





PEDESTRIAN ZONE  
WALK YOUR WHEELS

BICYCLIST  
DISMOUNT  
BIKE  
WALK ON  
PATH



USE  
PED  
SIGNAL

Commonwealth Ave







WELCOME TO  
**The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail**  
 WEST CONCORD, MA

[www.concordma.gov](http://www.concordma.gov)



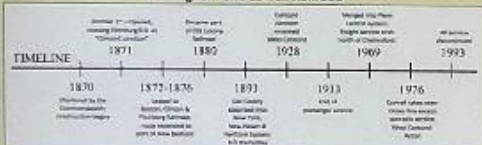
Scan this QR Code for a photo tour and interactive map highlighting points of interest along the way.

Concord's first railroad, the Fitchburg line from Boston, opened in 1844. This was chronicled with a mix of concern and admiration by Henry David Thoreau in "Walden" and other writings. Railroad construction reached a peak in the early 1870's with three new lines to Concord, including the Framingham and Lowell (F&L) that is the route of today's Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.

Opened in October 1871 after only a year of construction, the F&L provided a north-south route from the mills and factories of New Hampshire to the ports along the Massachusetts Coast with connections to New York and beyond.

The line was never very busy as a passenger carrier, with up to 5 trains per day at most; however, it was an active freight route - trains of up to 80 cars were seen even in its later years. It also provided a detour route when main lines further west via Worcester or Springfield were disabled by accidents or storms such as the 1954 hurricanes.

**Framingham and Lowell Railroad**



The route saw steady decline after the New Haven line was absorbed into the Penn Central line, and later the Conrail system. Only a segment from West Concord survived until the early 1990's and served several industries in Acton.



A lasting legacy was Concord Junction - now West Concord. Scattered communities coalesced around the railroad junction with its several factories, stores, worker housing, and its station serving both the F&L and Fitchburg lines. The village was renamed West Concord in 1928.



**Assabet River Bridge**



Over the ensuing years the line first became part of the Old Colony Railroad, the dominant railroad in southeastern New England, and later the New Haven system whose northernmost point was reached over the F&L's tracks.

Keep your eyes open - These are some of the railroad artifacts that you may see along the trail!



Welcome to the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail

- Stop at ALL stop signs
- Bicyclists and strollers should yield to pedestrians
- Keep to the right, pass on the left
- Use an audible signal when passing
- Look before passing
- Bicyclists and strollers should wear safety helmets
- Keep pets on a short leash, remove droppings
- When stopping, do not block the trail
- No littering - carry it, carry out
- Respect property adjacent to the trail

In emergency, dial 911

