



**TOWN OF CONCORD**  
**COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE**  
 141 KEYES ROAD, CONCORD, MA 01742  
 TEL. (978) 318-3290 FAX (978) 318-3291

**Application for CPA Funding**  
**Due no later than 4:00pm on Friday, September 17, 2021**

Applicant: Town of Concord

Co-Applicant (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

Project Name: Bruce Freeman Rail Trail

Project Location/Address: Sudbury town line to Acton town line/W. Conc.

Purpose: (Select all that apply)

- Open Space       Community Housing       Historic Preservation       Recreation

Project Budget:

Amount of CPA Funds Requested: \$ 300,000

Amount from Other Funding Sources: \$ 570,000

Total Project Budget: \$ 1,070,000

(If multi-year project, note current phase only)

Please check which of the following is included with this Application:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> One Paragraph Project Summary *  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Timeline *   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Map (if applicable)                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Architectural plans, site plans, photographs (if appropriate)                       |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Narrative *                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Copy of Audit or most recent Financial Information (Non Profit Organizations Only)* |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Selection Criteria and Needs Assessment     | <input type="checkbox"/> Letters of Support (if any)   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Detailed Project Budget *        |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feasibility Assessment                      |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Statement of Sustainability (if applicable) |  |

\* Required Documentation

The Contact Person for this Project is: Marcia Rasmussen

All Correspondence should be mailed to: 141 Keyes Rd. Concord MA 01742

The Contact Person can be reached by phone at: 978 318 3290 or by email at: mrasmussen@concordma.gov

Signature of Applicant: Marcia Rasmussen

Signature of Property Owner (if different): \_\_\_\_\_

**For Historic Preservation Projects Only** – please check the box below left and acknowledge:

- I/We have read the U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and understand that planning for and execution of this project must meet these standards.

## **Brief Project Summary**

The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail is a non-motorized, ADA accessible, multi-use trail serving as a recreational and transportation resource for residents and visitors of all ages and abilities. Phase 2C was completed in 2018; Phase 2B is currently under construction with completion anticipated in July 2022 and the final design of last ½ mile of Phase 2C from Powder Mill Road south to the Sudbury Town line is underway, with construction to be conducted in conjunction with the Sudbury portion of the trail in 2023. The design and construction of the BFRT is consistent with the goals outlined in the Community Preservation Plan, the Concord Open Space and Recreation Plan and the 2018 Envision Concord Comprehensive Long Range Plan. The additional funds requested in this application will be used to provide additional fencing (decorative fence near White Pond and 2-rail wood fence on the westerly side of the last ½ mile of the trail, in addition to plantings, benches, interpretive signage and other such amenities to enrich and enhance the visitor experience.

## **Narrative**

The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT) is a regional trail that has been constructed and is in active use in Lowell, Chelmsford, Westford, Carlisle, and Acton. The 2.7-mile portion of the trail in Concord (Phase 2C) has seen active pedestrian and bicyclist use during the COVID pandemic as residents were asked to quarantine and group activities were limited. Sudbury is currently in design, with construction funding listed in the State's Transportation Improvement Program for 2022, when the project will be advertised for construction. The trail will ultimately extend approximately 25 miles along the former New Haven branch of the Old Colony Railroad and is named in memory of former State Representative Bruce Freeman from Chelmsford. Phase 3 of the BFRT (the final 4.6 miles) includes sections of South Sudbury and Framingham; these communities continue efforts to obtain ownership of the right-of-way.

With completion of Phase 2C and residents actively using the trail for walking, hiking, biking and other purposes, the Town is receiving comments and concerns about the conditions observed, as well as requests and input on additional amenities, such as additional seating, signage and curb ramps.

Phase 2B is currently under construction. Once the work is completed, there may be a need for additional signage, fencing or other amenities to enhance the users' experience on the trail.

Lastly, the design for the final ½ mile of trail in Concord is being completed by Concord's consultant GPI as requested by MassDOT. In the spring of 2021, the Town learned that the 75% design plans prepared in 2016 had not been fully reviewed by the State agencies responsible due to this portion of the trail being removed from the project. After a site visit with MassDOT staff, concerns were expressed about the extent of fencing requested that did not appear to address specific safety concerns for those using the trail (now a tenet in designing multi-purpose trails) and have suggested that this is a non-participatory item, meaning that the State will not fund the requested fencing. MassDOT has been requested to state this determination in writing but have not yet received such documentation. This CPC application will support the installation of a decorative metal fence along that portion of the trail where White Pond is visible and a 2-rail wood fence along the westerly portion of the trail that abuts the Stone Root Lane neighborhood, as provided in the 2016 plans and shown again in the updated 2021 75% design plans, in the event MassDOT determines that this fencing is non-participatory for State funding purposes.

## **CPC's Selection Criteria and Needs Assessment**

This application meets the following Selection Criteria as found in the 2021 Community Preservation Plan:

a. *The project's eligibility for CPA funding under the CPA legislation.*

The application meets the criteria for Open Space and Recreation under the CPA legislation as it will provide funding for the support of recreational use and enhance the Open Space along the trail.

b. *The project's consistency with Town-wide planning efforts and reports that have received broad-based scrutiny and input.*

As noted in the 2005 Comprehensive Long Range Plan, in the 2015 Open Space and Recreation Plan and the 2018 Envision Concord plan, the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail has been identified as an important trail providing an alternative means of transportation and recreation for residents and visitors that connects people to conservation lands, schools and playing fields and the West Concord Village Center. These studies and plans acknowledge the efforts of advocates for the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail to gain support to convert 25 miles of abandoned rail bed into a multi-purpose trail connecting Lowell to Framingham which meets the CPA criteria for both open space and recreation.

c. *The project's support by relevant Town boards and committees and community groups and its consistency with recent Town Meeting actions.*

The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee and the Recreation Commission have both indicated the importance of completing this Rail Trail project in Concord. The Select Board has supported the funding of this program through the CPA and the Inter-Municipal agreement that was signed by the former Town Manager to accept the State funds for Phase 2C and 2B.

d. *The extent to which the project preserves, protects or enhances existing Town-owned open space, recreation, historic and/or housing assets.*

This project directly relates to the preservation, protection and support of Concord's open space and recreation opportunities, and potentially, historic resources (such as retention and restoration of railroad artifacts and interpretive panels that provide information on the area history).

e. *The extent to which the project serves multiple or underserved populations.*

As a non-motorized, ADA accessible, multi-use trail, this project directly serves multiple populations as well as people with disabilities.

f. *Whether or not the project fulfills more than one purpose of the legislation: housing, historic preservation, open space or recreation.*

This project fulfills two purposes of the legislation – recreation and open space.

g. *Administrative and financial management capabilities of the applicant.*

The project will be administered through the Town of Concord's Department of Planning and Land Management (DPLM). To date, DPLM has been primarily responsible for administering the Town's efforts in designing the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and has worked directly with Acton Planning Director to promote Phase 2B of this project (Acton's Community Preservation funds are being directed toward the Acton portion of the bridge over Route 2). Together we were also able to leverage additional State funds up to \$350,000 toward design of Phase 2B for that portion of the bridge within the State's right-of-way. The Department also has extensive experience in administering CPA funded grants and projects. The Town has completed all of the requirements of the program and grant funds to date.

h. *The extent to which the applicant has successfully implemented projects of a similar type and scale*

*or otherwise demonstrated the ability and competency to implement such a project.*

As noted above, the applicant has had a key role in the design for the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and has extensive familiarity with the work proposed. The Planning Division has overseen numerous grant funded projects and has the expertise to implement a project of this scale.

*i. Demonstrated financial need.*

Phase 2C has been completed in Concord in the spring 2018; construction of Phase 2B is underway as of May 2020. Without CPA funding available in 2022, we are unable to address needs that arise as the trail is in use and may not have the resources needed to provide fencing along the final half mile as represented by the BFRT Advisory Committee in 2014 to residents along the trail.

*j. Whether or not there will be multiple sources of funding for the project, including leveraging of other public and/or private funding.*

As noted above, the Town of Concord has provided funding toward the final design of the last ½ mile in Concord, construction of Phase 2B is underway and Phase 2C was completed in 2018. The State is providing the construction funding for the entire length of the BFRT in Concord that is determined to be within the scope of the project (trail connections are considered not within the scope of the project at this time and some aspects of the design, such as fencing, may be determined to be a non-participatory item in which case the Town will be expected to provide funding). This request is for funds that may be needed as additional work is identified.

*k. The feasibility of the project plan and whether or not the most reasonable approach for implementing the project has been selected.*

The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Committee continues to serve as a clearing house for any additional projects or scope of work that may be requested, desired or required. With construction and design work underway, it is important to have contingency funds available to not jeopardize the current timelines.

*l. The urgency of the project, the flexibility of the schedule and the impact of any delay in initiating the project.* Without resources available, opportunities to provide an enhanced experience for trail users may be lost.

## **Budget**

The funds are needed as contingency in response to unforeseen requirements and desired enhancements (i.e., additional landscaping, screening, benches, and signage in areas that were not anticipated at the time bid documents were prepared – estimated amount is \$50,000), or elements that are considered by MassDOT to be “non-participating” (e.g., fencing along the last ½ mile - \$60,000 estimated for the decorative fence near White Pond and \$190,000 for the 2-rail wood fence along the westerly side of the trail abutting the Stone Root Lane neighborhood). These funds would allow greater flexibility for the Town to participate in the design and construction process.

## **Feasibility**

Once construction is completed, the Town of Concord is responsible for the ongoing maintenance and improvements along the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail; residents using the trail are identifying areas in need of attention or proposing ideas that are worthy of consideration.





**Timeline**

The funds need to be available in 2022 to allow improvements along the trail for pedestrians and bicyclists, as well as an identified source of construction funds for the last ½ mile of the trail from Powder Mill Road to the Sudbury town line.

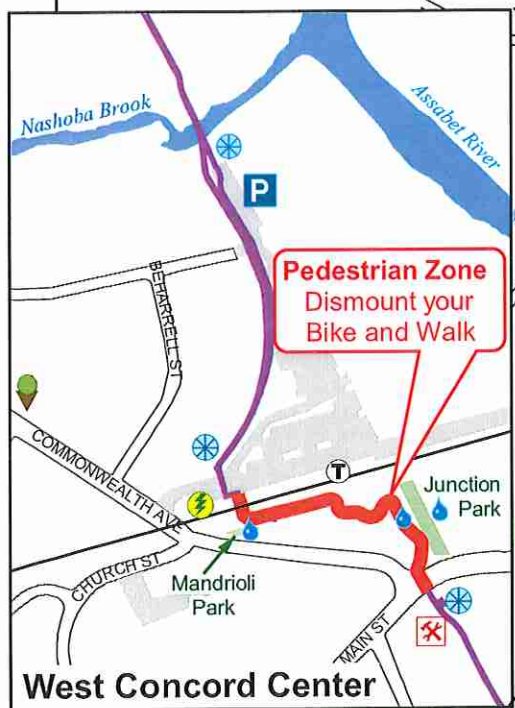


# Bruce Freeman Rail Trail










## Phase 2C in Concord, MA

-  Phase 2C, Concord MA
-  Current Construction 2021
-  Future Construction 2023
-  Pedestrian Zone

0.5 Mi



**West Concord Center**

-  Rail Trail Parking
-  Bicycle Parking
-  Handicap Parking
-  Bike Repair Stand
-  EV Charging Station
-  Ice Cream
-  Water Fountain
-  Railroad Mileage Posts
-  Commuter Rail Station

Scan this QR code with your phone to access an interpretive Rail Trail app



For maintenance issues call 978-318-3220

or go to "Report an Issue" at [www.concordma.gov](http://www.concordma.gov)

and select the "Potholes, street, sidewalk" option.

For emergency call 911



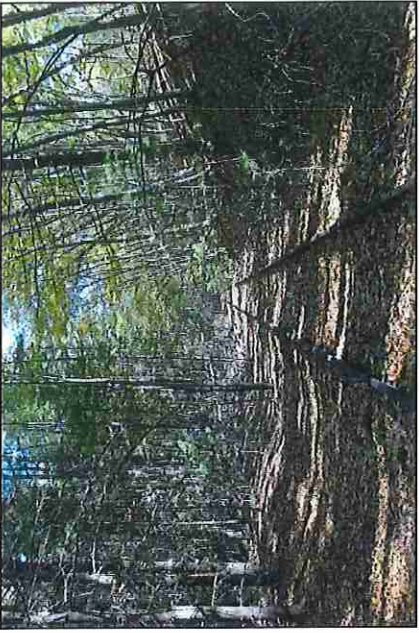


Photo 1: Eastern edge of trail drops off to vernal pool; Photo 2: looking south at path into woods; Photo 3: looking north along tracks near town land (right).



Eastern side of rail trail where White Pond is visible; second photo illustrates the point where the trail drops steeply toward the pond.