



Mass Cultural Council - Cultural Facilities Fund -
Capital 2021

Middlesex Canal Association Inc.

Application #CFF-C-0091

Primary Contact: Mr. J. Jeremiah Breen
Phone: (978) 688-4322
Email: jj@middlesexcanal.org

Applicant Profile

Applicant Type	Organization
Legal Name	Middlesex Canal Association Inc.
Date of 501(c)3 incorporation	03/05/1964
Address	71 Faulkner Street Billerica, Massachusetts 01862 UNITED STATES
Telephone	(978) 670-2740
Primary Contact	Mr. J. Jeremiah Breen president Phone: (978) 688-4322 Email: jj@middlesexcanal.org
Applicant Status	Organization - Non-Profit
Applicant Institution	Historical Society
Applicant Discipline	Multidisciplinary
FEIN / TAX ID	51-0176731
DUNS Number	000000000



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Project Overview

Is this grant application for a Capital (CAP) Grant only OR both a Capital (CAP) Grant and a Systems Replacement Plan (SRP) Grant?

Capital Grant (CAP)

Name of Executive Director (or equivalent):

J. Jeremiah Breen

Title:

president

Email:

jbreen5@verizon.net

Telephone:

9786884322

How many years has this Executive Director (or equivalent) been serving?

9

Organization Website:

www.middlesexcanal.org

Type of Organization:

501c3 Cultural Organization

Name of Subject Facility:

Middlesex Canal Visitor Center/Museum

Street Address of Subject Facility:

71 Faulkner Street

City of Subject Facility:

Billerica

State of Subject Facility:

MA

Postal Code of Subject Facility:

01862



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What is the square footage of the municipal facility?

What percent of the municipally-owned building is dedicated to arts and cultural purposes?

Please indicate the age of the municipal building:

Project type:

New Construction/Expansion

Indicate the approximate stage your project is in:

In construction/implementation

In a few brief sentences, provide a summary of your project.

Adaptive reuse of a 150-year-old wool cloth storehouse at 2 Old Elm Street, Billerica MA 01862, as a visitor center/museum. The new visitor center will replace the existing, rented, 4,400 sq. ft. visitor center at 71 Faulkner Street, Billerica.

Total Project Costs:

\$2,00,000.

Grant Request:

\$200,000.

Has your organization ever applied to the Cultural Facilities Fund?

Yes

Has your organization previously received a Cultural Facilities Fund grant?

No

If "YES", has your organization fully drawn down the grant funds or declined the grant in whole or in part?



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Organization Information

Total operating expenses for your organization's most recently completed fiscal year:

(Municipalities and colleges/universities: Please provide operating expenses for the cultural facility only.)
\$21,000.

Number of full-time equivalents (FTEs) employed at your organization:

1

Provide a brief summary of the organization, its programs, and services.

The Association was incorporated in 1964 and is the successor to the Middlesex Canal Co. incorporated in 1793. The Association has as its motto, ". . . this work designed for the benefit of the present & all Future Generations", words from the invocation at the groundbreaking for the canal. Three notable achievements since 1964 have been

- (1) creation of a Special Collection in 1971 at the UMass Lowell Library to make available to the public the records of the Middlesex Canal Company. The records had been ordered stored by the Supreme Court of Massachusetts in the Middlesex County Courthouse in 1860 after the dissolution of the company. The county commissioners a century later transferred them to the Middlesex Canal Special Collection at UMass Lowell.
- (2) establishment in 1977 by the legislature of the Middlesex Canal Commission with authorization for a Middlesex Canal Heritage Park. The legislature has funded the Commission with \$600,000 since 1977.
- and (3) opening in 2001 of the visitor center/museum at the summit pond of the canal. The visitor center is located where watered canal is on both sides of the summit pond and near the only visible remnant of twenty locks exists. The future center is located at the spot on the summit pond/Concord river bank of the ceremonial first shoveful of the groundbreaking in 1794. Part of the invocation at that groundbreaking became the motto of the Association, ". . . for the benefit of the present & all Future Generations."

Services for the present generation, two centuries after John Hancock and his compatriots began the canal, are a website and Facebook page with all 57 years of the journal, Towpath Topics, now published three times-a-year, online; walks on the towpath, twice a year, co-sponsored with the Appalachian Mountain Club; bike tours of the canal, twice a year; guest speakers at Association meetings, three times a year; host 16 classes of 3rd graders for a history lesson with funding from the Barker Foundation; staff the visitor center and have it open to the public, 100 days every year.

Incidental services, not scheduled, not programmed, occur. Three examples,
(1) an admirer of Henry Thoreau wanted to place a wayside exhibit aside the canal where he boated between the Concord and Merrimack Rivers in 1839. The Association sponsored her effort and received



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\$1600 from a real estate developer for the exhibit, now in place.

(2) a cub scout leader wanted a guide to the canal for his pack. A proprietor - the Association has two levels of membership, proprietor and associate - volunteered. One of the requirements of the cubs Bear Paws for Action Badge is to learn about two famous Americans. Coincidentally, the proprietor was a grandson of Loammi Baldwin, famous for building the canal.

and (3) a builder of a twelve-story apartment tower at Haymarket Square, Boston, wanted a painting for its entrance pavilion. The tower is named after its address, One Canal Street, and the visitor center's resident artist, Dahill, was commissioned and created The Canal that Bisected Boston for the pavilion, hung at 7' by 20' .

List any planning, capital, or preservation grants received for this facility from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts within the past 10 years.

None

Briefly interpret your organization's recent financial history, including any financial challenges. If your audits, review, or 990 are not up to date, please explain the circumstances.

In 2014, the Middlesex Canal Association accepted the gift of a dilapidated, 150-year-old, wool cloth storehouse. The first estimate for its adaptive reuse as a replacement for the existing, rented visitor center/museum was less than one million dollars. As of December 23, 2020, marked by a new roof, its renovation was nearly complete and had cost \$1 million. Another million is needed to reuse the renovated storehouse as a visitor center.

What are the start and end dates of your most recent strategic plan?

No strategic plan.



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Facility Information

Type of facility:

Other

If "other", explain:

The visitor center is on the bank of the Concord River. The National Park Service's Sudbury, Assabet, and Concord Wild and Scenic River Stewardship Council has granted \$11,500 towards an environmental observation deck and interpretive panel.

Is the building currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places?

No

What is the square footage of the facility or site that is the subject of this proposal?

5,800.

Do you have maintenance staff on payroll?

No

If not, who is charged with maintenance?

Board of directors.

Type of ownership of the facility:

Owned

If "other", explain:

If you own the facility

If the organization is carrying debt, what is the term of debt financing?

What is the current outstanding principal balance of the debt?

Who is listed as the owner on the title?

Middlesex Canal Association, Incorporated.

Be sure to provide a copy of the lease when uploading your required materials.

What is the term (start and end dates) of your current lease?

If your lease is expiring within the next 2 years, please make the case for investment.



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What are the owner's responsibilities for building maintenance and repair, as stated in the lease?

What are your responsibilities for building maintenance and repair, as stated in the lease?

If none of the above apply, briefly explain:



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Project Information

Briefly summarize the facility project that is the subject of this application.

Adaptive reuse of a 150-year-old wool cloth storehouse at 2 Old Elm Street, Billerica MA 01862, as a visitor center/museum. The new visitor center will replace the existing, rented, 4,400 sq. ft. visitor center at 71 Faulkner Street, Billerica. Having done \$1 million of renovation, the remaining work is outfitting the interior and connecting electricity, water and sewer to the building.

Briefly describe your existing facility, if different.

The existing visitor center/museum was completed in 2001 in rented 4,800 sq. ft. The rent has been \$1,700/month for several years.

Virtual tour, <https://tinyurl.com/01862museum>

Or <https://360.goterest.com/sphere/virtual-riverfest-billerica?scene=5ec7f145ffd0e1cb7fa5baeb>

Describe the challenge or opportunity that led to the development of the proposed facilities project:

The location of the dilapidated, 150-year-old wool cloth storehouse is where the ceremonial groundbreaking for the then greatest work of its kind in the United States took place September 10, 1793. The best location possible, on the river bank aside the canal, across the street from a remnant of the twenty locks, and where Thoreau left the Concord to travel through the canal to the Merrimack, described in */A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers/*. The Thoreau Towpath is one of the most visited parts of the canal and it begins here.

The challenge has been getting permission from the conservation commission for riverfront development and getting donations.

For Municipalities: Please describe how 50% or more of the facility has programming for arts, humanities, or interpretive sciences.

For colleges or universities: Please describe how this facility provides service and open access to the community and general public outside of the regular educational mission.

Please indicate whether the project includes any of the following:

(check all that apply)

Fire & Safety System Upgrades

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance

Please confirm whether you are applying for the Capital (CAP) Grant or both the Capital (CAP) Grant and System Replacement Plan (SRP) Grant.

CAP



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If you have already been a recipient of a Cultural Facilities Fund Capital grant, please describe how this project is distinct from the previously funded project:

If you have already been a recipient of a Cultural Facilities Fund Feasibility & Technical Assistance Grant, please describe how the planning has informed the capital project:



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Threshold Criteria #1 - Statutory - Community Impact

Describe the community need for this project:

Describe the tourism impact of your organization.

Describe the financial need for this grant:

Describe local support for the project (In terms of your organization and/or programming.):



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Threshold Criteria #2 - Financial Capacity

Describe your ability to raise the funds required to complete the project.

What percentage of matching funds are committed at the time of this application submission? (All grants require a 1:1 match.)

What percentage of the total project costs are committed?

Does your organization have dedicated capital replacement cash reserves?

Please describe how you fund the ongoing your capital maintenance and replacement costs of your facility:

If you are expanding a current facility, building a new facility, and/or increasing programming, describe how you will financially support the new venture.



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Capital Project Planning

Is the building or site you are making capital improvements to currently offering cultural programming?

Have you recently had a comprehensive capital needs assessment (for all your properties) done in-house or by a third-party qualified professional?

Describe how you identify capital maintenance needs and what your process is for addressing these needs.

Are you either expanding the square footage of programable/usable space in your current space or planning a new construction project?

If yes, do you have a business plan for this expansion?

For New Construction or Expansions

If you are building a new facility or expanding square footage in your current space, describe the evidence of 'market demand' that justifies the expansion of square footage and/or new construction.

If expanding, please describe what planning and preparation your organization has undertaken to address the impact the expansion will have on staffing and operations. (There is an opportunity to address how you will financially support this expansion in the financial section of this application).



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Transformative Impact

Describe the transformative impact of your project. Include a description of the urban or village center in which your project is located and to what extent your project will improve the appearance of the immediately surrounding area.

Describe how your project creates opportunities for additional private investment in the surrounding area due to vacancies, blight, or underutilized properties and what opportunities for additional private investment exist in the vicinity of your project.

Identify neighborhood, public, and/or private partners who will participate in your efforts to spur transformative impact and identify any specific private or public investment in the surrounding area.

Provide a statement regarding the opportunity for this project to attract an increased number of visitors to the facility and area.



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Implementation

Describe how the project will be ready to proceed by June 2022. Be specific about any preparation that supports your implementation timeline (e.g., financial readiness, contracts, design plans, project planning).



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Implementation - Key Project Team Members

Name #1

Organization

Title

Describe this person's role in the project and provide a brief summary of their relevant experience:

If a third party, are they currently under contract?

Name #2

Organization

Title

Describe this person's role in the project and provide a brief summary of their relevant experience:

If a third party, are they currently under contract?

Name #3

Organization

Title

Describe this person's role in the project and provide a brief summary of their relevant experience:

If a third party, are they currently under contract?

Name #4

Organization

Title

Describe this person's role in the project and provide a brief summary of their relevant experience:

If a third party, are they currently under contract?



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Name #5

Organization

Title

Describe this person's role in the project and provide a brief summary of their relevant experience:

If a third party, are they currently under contract?

Name #6

Organization

Title

Describe this person's role in the project and provide a brief summary of their relevant experience:

If a third party, are they currently under contract?

Name #7

Organization

Title

Describe this person's role in the project and provide a brief summary of their relevant experience:

If a third party, are they currently under contract?

Name #8

Organization

Title

Describe this person's role in the project and provide a brief summary of their relevant experience:

If a third party, are they currently under contract?

Be sure to include the following in your Required Materials:



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- **Provide a timeline for implementation, detailing what happens when. Please provide as an attachment in table format.**
- **Provide a clear project budget with the status of “sources” and “uses” of funds,**



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Systems Replacement Plan Project Planning

Describe why this capital needs assessment is the next logical step in the overall facilities planning process for your organization.

If you recently completed a building condition, accessibility, or energy-efficiency assessment, please provide the details of these assessments.