

Cochituate Rail Trail Natick Update

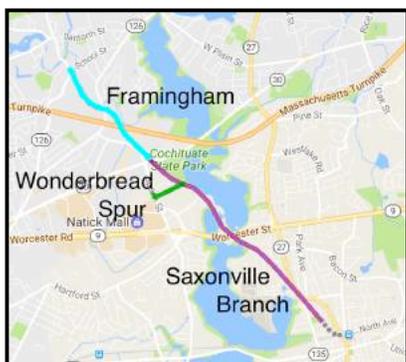
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A community newsletter from the Natick Cochituate Rail Trail Advisory Committee about the upcoming Cochituate Rail Trail. Visit our website at natickma.gov/crt

Cochituate Rail Trail: the home stretch!

The CRT will be a 4-mile multi-use paved path/park from Natick Center to Saxonville in Framingham, with the Wonderbread Spur connecting to the Natick Mall and beyond. The Framingham section is open; Natick section construction starts in late 2018, although it is open now as an unimproved, interim-use trail.

The Town now owns the former CSX right-of-way, following 2016 votes by Natick Town Meeting and the Board of Selectmen. Design will continue until early 2018, with federal- and state-funded construction anticipated to start in late 2018.



The CRT is for runners, walkers, bikers, strollers, and people of all ages and abilities. By 2020, the CRT will be paved to Willow Street, and connect to North Main Street and Natick Center.

A future connection to the Natick Center MBTA station will await a new, fully accessible station, a project that is now in early design.

Future off-road connections from Saxonville may require Framingham to buy CSX land, develop the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail and connect it to the CRT, part of a growing regional trail system. ■■■

Designing the CRT

The CRT design process is moving ahead. In November 2017, Natick and BETA (the Town's design firm) will submit the "75% design" plan to MassDOT. Once approved, a final design will be submitted in the Spring, with construction documents to follow.

The design includes a new bridge over Route 30, and a replacement bridge across Route 9, to allow

for safe pedestrian/bicycle access under both bridges. Route 30 from Speen Street to the TJX entrance is also being upgraded for safer travel.

The final design will include a 12-foot wide paved path, scenic lookouts, safe grade crossings, and connections to destinations such as Lake Cochituate State Park, the Natick Mall, Navy Yard Field, the Soldier Systems Center, and many other points



New Route 9 bridge near Springvale Water Plant

Learn more at natickma.gov/crt. ■■■

Access to Recreation

The Town of Natick has begun a redesign of Navy Yard Field, alongside the CRT, which will soon be considered by Town Meeting. The Conservation Commission owns a nearby parking lot on Mechanic Street, which will eventually serve park and CRT visitors with a safely designed crossing.

Natick and BETA are also working with the state Department of Conservation and Recreation to help encourage and manage access to Lake Cochituate State Park and the trailside lakefront. ■■■



Thanks to Natick DPW for new CRT signage

The CRT is now open!

The Town has approved interim use of the CRT before construction, with conditions. The DPW has cleared brush and installed signs, while volunteers will be helping to keep it in passable condition. The Route 9 bridge will soon be open, thanks to the efforts of Natick DPW, approval of the Board of Selectmen, and the help of the New England Regional Council of Carpenters. Please respect trail neighbors, and only get onto the CRT safely from public property. Under interim use, cycling will not be easy on the CRT because of the rough surface.

For safety reasons, the CRT is not accessible to the public between the Natick Center MBTA Station and Willow Street. Do not cross train tracks! ■■■



Cochituate Rail Trail Interim Use Regulations

- Open Dawn To Dusk
- No Motorized Vehicles
- Leash Pets
- Stay On Trail Area
- Do Not Disturb Soil
- Respect Private Property

Per Order
Natick Board of Selectmen
natickma.gov/crt

Frequently Asked Questions

Will the trail be open to motorized vehicles?

- Only for public safety. (Electric wheelchairs and electric bicycles don't count as motor vehicles.)

Will the CRT be used for public transit?

- The CRT is for non-motorized and recreational use. In a few years, the CRT will connect to a new Natick Center MBTA commuter rail station.

Will the trail be illuminated?

- The design does not include lighting.

Where will people park?

- Public parking is planned at Mechanic Street in Natick Center; other locations will be considered.

Can I connect to/fence off the CRT from my land?

- That is each abutter's choice. In general, the design only includes fences for public safety reasons, and it is up to abutters to decide if and when they want to connect to the CRT.

Will there be police patrols?

- The Natick Police will patrol the CRT, and asks users and neighbors to report any concerns.

Who will maintain the CRT?

- Volunteers such as the Friends of Natick Trails are expected to help maintain the CRT and fundraise, while the Natick DPW will be responsible for performing major repairs.

Ask crt@natickma.org your questions! ■■■

Meet the Friends of Natick Trails

A new, non-profit Friends group supports the CRT and other area trails. The Friends will help with volunteer efforts, fundraising and support for other trail projects. Learn more and sign up at FriendsofNatickTrails.org to get involved!

Strong Community and State Support

The Advisory Committee thanks the Selectmen, Town Meeting and many committees, including the Planning Board, Conservation Commission, Finance Committee, Open Space, Recreation and Parks, and Board of Health, as well as Community Development, Administration, and Public Works.

Our state legislative delegation and staff have been steadfast supporters. Thanks to the individuals and businesses that have helped bring this project close to fruition. We also acknowledge Framingham's leaders and its CRT committee, MassDOT and the District 3 staff, and the Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization for their assistance. ■■■

Like the CRT on Facebook

Visit [Facebook.com/crtrail](https://www.facebook.com/crtrail) to stay up to date. ■■■

Contact the CRT Advisory Committee

The CRT Advisory Committee, appointed by the Board of Selectmen, holds public meetings monthly or as work requires. You are welcome to participate as this project comes down the home stretch! Visit natickma.gov/crt for more information, or email crt@natickma.org. ■■■