

**MASSDOT - HIGHWAY DIVISION**  
Project Initiation Form

Proponent: Town of Groveland Title: Groveland Community Trail

Municipality/Organization: Town of Groveland

PIF completed by: Fay, Spofford & Thorndike (FST) Title: John Hendrickson, P.E., Vice President

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Date: June 9, 2015

**Part I – General Information**

Project Location: Former railroad corridor between King Street and Main Street

**Project Need:** Briefly restate the primary project need or goal as developed in the Project Need Form (e.g. rehabilitate a roadway, improve safety at an intersection, reduce corridor congestion, improve pedestrian facilities, or provide bike accommodation).

To provide safe accommodations to improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities to connect multiple community areas through the construction of a shared use trail facility.

**Regional Benefit:** Describe any regional benefits that would be realized should the Project Need be met.

This project would allow for accessible public access for bicycle and pedestrian use through Groveland via a former railroad corridor, which it is currently lacking. Construction of this trail will offer future opportunities to connect to a larger regional network (i.e. the Border to Boston Trail via Georgetown, the Bradford Rail Trail in Haverhill, and the TBD Merrimack River Trail.

**Part II – Project Costs and Responsibilities**

**Estimated Costs:** Provide available cost estimates or estimated cost ranges in current-year dollars and attach any cost estimate work sheets or summaries.

Estimated Construction Costs:		Estimated Other Costs:	
Construction Items:	<u>\$1,650,000</u>	Planning/Design:	<u>\$300,000</u>
Contingencies (10%):	<u>\$165,000</u>	Right-of-way:	<u>\$0</u>
Other Constr. Costs (10%):	<u>\$165,000</u>	Environmental Mitigation:	<u>\$0</u>
<b>Total Construction Cost:</b>	<b><u>\$1,980,000</u></b>	<b>Total Other Costs:</b>	<b><u>\$300,000</u></b>

**Anticipated Funding Program:**

STP	<u>          </u>	CMAQ	<u>X</u>	HSIP	<u>          </u>
TAP	<u>X</u>	NHPP	<u>          </u>	HPP	<u>          </u>
NFA	<u>          </u>	Other	<u>          </u>	SRTS	<u>          </u>

Indicate all potential sources of funding that may apply to the project

Project Responsibilities:	MassDOT	Community	Other (specify)
Project Management	X		
Design		X	
Permitting		X	
Right of Way		X	

## Part III: Project Description

### A. Proposed Improvements to Facility

**1. Scope of Work:** Describe the proposed improvements including limits of work, length of the project, major improvements, proposed cross-section, improvements to secondary assets, and related work. The description of proposed improvements to secondary assets should include improvements to curbing, sidewalks, traffic signals, signs, lighting, landscaping, drainage, walls, etc. The scope of work for a multi-use path should also identify at-grade crossing treatments.

The proposed project will consist of the construction of a shared use trail along the former railroad corridor (abandoned Georgetown Branch) from the corridor's intersection with King Street at the Georgetown line northwest to the intersection of Main Street. The length of the project is approximately 2-miles and also intersects Ashcroft Terrace, School Street and Center Street. It is anticipated that the trail will consist of a 10-foot wide paved surface with 2- to 3-foot soft surface shoulders. Construction of a trailhead and small parking area at both the King Street and Main Street intersections are being explored. The crossing at Ashcroft Terrace will consist of a typical trail crossing including signage and pavement markings for both vehicles and trail users. The School Street intersection will include the proposal of a pedestrian signal (rectangular rapid flashing beacon) to increase safety at this crossing. In addition, the trail connection between the School Street and Center Street intersections, will be on road and along existing sidewalks and upgrades to these facilities to meet ADA/AAB compliance concerns would also be proposed. Drainage would be maintained along the corridor and swales proposed as necessary to guide stormwater runoff to outfalls.

**2. Proposed pavement rehabilitation:** Describe the proposed rehabilitation methods that are being considered. Keep in mind that the final pavement improvements will be identified through the development of a pavement design submitted as part of the project design process.

The proposed shared use facility would be constructed as a paved surface along the former railroad corridor which is currently gravel. Roadway work would consist of minimal sawcutting and gutter reconstruction where new curbing would be proposed as a means of upgrading existing sidewalks.

**3. Pedestrian Accommodations:** Describe how the improvements are addressing pedestrian accommodation according to ADA/AAB requirements, through improving existing facilities, improving safety and traffic calming, as well as proposing new or expanded facilities.

The proposed shared use trail will address pedestrian and bicycle accommodations by creating an off road ADA/AAB compliant paved surface trail which would facilitate travel by healthy modes of transportation through Groveland. Existing sidewalks will be upgraded at the School Street/Center Street crossing and intersections will be upgraded with additional signage and pavement markings denoting the trail/roadway crossing.

**4. Bicycle Accommodations:** Describe how the improvements are addressing bicycle accommodation through improving existing facilities, as well as proposing new or expanded facilities.

The proposed shared use trail will address pedestrian and bicycle accommodations by creating an off road ADA/AAB compliant paved surface trail which would facilitate travel by healthy modes of transportation through Groveland. Existing sidewalks will be upgraded at the School Street/Center Street crossing and intersections will be upgraded with additional signage and pavement markings denoting the trail/roadway crossing.

**5. Design Exceptions:** Identify whether any exceptions to MassDOT design criteria are anticipated.

N/A

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**6. Alternatives Analysis:** Identify any alternatives that have been considered. Attach any pertinent information related to that analysis.

N/A

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**7. Retention of Existing Infrastructure:** Identify efforts to retain/preserve existing Infrastructure, e.g. reuse of curbing, sidewalk, minimized/targeted vertical or horizontal geometric changes, etc. ● GreenDOT

The proposed shared use facility would be constructed as a new paved surface along the former railroad corridor which is currently gravel. Retaining existing infrastructure would be proposed to the maximum extent possible. Roadway work would consist of minimal sawcutting and gutter reconstruction where new curbing would be proposed as a means of upgrading existing sidewalks to meet compliance. Additional roadway work would consist of proposed signs and pavement markings to clearly denote the active route for users.

**8. Potential Impacts to Utilities:** Identify any anticipated impacts or complications the proposed improvements will have on utilities.

Underground utilities located at crossings would be minimally impacted at most (i.e. structure adjustments) as the roadway work would be minimal including sawcutting shoulders and gutter reconstruction where new curbing and sidewalk reconstruction is proposed. The utility poles and overhead wires that exist along the corridor would not be affected as part of the facility construction. Terms of the lease would include National Grid retaining all access to their facility lines for maintenance purposes.

## **B. Mobility Improvements**

1. Describe how the proposed improvements will impact mobility. Include any traffic analysis, including LOS (Level of Service) data, if available. ● GreenDOT

N/A

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2. Identify whether the proposed improvements will impact connectivity or access along the corridor or to facilities. If this is a new connections, include existing and proposed travel times. ● GreenDOT

Constructing a shared use facility will provide connections to multiple neighborhoods and town assets both along the corridor and along Main Street (i.e. Border to Boston Trail via Georgetown, Bagnall School, Future Center Street Greenway, Shanahan Field, Riverside Plaza in Haverhill, Groveland Center, Perry Park School, Pines Recreation area, Town Hall, Library, etc.). The Town is evaluating upgrading existing sidewalks and creating an on-road route for pedestrians and bicyclists along Main Street in order to provide a greater benefit to users.

3. Identify how the project will impact mobility for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users. ● GreenDOT

Accessible contiguous pedestrian and bicycle accommodations are currently lacking in Groveland. The construction of the shared use trail could provide for a future connection regional trail networks (i.e. Border to Boston Trail via Georgetown, Center Street Greenway, Bradford Rail Trail, etc.). Making these regional connections would be difficult without the construction of this shared use facility through Groveland.

## **C. Safety and Security Improvements**

1. Describe any improvements that are expected to reduce the crash potential. Provide any highway safety analysis that has been completed.

N/A

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2. Describe any improvements that are expected to improve safety for other multi-modal users such as pedestrians, bicyclists, persons with disabilities, transit riders, trucks, school children, etc. ● GreenDOT

There are a number of schools, recreation areas and Town buildings in close proximity to this trail that providing off road access to would be a safe mode of transportation for pedestrians and cyclists. The trail would be constructed to meet ADA/AAB compliance and at grade crossings will include signage and pavement markings to denote a crossing, except for the School Street crossing which would additionally have a pedestrian signal at the crossing.

3. If the project is on a designated evacuation route or NHS corridor, how will the project impact the route?

N/A

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#### **D. Economic Development - Problem, Need, or Opportunity**

1. Describe any improvements that improve a business district, business related elements or support proposed economic development opportunities.

The proposed project provides an opportunity to improve access and connections to multiple neighborhoods and town assets while providing healthy modes of transportation to these places.

2. Identify improved access to services, industry clusters or job creation in the project area. Include the number of jobs to be created, if available. ● GreenDOT

The proposed project provides an opportunity to improve access and connections to multiple neighborhoods and town assets while providing healthy modes of transportation to these places.

3. Identify how the improvements reflect Smart Growth Development and Sustainable Development Principles. ● GreenDOT

The proposed project is a shared use trail which would facilitate travel by healthy transportation modes (i.e. walking and bicycling), improve air quality, preserve the environment, and enhance the quality of life, which reflects smart growth development and sustainable development principles.

#### **E. Environmental Impacts and Improvements**

Describe any improvements or impacts to the resources. Consider any storm water improvements and changes in impervious area. Identify any anticipated permitting that could be problematic.

1. Wetland(s):

Wetlands are intermittent along the corridor and any construction in these areas is not anticipated to result in permanent impacts to these systems. Any temporary or permanent impacts to these systems determined throughout the design process would be compensated appropriately and approved by the local Conservation Commission.

2. Water Supply Watershed(s):

N/A

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3. Storm Water Improvements/Impaired Waterbodies:

N/A

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4. Priority Habitat(s):

An information request was sent to NHESP in 2014 and a response letter from them indicated the following rare species within the vicinity of the site: two species of endangered Sturgeon, Bald Eagle (threatened), Blanding's Turtle (threatened) & Woods Turtle (special concern). It is not anticipated that there would be any negative impacts to these species as part of the proposed project, though throughout the design process any potential direct impacts should be determined and mitigation opportunities would be considered if necessary.

5. Historic/Cultural/Scenic Resource(s):

Upon a preliminary screening of the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System, there doesn't appear to be any eligible properties within the vicinity of the project listed as a historic, cultural or scenic resource. A letter was mailed to the Groveland Historic Commission on March 5, 2015 to solicit any comments or concerns they may have regarding the future project.

6. Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases: Will the improvements impact greenhouse gases through construction methods, operational modifications, and changes in connectivity, access, or travel behavior.

● GreenDOT

The proposed project is a shared use trail which would facilitate travel by healthy transportation modes (i.e. walking and bicycling), improve air quality, preserve the environment, and enhance the quality of life, which reflects the reduction of greenhouse gases.

7. Hazardous Materials: Is it anticipated that the proposed work will involve handling hazardous materials within the project limits or on any adjacent properties?

The prior use of the corridor for railroad operations have likely resulted in shallow soils that are expected to have low concentrations of anthropogenic contaminants. Items for handling and disposal of hazardous materials would be included as part of the contract documents issued for construction should the contractor uncover any unforeseen materials.

## **F. Community Effects**

1. Identify how much right of way is anticipated to complete the project, including fee takings, permanent and temporary easements.

It is anticipated that the proposed shared use trail could be constructed within the former railroad corridor, currently owned by National Grid, and Groveland Town land. The Town of Groveland would enter a 99-year lease agreement with National Grid to utilize this corridor as a shared use trail facility. In addition, depending on the design of the potential parking areas or trail head along the corridor at the at grade crossings, temporary easements may be required during construction for grading purposes.

2. Describe how the project will improve/impact the neighborhood with respect to access to services, jobs, and public transit.

The proposed project provides an opportunity to improve access and connections to multiple neighborhoods and town assets while providing healthy modes of transportation to these places.

3. Describe any effect the improvements will have on the existing housing stock or potential for new housing development.

The proposed project provides an opportunity to improve access and connections to multiple neighborhoods and town assets while providing healthy modes of transportation to these places.

4. Identify any improvements that involve community planning and equitable sharing of benefits/burden or are particularly targeted within an Environmental Justice area.

N/A The abutting land use to the proposed facility is primarily residential land.

## **G. Transportation Enhancements**

1. Identify any transportation enhancements, such as pedestrians, bicyclists and transit accommodations, education; landscaping; scenic/historic acquisition, beautification, preservation, programs, or facilities; outdoor advertising management; archeological planning and research; environmental mitigation or wildlife mortality reduction efforts.

The proposed project is a shared use trail which would facilitate travel by healthy transportation modes (i.e. walking and bicycling). Landscaping and other informational kiosks could be added amenities to the project as a means of beautification and education along the corridor.

2. Are the proposed enhancement elements supported by the MPO?

The Georgetown Branch Shared-Use Feasibility Study was prepared by the MVPC in February 2012 and describes the potential for a regional trail system in this area.

## **H. Planning and Public Outreach and Support**

1. Describe any additional Public Outreach that has occurred since the PNF was submitted. Include any public informational meetings, local mailings, workshops, planning documents, etc., where the proposed improvements were specifically presented to abutters, businesses and/or the general public. Include information on meeting dates, attendance, concerns, and support.

The Public Outreach that has occurred so far on the proposed facility includes the following:

April 2014 – Project presented at Spring Town Meeting to obtain vote for appropriated preliminary design funds

February 23, 2015 – Public Information Meeting open to public (mailing to direct abutters)

February 25, 2015 – Public Information Meeting for Whitestone Village Community (mailing to residents)

March 5, 2015 – Coordination letters sent to Town Departments soliciting comments and concerns (i.e. Board of Selectmen, Conservation Commission, Finance Department, Police and Fire Departments, Highway Department, Historic Commission, Municipal Electric Department, Planning Board and Water & Sewer Department

March 23, 2015 – Televised Board of Selectmen Meeting presenting the project

April 13, 2015 – Public Information Meeting open to public (mailing to notify)

April 2015 – Project presented at Spring Town Meeting to obtain vote for appropriated final design funds

May 11, 2015 – Site with abutters who had additional project questions in specific locations

2. Were there any special needs that needed to be accommodated to fully engage the public with respect to public outreach?

The Whitestone Village Community abuts a substantial portion of the corridor, so it was thought beneficial to hold a public information meeting specifically for their community to attend as this group had similar questions and concerns regarding the project.

#### **I. Maintenance**

1. Identify any improvements that involve particular long-term or ongoing maintenance implications.

The proposed shared use facility would be maintained by the Town of Groveland following construction. Groveland's Highway Department Commissioner attended one of the public forums and expressed his opinion that maintenance of this facility would be acceptable, requiring minimal upkeep, mostly consisting of mowing in the spring/summer/fall months.

2. Identify any improvements that will improve the environmental sustainability of the facility related to operation and maintenance.

The facility would be characterized as recreational space for the Town and the Highway Department would handle operation and maintenance of the trail in a similar process to other recreational spaces.

**Thank you for completing this form. Please submit the PIF to the Regional MPO/RPA and the MassDOT Highway Division District office.**