



# Town of Sudbury

Planning and Community Development Department

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<https://sudbury.ma.us/pcd>

TO: Select Board  
FROM: Beth Suedmeyer, Environmental Planner, Planning and Community Development  
RE: BFRT Design Project Update  
DATE: October 15, 2021

I am pleased to provide this summary of project status in response to the request for an update on the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (BFRT) Design Project (BFRT, Phase 2D, MassDOT ID 608164).

## Design Schedule

Following the comment resolution process for the 75% Design submission to MassDOT, we are at the 100% Design stage and finalizing environmental permit applications. The Project remains on schedule for a June 25, 2022 Advertisement. The project design must be "shovel ready" by October 2022 to take advantage of the state and federal funds for construction. The project is on track to achieve this milestone. A revised project schedule is available online and MassDOT has not expressed any concerns with the schedule since its submission in September.

## Schedule and Progress Updates:

- 100% Submission scheduled for Mid-January 2022
- Environmental Permits
  - Chapter 91 review by MassDEP is complete. MassDEP determined the project was jurisdictional, but exempt from permitting as it qualifies as a minor modification.
  - Draft permits have been reviewed by MassDOT and the Sudbury Conservation Coordinator. F&O is preparing final versions. All Applications will be submitted by MassDOT. Our estimates for timing are as follows:
    - MEPA ENF – Submitting to DOT end of October 2021, DOT to file in November.
    - NOI – Revised Final Draft to DOT early November, DOT to file end of November.
    - Army Corps Pre-Construction Notification (PCN) – No Corps mitigation is required, as impact thresholds for mitigation are not exceeded. Revised Final Draft of PCN to DOT in November, DOT to file end of November.
- Right-of-Way (ROW)
  - Preliminary lease agreement comments from Town Counsel have been sent to the Attorney at the MassDOT Rail Division.
  - MBTA Agreement Application for temporary construction access of the MBTA corridor is under final review by MBTA.
  - Title research for temporary easements and private driveway crossings is underway.
  - Next steps – Preliminary ROW Plan Approval
    - Appraisals for temporary easements
    - Negotiations with property owners
    - Final Lease Agreement(s) with Rail Division
    - Town Meeting Approval – timing to be determined

### **Ongoing Design Discussions with MassDOT**

There are still no major issues or requests for changes from MassDOT that would significantly impact the overall success or schedule of the project. We are continuing close coordination with MassDOT and providing additional information on a variety of matters.

1. We are continuing to provide requested information to MassDOT regarding the Town's requests for the bathroom (proposed at Broadacres Farm), pavilion (proposed at Broadacres Farm), hydration stations (proposed at Hudson Road, Broadacres Farm, and Davis Field), parking at Broadacres Farm, connector paths at Davis and Parkinsons Fields, kiosks, interpretive signs, and granite posts which Sudbury proposes for wayfinding and interpretations. We are documenting the consistency of these proposed trail accessories on other MassDOT trail projects. Some of these items are needed to maintain consistency for trail users coming from Concord, where the MassDOT project included them. The Boston MPO allocated construction budget is sufficient to cover these items (and the construction estimate still comes in under budget with the inclusion of them).

We are optimistic many of the items mentioned above will be included in the MassDOT project and state and federal construction budget, as would be consistent with other shared use paths. If some of the items are not paid for as part of this project, the MassDOT project could potentially still prepare for them with grading, concrete pad installation, electrical conduit installation, water line installation, etc., as these costs to prepare the site could potentially be covered. The Town would also be able to pay for items if MassDOT does not cover them and they would be constructed as part of the construction project (referred to as non-participating items). The CPA Application update below speaks to this possibility. The proposal for an allocation of Town funding to cover items for which MassDOT may not pay allows for the greatest flexibility in meeting project needs. The Town will be able to consider all options as more information is available.

2. Rapid Flashing Beacons and trail user stop signs are proposed at all roadway and private driveway intersections, except for Hudson Road which will have a pedestrian signal as part of the traffic signal being added and North Road where a HAWK (High-intensity Activated crossWalk) overhead signal is proposed. These were all included in the 75% plan submission. MassDOT has requested we provide further justification for the Rapid Flashing Beacons at all intersections. Fuss & O'Neill will review the recommendations and prepare a justification memorandum to address this.
3. Following the comments on the landscaping proposed in the 75% plans, Town staff, the MassDOT Landscape Architect, and a F&O Landscape Architect held a coordination meeting on the corridor on October 13, 2021. The meeting was productive and resolved many questions raised during the design review process. Stockade fencing will only be allowed where a safety need is demonstrated. Many plantings will still be proposed, but emphasis is placed on selecting the right native plant for each location and on ease of maintenance. Once revised landscape proposals are ready, the Town will coordinate with and update the project abutters. The landscaping and fencing changes will be consistently applied and identify the limitations MassDOT has imposed.

### **Task Force Meetings**

The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Advisory Task Force held a productive meeting on October 14, 2021 and has scheduled their next meeting for November 4, 2021. Information on this group is available at <https://sudbury.ma.us/bftr/>.

### **Community Preservation Act Funding Requests**

The Town through the Town Manager's Office has requested two CPA Funding Applications for continuing the BFRT Project Advancement. The first is for funds which may be used for elements of the final design, construction details that may not be covered by MassDOT (potentially rest area structures, signs, and amenities like art installations), graphic design of the interpretive signs, design for recreational facilities to tie into the BFRT area, and construction oversight by the Town's consultant. The placeholder amount indicated at this stage is \$500,000 until we have resolved the question of what items in BFRT construction will be paid for by MassDOT.

Part of this request is a response to MassDOT indicating, during the 75% Design review process, they may not fund construction of some of the trail accessories proposed for the project. With this question outstanding and a desire to create the full trail accessories currently proposed, we are requesting CPA funds to cover some project construction costs which may potentially not be covered by MassDOT.

The second request is for funding to advance towards the design and construction of the BFRT extension south of the intersection with the Mass Central Rail Trail along the former-CSX corridor (known as Sudbury BFRT Phase 2 and BFRT Section 3A). The Town proposes to build on the success of the corridor acquisition, collect necessary corridor data, consider alternatives, and initiate trail design concepts for the extension of the BFRT. The request is for a \$125,000 project which includes topographic survey, wetlands delineation, alternatives analysis, and concept development for the expansion of the rail trail to the newly acquired corridor. This will be an important first step in the design of the next phase of the BFRT. The Town will also seek additional funds through grants to support this work.

As always, more information on the project and the 75% design plans may be found at the BFRT project webpage. <https://sudbury.ma.us/pcd/?p=354>