

Procedure for Approving a New Trail or Trail Network

Note: The circumstances for each trail project are different; these steps are a guide and may be completed in a different order, or omitted as appropriate.

1. A new trail or trail network is suggested by a member of the Trails Committee, a member of the public attending a Trails Committee meeting, or the Conservation Commission. If the Trails Committee agrees to move forward, a Project Manager is designated.
2. The Project Manager arranges to walk the proposed trail or property with the person who suggested the trail, property owner (if private land), the City Forester, Planning staff, and any Trails Committee and Conservation Commission members who are available and interested.
3. The Project Manager prepares a preliminary Trail Criteria checklist for presentation and discussion at a subsequent Trails Committee meeting. After discussion, including review of the Trail Criteria, if the Trails Committee feels the proposed trail is worth exploring and the Planning staff and City Forester agree, the Trails Committee votes on whether or not to proceed with the trail project.
4. Preliminary approval from the Conservation Commission is obtained to move forward. If the Commission's reaction is negative, either more information is provided or the project is dropped and the person who made the proposal is notified.
5. The Project Manager and Planning staff work with property owners to obtain any trail easements or permissions needed before further work is done.
6. The City Forester and Project Manager layout the proposed trail based on the Trails Criteria checklist.
7. Planning staff and Forester consider parking (if applicable) or access issues and necessary permits, and prepare a budget for any needed infrastructure.
8. The Project Manager prepares a revised Trail Criteria checklist and presents the checklist and other relevant information at a Trails Committee meeting for discussion. Planning staff and City Forester provide input. Trails Committee votes whether or not to recommend the proposed trail to the Conservation Commission.
9. The Project Manager arranges an opportunity for the Conservation Commission to walk the trail.
10. Conservation Commission determines whether a public hearing on the trail is required. Otherwise the Commission reviews at a regular meeting. Project Manager attends to provide information. Commission votes whether or not to approve the trail.

Concord Trails Subcommittee

Trail Criteria

These criteria will be used to assist the Trails Subcommittee and Conservation Commission in determining whether we should take on a trail project.

The following are criteria which weigh in favor of taking on the project:

- Links conserved areas or trail networks
- Provides access to natural areas for neighborhoods without such access.
- Provides access to special places: views, waterfront, natural features, historic features
- Provides public access to City conservation land acquired with the intent for public use
- Reduces traffic on heavily used trails
- Likely to be well used
- Has community support
- Improves the diversity of City trails

The following are criteria which weigh against, or pose a challenge, for taking on the project:

- Difficult to maintain: wet areas, open fields, brushy areas, erosion potential
- Requires expensive development – e.g. expensive bridges, DES permitting
- Community opposition
- Trailhead parking, safety, and traffic issues
- Negatively impacts areas of special concern for habitat, plant life or wildlife such as: vernal pools, endangered species, nesting sites or deer yards, ponds, seasonal streams, watershed
- Trail leads to an attractive nuisance, e.g. quarries, abandoned structures
- Unusually difficult for police and fire responders to service the area
- Close proximity to residential dwellings
- Unusual fire risk, such as: steep slope alignments, past fire history, and impact on surrounding areas (e.g. watersheds or neighborhoods)