



Town of Westford
MassWorks Grant Application:
Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Extension

MWIP-2011-Westford-00186
Submitted on September 16, 2011

Applicant Information

Name of Municipality: Town of Westford
Designee for the Project: Angus Jennings AICP, Director of Land Use Management
Address: 55 Main Street
Westford, MA 01886
Phone: (978) 692-5524
FAX: (978) 399-2732
Email: ajennings@westfordma.gov

Project Type

Please select one of the following project types that best describe your project

Housing development at density of at least 4 units to the acre
Transportation improvements to enhance safety in small, rural communities
Community revitalization and sustainable development ☒
Economic development and job creation and retention

Is the population of the host community 7,000 or below? Yes ☐ No ☐
Is the host community within the South Coast Rail Corridor region? Yes ☐ No ☐
Is the project located in a Gateway City? Yes ☐ No ☐

Public Infrastructure Project

Amount of funds requested: \$164,500.00
Name of proposed project: Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Extension
Project site address: Westford, Carlisle, Acton
Is the project site public owned? ☒ Yes ☐ No
Describe type of ownership (select all that apply).
x Public land
x Right of Way
Leasehold
x Easement
Other

If other, please explain:

Work to occur within: public layout of state-numbered by town-owned Route 225 (for safe pedestrian crossing); MassDOT rail ROW for trail work; and Town of Acton recreation (including parking) easement.

Is the project seeking other sources of public funds? ☒ Yes ☐ No
Has the project been subject of a local public hearing or meeting? ☒ Yes ☐ No
Does the project support transit-oriented developments (that is, developments located within one-half mile of a transit station; further, transit station is defined as a subway or rail station, or a bus stop serving as the convergence of two or more bus fixed routes that serve commuters)? ☒ Yes ☐ No
Does the project support the redevelopment of a previously developed site? ☒ Yes ☐ No
Does the project support a development containing a mix of residential and commercial uses, with a residential density of at least four units to the acre? Yes ☐ No ☐
Does the project support the development of new housing (or a mix of uses

including housing) with a residential density of at least four units to the acre? ☒ Yes ☐ No
 Is the project regionally significant and supported by two or more communities? ☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please attach letters of support from each community.

Letters of support attached, including from the Town of Acton; the Town of Carlisle; Senator Eileen Donoghue and Representative James Arciero; and the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail

Is the project consistent with a local Master Plan? ☒ Yes ☐ No
 Is the project consistent with a regional growth plan? ☒ Yes ☐ No

If yes, please identify the plan: NMCOG 2020 Vision (<http://www.nmcog.org/pdf/2020visionreport.pdf>)

Is the project consistent with MassDOT's Complete Streets design guidelines that call for appropriate accommodation of all transportation modes (See the MassDOT Highway Division Project Development and Design Guide, Chapter 5)? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Will the project be ready to proceed with construction in the upcoming construction season? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Does the project support future growth in and around the project area? ☒ Yes ☐ No
 If yes, please explain.

Redeveloping rail road into a shared use path will provide residents in region an alternative form of travel from car to bicycle for short trips as well as medium distanced. Providing safe and accessible parking is critical to the continued success and safe use of the trail.

If the project supports future growth in and around the project area, what is the commercial square footage available for future development that is supported by the current zoning? Zero sq. ft.

If the project supports future growth in and around the project area, what is the number of new housing units available for future development that is supported by the current zoning? Zero

Project Description

Please provide a detailed description of the public infrastructure project for which you are requesting grant assistance that includes a full explanation of the uses for which this grant is being requested. Please provide a concise explanation of how the infrastructure project will advance the host community's housing, economic development or community revitalization objectives, or if your community has a population of 7,000 or less, how the project will enhance public safety and transportation.

If the MassWorks Infrastructure Program funding is intended for a specific element of a larger public infrastructure project, please describe that element and its relationship to the overall project.

Please be advised that no more than 10% of the total grant request may be used for design/engineering, except in communities with a population of 7,000 or less, where the communities are eligible to apply for full design/engineering costs along with a construction grant.

The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail is a sustainable reuse project which provides a public cycling and pedestrian corridor across multiple Massachusetts towns and cities. Currently, the completed Phase 1 of this rail trail spans from the City of Lowell, through Chelmsford, and ends in the Town of Westford at the junction of Routes 225 and 27. There is no public parking at this terminus. The closest sanctioned parking is approximately two miles away in the Town of Chelmsford.

Safety concerns have arisen due to "informal" parking that occurs in nearby neighborhoods, and in particular near the intersection of these two state-number routes. The Town of Westford

has posted “no parking” restrictions in this location due to a local bylaw prohibiting parking in this location, even regular enforcement has not totally eliminated non-sanctioned parking, and safety concerns remain. Further, the need and demand for parking near the trail terminus is evidenced by such “informal” parking, and reinforced by trail counts showing a steadily increase in the number of trail users.

The MassDOT design process for Phases 2A and 2C is now underway, and will extend the trail more than 13 miles southerly through Westford, Carlisle, Acton and Concord, ending at the Sudbury town line. This section of construction is currently listed for funding in the Boston MPO Long Range Transportation Plan for the FY21-25 timeframe, and will include several locations for public parking. However, an adequate interim solution must be found to ensure public safety in the southern portion of this new and popular regional amenity. (Link to Bruce Freeman Rail Trail website: <http://www.brucefreemanrailtrail.org/>)

Over the past year Westford staff and officials have devoted considerable time toward possible solutions to this problem including feasibility testing of nearly twenty parcels for potential parking and conceptual planning for the very limited number sites with any potential whatsoever. Materials documenting this process including online video of a well-attended all-Boards meeting in August are viewable online at the Town of Westford website. (www.westfordma.gov); Follow link from homepage for Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.

From this process, both local and sub-regional consensus has emerged around a concept to accelerate access to a parcel adjacent to the rail ROW in Acton and intended for parking (in the BFRT 25% design plan) for which the Town of Acton holds a recreation easement allowing the construction of parking.

Building on prior collaboration among Westford, Carlisle and Acton on the 25% design plans, the proposal detailed in the MassWorks grant application has now secured votes of support from the Boards of Selectmen in all three communities. Iron Horse Preservation Society Inc. has committed to extend the BFRT 1,700 feet to connect to a feasible parking location immediately adjacent to the rail trail.

The project will also benefit from volunteer efforts to be coordinated by the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, and from contribution of in-kind services by the Westford Planning, Engineering, Conservation, Recreation, and Highway Departments among others.

This is a creative, efficient and collaborative idea that will result in ADA/AAB compliant design and construction that will incorporate MassDOT guidelines. GPI, the project engineer for the Phase 2A/2C design, has been involved with meetings and discussions to date and will continue to do so to ensure that this interim improvement will advance, and not undermine, future design and construction efforts. The grant also includes a funding request to ensure safe pedestrian crossing at the Routes 225/27 intersection.

This initiative enjoys support from all three towns in which work would take place and will result in near-term, benefits for the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and its users throughout the region.

Project Map

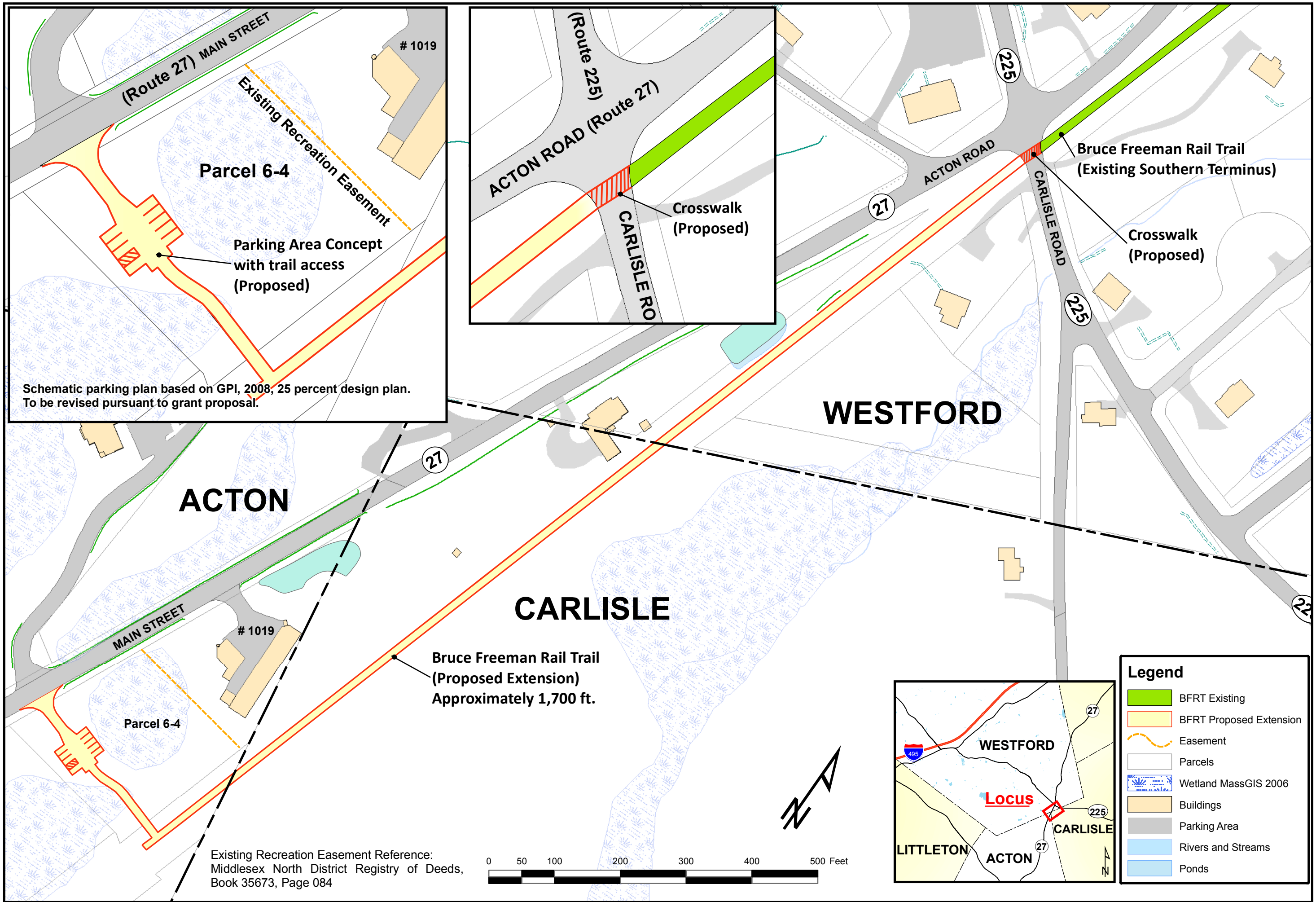
A map of the proposed improvements is attached.



Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Proposed Extension and Parking Area



September 14, 2011





IRON HORSE PRESERVATION SOCIETY, INC.

P.O. Box 2128
Reno, Nevada 89505

Phone (775)336-4496
Fax (775)337-0505

Town of Westford
Board of Selectmen
55 Main Street
Westford, MA 01886

Subject: Approx. 1700' of railroad track development for the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail

Iron Horse Preservation Society, Inc. has had the opportunity to visit the next proposed track development in Westford, MA adjoining the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT). After the inspection meeting with Westford and Carlisle representatives and staff, Friends of the BFRT, and Becky Williamson from GPI, I have determined that IHPS is willing to do the following work-

- Remove all of the railroad material (rails, angle bars, tie plates, spikes, railroad ties, etc.) including the developing debris. The corridor will be left free of all material.
- The trees that have fallen across the right-of-way will be cut up and removed from the corridor.
- The corridor will be graded level (allowing for proper drainage) and compacted.
- If recycled asphalt is made available to us or another can be supplied in a timely fashion, IHPS will spread and compact that material for a more finished surface. This can be accomplished upon a donation of scrap metal to cover our costs.
- Once work begins, this work can be performed within 10 days.
- All of these functions will be provided at no cost to Westford with the donation of the track materials.
- All permitting and erosion control to be completed by other parties.

IHPS is available to handle this project and more next year 2012 but, having an agreement in place sooner rather than later will make it more predictable when the work can be performed.

Thanks for your consideration for this project.

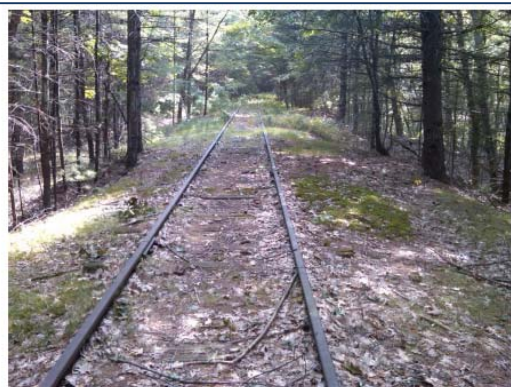
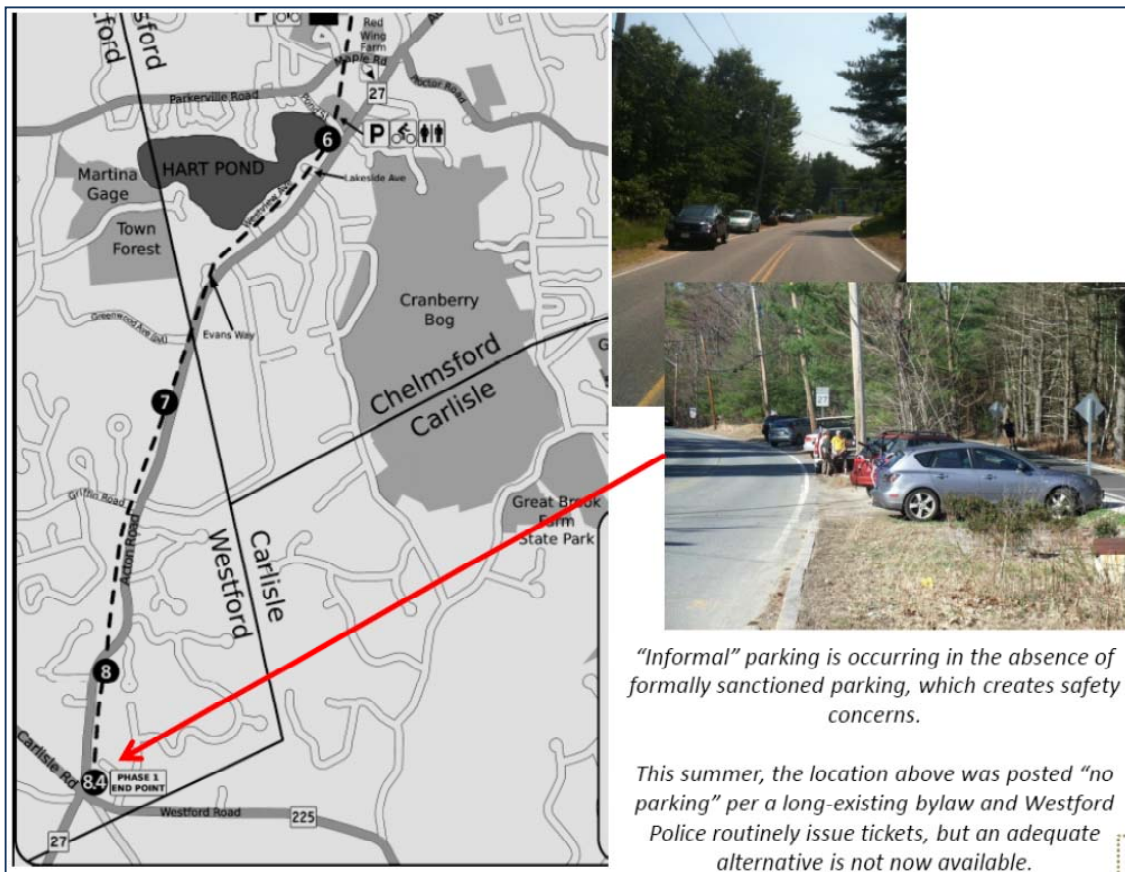
Iron Horse Preservation Society, Inc.

J.K. Hattrup

Joe Hattrup
COO

Please feel to contact me with any questions or in depth details concerning this matter or like matters on my cell (775) 742-2149, thanks again.

cc: Angus Jennings



*Top: Site walk to review project objectives, scope and feasibility.
Bottom: Friends of BFRT have volunteered to clear downed branches in a couple of sections of trail ROW.*

*Top: Residual value of rail and ties can be converted to ADA/AAB accessible trail to new terminus and parking.
Bottom: Ensuring safe pedestrian crossing of 225 is key goal.*

Budget and Sources

Action	Cost	Cost Estimate OR Previously Bid	Requesting MassWorks Infrastructure Program grant support for this use
Survey	\$0	Cost Estimate	No
Design/Engineering	\$9,000.00	Cost Estimate	No
Construction	\$120,000.00	Cost Estimate	Yes
Other: Recycled Asphalt Product (RAP)	\$10,000.00	Cost Estimate	Yes
Other: Erosion Controls	\$4,000.00	Cost Estimate	Yes
Other: Contingency @ 15%	\$21,450.00	Cost Estimate	Yes
Total:		\$164,450.00	

Please identify all sources of funding to support the proposed public infrastructure project, including the total requested MassWorks Infrastructure Program grant. Please specify whether each funding source is secured or currently pending approval.

Source	Amount	Secured OR Pending	Additional Details
Town of Westford	\$15,000.00	Secured	The Town of Westford Engineering Department has offered to provide survey, permitting and engineering support for the proposed project.
GPI pursuant to Phase 2A MassDOT contract	\$0	Secured	Estimate of value of contracted work toward survey of potential parking sites not available.
Private fundraising	\$0	Pending	Friends of Bruce Freeman Rail Trail have offered fundraising support as may be needed. Amount not known.
Community Preservation Act funds	\$0	Pending	If a funding gap is identified within the design and permitting stages CPA funds will be sought.
Total:		\$15,000.00	

Additional information regarding estimated budget and sources of estimates is enclosed.

Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Extension and Parking Westford, Carlisle and Acton, MA

Project Budget: MassWorks Request		as of 9/16/11
Intersection	Estimate	Source
Survey	\$ -	(1)
Permitting	\$ -	(2)
Design / Engineering	\$ 9,000	(3)
Construction	\$ 50,000	(4)
OptiCom	\$ 20,000	(4)
<i>Intersection sub-total</i>	\$ 79,000	
Trail	Estimate	Source
Survey	\$ -	(1)
Permitting	\$ -	(2)
Design / Engineering	\$ -	(5)
Construction	\$ -	(6)
Recycled Asphalt Product (RAP) @ 350 tons w transport	\$ 10,000	(7)
Erosion controls; ~875 lf @ \$2.50/lf.	\$ 4,000	(8)
<i>Trail sub-total</i>	\$ 14,000	
Parking Area	Estimate	Source
Survey (est. value at \$2,500; 1 day in field, 2 in office)	\$ -	(5)
Permitting (est. value @ \$6,000; wetland delineation, 3 separate NOIs and attend permitting mtgs)	\$ -	(5)
Design / Engineering (est. value @ \$5,000)	\$ -	(5)
Construction	\$ 50,000	(7)
<i>Parking Area sub-total</i>	\$ 50,000	
<i>Total</i>	\$ 143,000	
Contingency @ 15%	\$ 21,450	
TOTAL MASSWORKS FUNDING REQUEST	\$ 164,450	

Sources:

(1) Part of MassDOT Phase 2A design; GPI.

(2) Included in GPI cost estimates.

(3) GPI (adjusted for OptiCom design)

(4) GPI

(5) Town of Westford in-kind contribution of design, permitting, labor.

(6) Iron Horse Preservation Society, Inc. to complete for no financial cost.

Town will pursue MassDOT Rail ROW division authorization of removal of rail and ties.

(7) Westford Highway Superintendent and Engineering Department

(8) Westford Engineering Department. Silt fence and straw wattles to be installed by volunteers coordinated by Friends of the BFRT with instruction and oversight by Westford Conservation/Resource Planner.

Project Schedule and Milestones

Please provide a project schedule and anticipated project milestones for the public infrastructure project for which the community is seeking grant assistance. If necessary, please use the space provided below to provide additional details.

Milestone	Start Date	End Date	Additional Details
Survey	9/14/11	11/23/11	GPI will initiate survey work in the coming weeks within the initial stages of MassDOT Phase 2A design work. Becky Williamson at GPI confirmed that all survey work to be completed by Thanksgiving. Supplemental survey by Westford Engineering Department as may be needed.
Permitting	11/28/11	4/2/12	To include MassDOT access and signal permits; Conservation Commission Orders of Conditions from three municipalities; and Acton Site Plan Review for parking site. Some permitting to be concurrent, others sequential. Included in this timeline is the anticipated time required to secure rights from MassDOT Rail ROW division to perform work in the right-of-way; and securing permissions for removal of rail and ties.
Design/Engineering	10/31/11	12/30/11	Assumes grant award date of October 31, 2011. Upon receipt of grant funding, contract change-order to be executed with GPI, engineering firm for BFRT Phase 2A, 2C. Timeline includes engineering work to be completed by Town of Westford.
Bid/Contract	4/2/12	4/30/12	Iron Horse Preservation Society has submitted a letter of commitment to re-grade 1,700 feet to proposed parking location and surface with RAP to provide ADA/AAB accessible trail.
Start Construction	7/2/12		To be conservative, a start date was estimated at the beginning of FY13 in the event supplemental FY13 CPA funding is required. If grant funding is adequate to fund project, work would occur by end of FY12. Total duration of work estimated at ten days.
25% Construction	7/6/12		
50% Construction	7/10/12		
75% Construction	7/12/12		
100% Construction	7/16/12		
Punch List	7/16/12	7/20/12	

Readiness Checklist

Please provide a list of all permits and other actions required for this project, the current status of those permits, and the timeframe in which the permits will be obtained. Please specify all required local permits and the status of each. If necessary, please use the space provided below to provide additional details.

Required Permits	Filing/Request Date	Anticipated Date of Issuance	Additional Details
Order of Conditions	11/28/11	1/16/12	Westford, Acton, Carlisle Conservation Commission for Orders of Conditions.
MassDOT Access Permit	1/2/12	2/27/12	For road access and modifications to signals. Addition of pedestrian crossing and installation of OptiCom.
Other Permit: MassDOT Rails ROW Division	9/26/11	1/30/12	At September 14, 2011 MassDOT kick-off mtg for BFRT Phase 2A and 2C design, was recommended to provide up to four months for MassDOT Rail ROW division to turn around permissions and answer to policy question. Efforts to secure rights to work within layout and to remove rail and ties in order to secure rail trail construction to begin prior to notice of award of grant funds.
Local Permit: Site Plan Review	1/2/12	2/13/12	Town of Acton

Certification of Public Entity Authorization

If a vote has been taken, please submit a certified copy of the vote taken by the executive body authorizing acceptance of state funding for this project.

Based on review with Town Counsel and with MassWorks Program Administrators, determined that no local vote required. However, Board of Selectmen voted on September 13, 2011 to support submittal of grant application.



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
THE GENERAL COURT
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

September 14, 2011

MassWorks Infrastructure Program
Executive Office of Housing & Economic Development
One Ashburton Place, Room 2101
Boston, MA 02108

RE: Westford Grant Application- Bruce Freeman Rail Trail

Dear MassWorks Infrastructure Program:

This letter is in support of the MassWorks grant application for the Town of Westford with regards to the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.

The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail is a sustainable reuse project which provides a public cycling and pedestrian corridor across multiple Massachusetts cities and towns. Currently, the completed Phase 1 of this rail trail spans from the City of Lowell, through Chelmsford, and ends in the Town of Westford at the junction of Routes 225 and 27. There is no public parking at this terminus. The closest parking is over two miles away in the Town of Chelmsford.

The second phase of the rail trail, which is currently being designed, will extend the trail more than 13 additional miles southerly through the Route 225 intersection in Westford and will run through Carlisle, Acton, Concord, and extend to the Sudbury town line. This section of construction is currently listed for funding in the Boston MPO Long Range Transportation Plan (TIP) for the FY 2021-2025 timeframe, and will include several locations for public parking. However, an adequate interim solution must be found to ensure public safety in the southern portion of this new and popular regional amenity.

The staff and officials in Westford have spent a great deal of time for the past year trying to identify a parcel for potential parking, included in this effort was several well-attended public meetings. Consensus has emerged around a concept to accelerate access to a location in Acton intended for parking in the BFRT 25% design plan. The Town of Acton holds a recreation easement on this parcel which would allow for the construction of the parking.

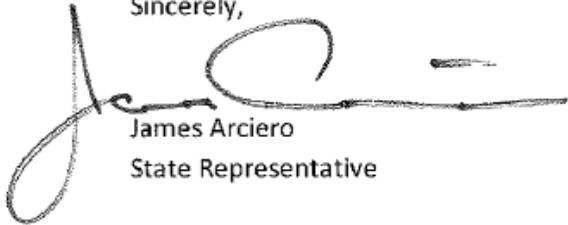
Building on prior collaboration among the towns of Westford, Carlisle and Acton on the 25% design plans, the proposal detailed in the MassWorks grant application has now secured votes of support from all three boards of selectmen. Iron Horse Preservation Society, Inc. has committed to extend the BFRT an additional 1,700 feet to connect to a feasible parking location immediately adjacent to the rail trail. This is creative, efficient and collaborative idea that will result in an ADA/AAB compliant design and construction that incorporates MassDOT guidelines. GPI, the project engineer for the Phase 2A/2C design, has been involved with meetings and discussions to date and would continue to do so to ensure that this interim improvement would advance, and not undermine, future design and construction efforts. The grant also includes a funding request to ensure safe pedestrian crossing at the Route 225/27 intersection.

This initiative enjoys support from all three towns in which work would take place and will result in near-term benefits for the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and its users throughout the region.

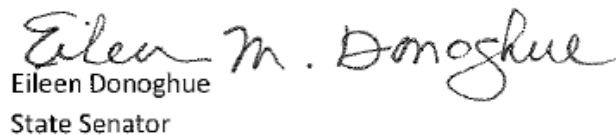
In conclusion, we fully support the efforts of the Town of Westford as they seek this MassWorks grant funding to support the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'James Arciero', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

James Arciero
State Representative

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Eileen M. Donoghue', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Eileen Donoghue
State Senator



TOWN OF ACTON

472 Main Street
Acton, Massachusetts, 01720
Telephone (978) 929-6611
Fax (978) 929-6350

Mike Gowing, Chairman
Acton Board of Selectmen

September 14, 2011

MassWorks Infrastructure Program
Executive Office of Housing & Economic Development
One Ashburton Place, Room 2101
Boston, MA 02108

RE: Letter of Support, Town of Acton, MA
MassWorks Infrastructure Program:

At it's regular meeting on September 12, 2011, the Acton Board of Selectmen voted to support the MassWorks grant application submitted by the Town of Westford related to the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail limited extension and parking project.

The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail is a sustainable reuse project which will create a new transportation corridor for the public to utilize across multiple Massachusetts towns and cities. Currently, the completed phase one of the rail trail spans from the City of Lowell and ends in the Town of Westford, but has no public parking at this terminus. The closest parking is nearly 2.5 miles away in the Town of Chelmsford. The second phase of the rail trail will continue through the towns of Westford, Carlisle, Acton, Concord, and Sudbury (over 13 miles). This section of construction is programmed for the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) for 2021, and has design for public parking. An adequate solution must be found in the interim to ensure public safety along this new and popular public amenity.

In conclusion, the Acton Board of Selectmen fully supports the efforts of the Town of Westford as they seek grant funding to support the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Extension. By addressing this infrastructure project, we will ensure that Acton residents have an alternative, safe form of transportation that provides a healthy way to enjoy and experience New England towns and landscapes with minimal harm to the environment.

Sincerely,


Pamela Harting-Barrett, Vice-Chairman
Acton Board of Selectmen



Town Administrator
Tel. (978) 371-6688

Town of Carlisle

Office of

BOARD OF SELECTMEN

66 WESTFORD STREET
CARLISLE, MASSACHUSETTS 01741
TEL. (978) 369-6136



Fax. (978) 318-0098

September 14, 2011

MassWorks Infrastructure Program
Executive Office of Housing & Economic Development
One Ashburton Place, Room 2101
Boston, MA 02108

RE: Letter of Support, Town of Carlisle, MA

MassWorks Infrastructure Program:

At our meeting on September 13, 2011, the Carlisle Board of Selectmen voted to submit a letter in support of the MassWorks grant application submitted by the Town of Westford related to the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail limited extension and parking project.

The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail is a sustainable reuse project which will create a new transportation corridor for the public to utilize across multiple Massachusetts towns and cities. Currently, the completed phase one of the rail trail spans from the City of Lowell and ends in the Town of Westford, but has no public parking at this terminus. The closest parking is nearly 2.5 miles away in the Town of Chelmsford. The second phase of the rail trail will continue through the towns of Westford, Carlisle, Acton, Concord, and Sudbury (over 13 miles). This section of construction is programmed for the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) for 2021, and has design for public parking. The proposed 1700 ft extension proposed by this grant application would extend the current trail to one of these public parking areas, providing an adequate solution to ensure public safety along this new and popular public amenity.

The Carlisle Board of Selectmen fully supports the efforts of the Town of Westford as they seek grant funding to support this short Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Extension. By addressing this infrastructure project, we will ensure that area residents have an alternative, safe form of transportation that provides a healthy way to enjoy and experience New England towns and landscapes with minimal harm to the environment.

Sincerely,

Douglas A. G. Stevenson, Chairman
Carlisle Board of Selectmen



Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail

<http://www.brucefreemanrailtrail.org/>

September 15, 2011

MassWorks Infrastructure Program
Executive Office of Housing & Economic Development
One Ashburton Place, Room 2101
Boston, MA 02108

The Town of Westford is submitting a Mass Works Infrastructure Program grant application to fund an extension of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail from its current *temporary* terminus at the junction of Routes 27 and 225 in Westford. The grant proposal includes adding 1700 feet to the trail, providing a safe crossing for trail users at Routes 27 and 225, and providing parking to access the southernmost 2.5 miles. These enhancements would make the BFRT more easily available to existing trail users and encourage new users to try the trail.

The Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (FBFRT) wanted to bring to your attention an aspect of the BFRT with which you may not be familiar: Since the August 29, 2009 ribbon cutting, thousands of people have enjoyed the trail, and several significant events have been hosted on it, as well as its being used by individuals for their betterment:

* **2010 and 2011 Annual Kids' Pan Mass Challenge Rides**

Two Westford young women, Jessica Ryan and Claire Enos, ages 14 and 12 in 2010, organized this annual fundraising event to honor one of their mothers, who died of breast cancer.

The 2010 ride was the first event EVER on the BFRT. It included 50 riders and 25 adult volunteers, and raised \$3,500 for the Dana Farber Cancer Institute through the Jimmy Fund.

This year's ride on June 26 was even more successful – and fun – and raised \$6,000. Of the 35 volunteers, 4 were teens doing community service hours.



- * **Live for Liv Ride** After the tragic murder in Westford of Olivia Marchand, her mother's sister Jill wanted to help Liv's mother, Jody, recover from her own injuries and loss of her daughter, and Jill thought of a ride for adults and families on the BFRT in Westford to honor Olivia near her birthday. As the proceeds recipient, The Domestic Violence Services Network became a partner, and out of their teamwork, and helped by many friends, family members and other volunteers from Westford and the region, a joyous event occurred on

July 24, 2011. Using Westford's 4-H grounds as their parking lot and headquarters (at no charge by 4-H), 261 adults and children rode either a 6-mile family ride, or a 23-mile longer loop – both using the BFRT. The “day-of” registrations surpassed their highest expectations (and supply of t-shirts and water bottles). 61 volunteers helped with a BBQ, face painting, massages, and other family-friendly activities. The event raised \$11,000 and truly did honor Liv's memory and brought joy to her mother and everyone who participated that day.



[all photos taken by Emily Teller]

- * **Spontaneous event:** Puma, a Westford business on Lyberty Way, used the BFRT early one Friday morning in early spring (6:30 am-7:30 am) for its employees to have a “team building” event. They parked at Agway in Chelmsford (as there is no parking near their building) and ran for an hour on the BFRT. They also just hosted a 5K road race earlier this month on roads around Westford.
- * **The Westford Eagle photographer “caught” some women walking on the BFRT:** the August 25, 2011 front page had a photo and lengthy story of 4 women using the BFRT this summer to train for the Boston Marathon Jimmy Fund Walk in September, again to honor family members and friends and to support cancer research.
- * **“Trail to Personal Growth”** was the title for an article in the Friends BFRT's spring newsletter which focused on Hilary Taylor of Westford. She registered for a sprint triathlon, and, since the BFRT is a safe, outdoor path that is only a quarter-mile from her home, training there was a logical plan. She had been riding an exercise bicycle indoors! Hilary's first goal was to ride to Chelmsford Center and back, and she built up her mileage gradually. She said, “I will never forget the day that I got there!” She was “totally blown away” by the triathlon experience and was planning on doing another race this summer. One person; one story. There are hundreds more whose physical and psychological (and perhaps family) health have been improved by their frequent use of the rail trail.

Documented BFRT trail usage: All of us are familiar with the Minuteman Bikeway that goes from Bedford's former train depot through Lexington and Arlington to Alewife in Cambridge. The Minuteman is a member of the Rails to Trails Conservancy Hall of Fame and one of the busiest trails in the country. Many people use the trail not only for exercise, but to commute from work and/or public transportation. With the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail slated to pass close by the West Concord commuter rail station it is envisioned that once completed, the BFRT will rival the Minuteman in popularity with commuters. As the statistics below show, today the BFRT is already a very popular recreational resource.

- * The BFRT is "running" close behind the Minuteman – and this is only in 2 years of existence! Westford's 2010 Annual Town Report had the following statistics, part of statewide counts of trail usage organized by the Boston Region Metropolitan Planning Organization. The usage numbers are collected for comparing other trails, prioritizing maintenance activities, and applying for grants.
- * Volunteer counters from Acton, Chelmsford, Littleton, Lowell, Sudbury, and Westford recorded BFRT usage on 2 Tuesdays and 2 Saturdays in June, July and September of 2010. This local work was coordinated by the Chelmsford Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC).
- * Over the 4 days, 42 volunteers covered 96 one-hour time periods. All of these numbers are for a 12-hour period from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Trail users who pass a count location twice are counted twice, so the counts do not represent the number of users on a given day but rather the number of trips as noted above.
- * There were more trips on the trail on a lovely autumn Saturday (around 1,500) than there were on a hot summer Saturday (around 1,100).
- * In September 2009, around 1,200 trips in the same location were recorded.
- * Most trips on Saturdays were by bicycle at 70%, walkers at 20%, runners/joggers at 6% with in-line skates, child carriers, or other forms of locomotion at 4%.
- * By comparison, the numbers for the Minuteman Commuter Bikeway in Lexington were 3,000 in September 2009 and 4,000 in September 2010. The numbers for the BFRT are more similar to historic numbers for the Nashua River Rail Trail.

The Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and the thousands of BFRT users very much appreciate your time and consideration of Westford grant application for extending the trail and making it more accessible.

Sincerely,

Westford Directors, Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, Inc.

Emily Teller
9 Texas Road
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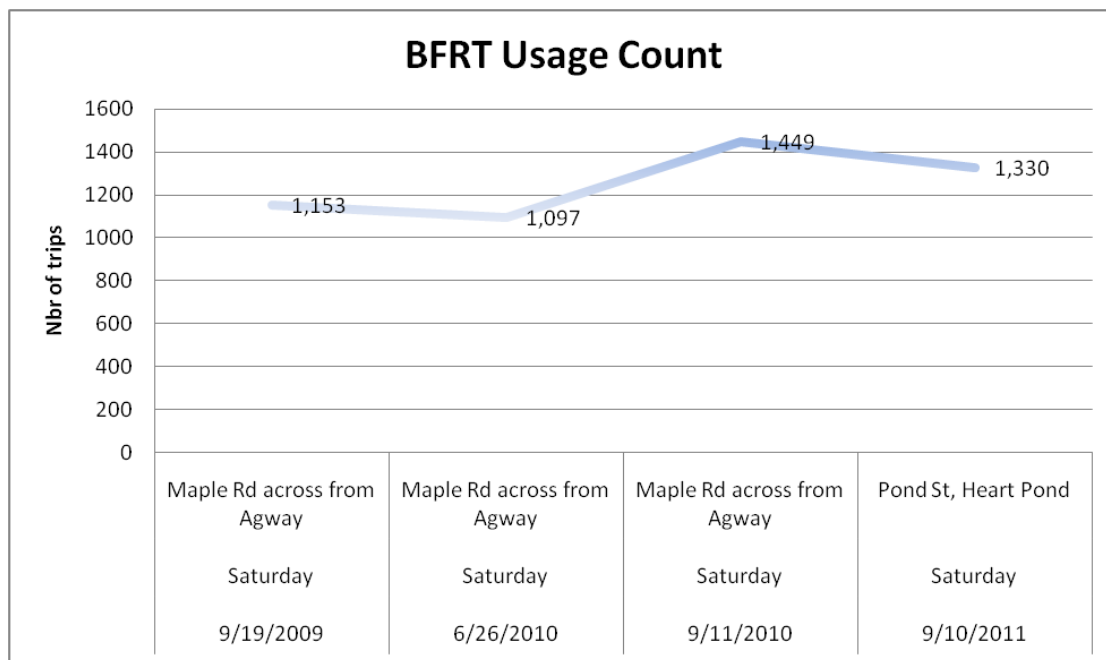


September 15, 2011

Mr. Angus Jennings, AICP
Director of Land Use Management
Town of Westford
Town Hall
55 Main Street
Westford, MA 01886

Dear Mr. Jennings:

In August of 2009 the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail opened, and since then has seen significant usage. The Chelmsford Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee with assistance from the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail have conducted yearly trail counts since the inauguration of the trail.



Usage counts for the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail compare favorably to more established trails in the region. A trail count organized by the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization on September 8, 2007 tallied 1,122 trail users for the Nashua River Rail Trail and 2,450 trail users for the Minuteman Commuter Bikeway at the Lexington depot.

Sincerely,

Chris Barrett
Westford Board Member
Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail