



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, 2022

Applicant: Town of Concord

Co-Applicant (if applicable): _____

Project Name: Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT)

Project Location/Address: Acton town line to Sudbury town line including West Concord Village.

Purpose: (Select all that apply)

- Open Space Community Housing Historic Preservation Recreation

Project Budget:

Amount of CPA Funds Requested: \$ 50,000

Amount from Other Funding Sources: \$ unknown

Total Project Budget: \$ 50,000 +

(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 checked="" 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 (<u>Non Profit Organizations Only</u>)* |
| <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): [Signature]

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 November 2022 and the construction of last ½ mile of Phase 2C from Powder Mill Road south to the Sudbury Town line anticipated to begin this fall (with completion by fall 2024). 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 amenities to enrich and enhance the user experience, such as safety improvements at Junction Park, interpretive/contemplative improvements at the Concord Prison Cemetery site adjacent to the BFRT and additional plantings and signage along the trail (such as perennial plantings at the Powder Mill Road switchback access).

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, Acton, and Concord. The 2.7-mile portion of the trail in Concord (Phase 2C) has been actively used by many during the COVID pandemic. Sudbury completed design in the summer 2022 and construction is expected to begin this fall. 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; Sudbury has successfully obtained ownership of the right-of-way and has been awarded funds to begin design.

With completion of Phase 2C and residents actively using the trail for walking, hiking, biking and other purposes, the Town and the BFRT Advisory Committee has received comments and concerns about safety in Junction Park as well as requests and input on additional amenities, such as creating a contemplative/interpretive area at the Concord Prison Cemetery. CPC funds allocated and approved at the 2022 Annual Town Meeting will begin to address these items, but additional funds will be needed to complete them.

Also, with Phase 2B currently under construction and expected to be completed in November 2022, there may be a need for additional signage, fencing or other amenities to enhance the users' experience on the trail.

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 the 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 was completed in Concord in the spring 2018; construction of Phase 2B is underway with completion expected in November 2022. Without CPA funding available in 2023, the Town

will be unable to address all of the safety concerns regarding Junction Park and the desire to provide a contemplative/interpretive experience at the Concord Prison Cemetery.

- 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 and design/construction of Phases 2B and 2C through the Community Preservation Act program and Capital Improvement program. The State has provided 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, the safety improvements at Junction Park, and an interpretive site at the Concord Prison Cemetery are outside of the scope of the project).

- 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 serves as a clearing house for additional projects or scope of work revisions that may be requested, desired, or required. They conducted an extensive public discussion of safety concerns regarding Junction Park and prepared a report with recommendations for the Select Board, which will be implemented by Town staff. Additionally, they have met with representatives of Concord Prison Outreach and Dept. of Corrections staff to discuss the Concord Prison Cemetery project, obtaining State DOC support for the concept. With the bridge over Route 2 expected to be completed this year, it is important to implement these plans sooner to address the anticipated increased use of the BFRT.

- 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 initial design for the Concord Prison Cemetery space has been estimated at \$15,000, which may be available through the 2022 appropriation; however, implementation of that design has not yet been estimated. The BFRT Advisory Committee and Concord Prison Outreach hope to conduct fund-raising to implement the design but may need additional funds to complete the project. Additionally, depending on the materials finally selected for safety enhancements at Junction Park and installation of similar materials at the Nashoba Brook bridge, additional funds will be needed to complete these projects in 2023 as identified by the BFRT Advisory Committee, Select Board and others.

Feasibility

Once construction of the rail trail is completed, the Town of Concord assumes responsibility for the ongoing maintenance and improvements along the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. Residents using the trail have identified areas in need of attention and have proposed ideas that are worthy of consideration, such as the safety enhancements at Junction Park and interpretive information at the Concord Prison Cemetery as well as additional plantings and signage along the trail.

Statement of Sustainability

The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail already provides residents with a safe, alternative path of travel by foot or bicycle, which reduces vehicle trips resulting in less congestion and reduced air pollution. Materials selected for implementation of plans outlined above will be focused on sustainably produced or constructed of sustainable materials. Plants selected will be native or non-invasive and low-

maintenance and low water consuming.

Outreach Strategy

Concepts for improved safety in Junction Park are being reviewed now by several stakeholder groups including the BFRT Advisory Committee, the Commission on Disability, the West Concord Junction Cultural District Committee, the Concord Public Works staff, and the West Concord Green Thumbs.

Initial conversations with the BFRT Advisory Committee, Concord Prison Outreach (CPO) and Mass. Dept. of Corrections have taken place in the fall of 2021, with CPO inviting groups to participate this fall. Invitations have been extended to members of the Concord Cemetery Committee and the Historical Commission.

Timeline

The funds need to be available in 2023 to allow implementation/completion of the two identified projects (Junction Park and Prison Cemetery) as well as installation of minor improvements (plantings and signage) along the trail to enhance the trail user experience.