard for a long time to accomplish the goals that have made our operation what it is today. Having worked with the NYSDOT grant programs over the past three years to replace the highway crossings at Route 209 and Washington Avenue we will continue to use this funding opportunity to complete the next phase of our expansion plans and reduce our locomotive emissions. We at the CMRR are proud of our success of being one of Ulster County’s top tourist attractions and thank the NYSDOT, our county representatives, and our community for their continued support”.

The Catskill Mountain Railroad planning and projects can be found for review by visiting their website at www.catskillmountainrailroad.com and clicking on CMRR Expansion.

