

A community newsletter about the pending Cochituate Rail Trail. See natickma.gov/crt

Cochituate Rail Trail: Opening in 2021!

The Natick CRT is now under construction, and is scheduled to open in the first half of 2021. The path will extend 4 miles from Framingham's Saxonville neighborhood to Natick Center. A final connection is planned to the Natick Center MBTA Station once the redesigned, fully accessible station is completed, scheduled for 2022.

The Framingham section is open, with temporary closures by Route 30. The Natick section is closed to the public during construction: see NatickMA.gov/CRT for updates. ■■■

New Bridges Across Routes 9 and 30

The new Route 9 bridge was craned into position on October 11-12. The Route 30 bridge is expected to be installed in November, date to be announced.



New CRT Route 9 Bridge, designed by BETA and installed by MAS Building and Bridge

Both bridges will support emergency vehicles, such as ambulances. They feature high roadway clearance, while the bridge supports are set back from the road for pedestrian access. ■■■

Natick Center Connection

The Town is planning a ramp connection from the CRT to Main Street. The ramp will complement a trail extension to the outbound platform of the new [Natick Center Station](#) to be built by the MBTA when the station is finished, expected in 2022. The ramp has been approved by MassDOT for future federal/state construction funding eligibility.



Conceptual design of the ramp to Main Street at the Natick Center MBTA Station

Most of the design funding for the Main Street ramp connection has been approved through a [MassTrails](#) grant. The Town has applied for additional funding for the balance of design fees, as part of a grant proposal to encourage accessibility and wider use of the Town's growing trail network. ■■■

Lake Cochituate Path: Connecting the CRT to West Natick neighborhoods

Another important connection to the CRT is in the early design phase.

Lake Cochituate Path is a MassDOT project that would run along the eastbound side of Route 9, between the new CRT bridge and Hartford Street, providing safe walking and biking access to neighborhoods along Speen and Hartford Streets in West Natick.



Proposed Alignment for Lake Cochituate Path

A design process, including virtual meetings with neighbors and the public, is planned to start in 2020. MassDOT has approved this project to be eligible for future federal/state construction funding. ■■■

Maintaining the CRT

The CRT will require care and maintenance to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience for users, and to be a benefit for neighbors who for years lived alongside a seldom-used corridor.

Town staff and the CRT Advisory Committee are developing an Operations and Maintenance Plan to help guide Town policies. Parking, landscaping, safety and many other important subjects will be addressed through this plan, which will be available online when it is approved.

The CRT web page is at NatickMA.gov/CRT. ■■■

Fundraising and Sponsorships

The Friends of Natick Trails are a non-profit corporation organized to help support Natick's growing network of walking and biking trails, including the CRT, in partnership with the Town and a thriving volunteer community.



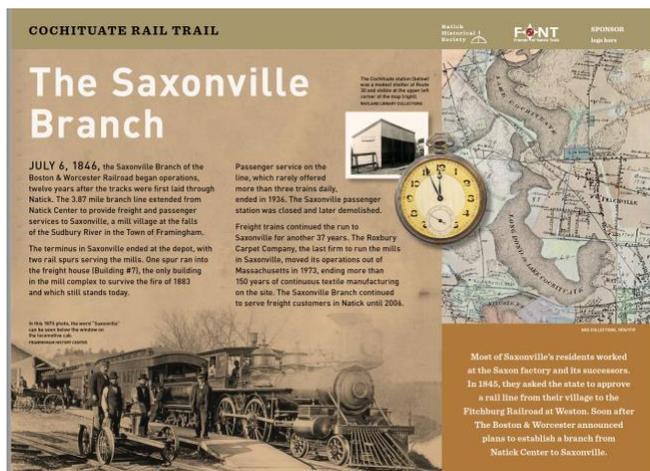
The Friends are offering various sponsorships to the public, such as 8" square bricks, bench plaques, historical panels, and other signage. Sponsorship proceeds pass through to the Town and

will help maintain and improve the CRT.

See FriendsOfNatickTrails.org to learn more. ■■■

Discover Natick History along the CRT

The [Natick Historical Society](http://NatickHistoricalSociety), in partnership with the [Friends of Natick Trails](http://FriendsOfNatickTrails), has developed a series of historical panels that will be installed along the trail. Visitors and long-time residents will learn more about Natick's origins and development.



These panels and benches were made possible thanks to MassDOT. ■■■

Construction During the Pandemic

COVID-19 has upended many things, of course, including construction projects. The CRT has been slightly delayed, but stayed close to schedule.

The primary contractor, MAS Building and Bridge, has worked closely with Town staff, Framingham, MassDOT and subcontractors to deliver a good project, and they all deserve thanks.

Former Town Engineer Mark Coviello has ably represented the Town during construction. ■■■

The Regional and Statewide Trail Network

The CRT is one of many trails that have recently opened or are in the works, in MetroWest and from the Cape to the Berkshires. Governor Baker and the MassTrails team, municipalities, regional planners, advocates and legislators have worked together to make lasting progress.

Visit NatickMA.gov/CRT for links to information about statewide initiatives and other trails. ■■■

Looking Ahead and Giving Thanks

As Natick and Framingham prepare to open the CRT in 2021, a few reminders:

- For questions, email crt@natickma.org
- The CRT is closed in Natick during construction.
- Please respect trail neighbors, now and once the trail is open.
- See NatickMA.gov/CRT for updates and information, and a map of the trail once the CRT is officially open.

The CRT has been a long time coming. Many Natick residents, including Dick and Jill Miller, George Eckert, Stephen Broadley and many others from Natick and Framingham were working on the CRT long before it became an official project.

Town Meeting, the Select Board, many committees, Town staff, legal counsel, consultants, volunteers, local businesses, taxpayers, along with our state and regional partners have all helped get us to this point.

Are you ready? We are! ■■■