

Applicant Information

The **Capital Grants** program provides matching grants to assist with the acquisition, final-stage design, construction, repair, renovation, installation of fixed equipment, or other capital improvements or deferred maintenance of cultural facilities in Massachusetts.

Applicant Organization Information

Review the applicant information. If you need to update the Organization Information, use the Note feature on the left to contact a Mass Cultural Council staff person for help.

Legal Name: Middlesex Canal Association, Inc.

DBA:

Report Name: Middlesex Canal Association

Physical Address:

Address 1: 71 Faulkner Street

Address 2:

City: Billerica

State: MA

ZIP: 01862-1540

Mailing Address (if different):

Mailing Address 1:

Mailing Address 2:

City:

State:

ZIP:

Parent Organization: Grant Seeking Organizations

Fiscal Agent:

Contract Manager:

Contract Manager Title:

Contract Manager Email:

Applicant Website

Review the web address. If you need to update it, you can do so in your Organization Profile.

Website: <http://www.middlesexcanal.org/>

Primary Contact

Review the applicant information. If you need to update the Primary Contact information you can do so in your Profile. Click Home button in upper right corner to get to My Profile button.

J. Jeremiah Breen
jbreen5@verizon.net
978-688-4322

Executive Director Information

Who is the executive Director (or equivalent) of the applicant organization?

Executive Director Name (first and last)

J. Jeremiah Breen

Executive Director Title

president

Executive Director Email

jbreen5@verizon.net

Executive Director Phone

978-688-4322

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

9

Project Information

Description

Describe the facility project that is the subject of this application. Please describe the purpose of the grant (if awarded) by completing the following sentence, "This is a grant of financial assistance to..."

complete the new Middlesex Canal Visitor Center/Museum.

Please indicate whether the project includes any of the following. (Check all that apply)

Fire & Safety System Upgrades, Energy Efficiency Measures / Green & Sustainable Building Practices, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Compliance

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.

Subject Facility

Name of Subject Facility

Middlesex Canal Visitor Center/Museum.

Street Address of Subject Facility

Enter the physical address of the subject facility.

2 Old Elm Street, Billerica MA

City of Subject Facility

Enter the physical address of the subject facility.

Billerica

State of Subject Facility

Massachusetts

Zip Code of Subject Facility

01862

Square Footage of Subject Facility

5,760

Subject Facility Status

Select the best description.

Owned or Leased by a 501c3 Organization

Organization's Mission Statement

To acquire, restore and preserve all extant remains of the historic Middlesex Canal; to establish a museum devoted to the history of the Canal and of transportation in general; to establish along the route of the Canal parks for public recreational and educational use; to engage in historical research and to publish historical, literary, and scientific works concerning the Canal, the area formerly served by it and the era during which it was active; and through such means educate and publicize to the the general public concerning the Canal and the Industrial Revolution in the United States.

Proposed Project

Project type (select all that apply)

Renovation/Repair, New Construction/Expansion, Fixed/Integrated Equipment

Indicate the approximate stage your project is in

In construction/Implementation

Total Project Costs

\$2,000,000

Grant Amount Requested

\$200,000.00

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.

\$22,000.00

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

0

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.
- (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 future center is located at the spot on the summit pond/Concord river bank of the ceremonial first shovelful 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, the journal, Towpath Topics, published three times-a-year, with all 57 years online at middlesexcanal.org; 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. More than 14 acres has been deeded or otherwise been given for use as the Commonwealth's Middlesex Canal Heritage Park between Lowell and Boston. Incidental services, not scheduled, not programmed, occur.

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.

Since receiving in 2014 the woolen cloth storehouse for a visitor center/museum, the MC Association has spent more than \$1 million to renovate the 150-year-old building. Year 2022, the MC Association has the challenge of adaptive reuse of the renovated warehouse for a visitor center.

Facility Information

Type of facility

Other - Please describe

If your organization operates from an existing facility that is different from the facility that is the subject of this application, please explain

Since 2001, the MC Association has operated a visitor center/museum in the Faulkner Mill, 71 Faulkner St, Billerica

Other

Type of Facility. Visitor center for the Middlesex Canal, Billerica & Bedford Railroad, and Billerica Mills Historic District. The center has a mile of canal for walking east and west of it, an observation deck overlooking the summit pond and Billerica Falls of the Concord River. Henry David Thoreau describes in A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers hearing the Falls and leaving the river to journey on the canal to the Merrimack.

Do you have maintenance staff on payroll?

No

Who is charged with maintenance?

Museum committee of the board of directors. The weekend volunteers replace light bulbs, clean the restrooms, etc. Trades people are hired as needed. In the past five years, a plumber replaced the hot water heater.

Type of ownership of the facility

Other - please describe

Describe ownership type

Tenant at will, month-to-month, rent \$1,700/month for 4,400 sf.

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?

71 Faulkner St, Faulkner Mills, Inc.

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

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

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

Please provide any additional relevant information regarding ownership and/or maintenance of the subject facility.

Town of Billerica pays utilities.

Statutory - Community Impact

Describe the community need for this project.

A public building with public parking with easy access to the Concord River welcoming visitors.

Describe the tourism impact of your organization.

"The Middlesex canal, uniting the waters of [the Merrimack River] with the harbor of Boston, is however the greatest work of the kind which has been completed in the United States." Report on Public Roads and Canals by the US Secretary of the Treasury to Congress, April 4, 1808. Retrieved from the internet, <http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2046>.

The visitor center is on the bank of the canal and of the Concord River summit pond, the highest point of the canal. A mile of the walkable Thoreau Towpath begins at the visitor center. Rte. 3 already has signs directing visitors to the center, less than twenty minutes away. The new center will have signs on I-495, less than fifteen minutes away. Aside from those visiting the greatest -, approximately 10% are from out-of-state visiting the greatest, this past Covid-19 December, visitors were from San Diego and Pennsylvania --, the attraction is a riverfront park on Thoreau's Concord River with public rest rooms and dog walk. I-95 is a major north-south route with no rest areas.

Brief description of canal

Incorporated in 1793 with John Hancock as the first proprietor, the canal connected the Merrimack River at Lowell with the Charles River at Boston by a ditch 3½' deep, 30' wide, 27 miles long with eight aqueducts, twenty locks, and fifty bridges. It was the greatest work of its kind in the US until the Erie Canal, and its low-cost transportation of thousands of bales of cotton along with waterpower was the basis for the cotton mills of Lowell, Nashua, and Manchester. The canal operated for 50 years, until the one horsepower canal boat quickly lost to a new competitor, the 30 horsepower steam locomotive.

Lowell National Historical Park has a committee preparing for Lowell's bicentennial celebration. The Middlesex Canal Association is a major celebrant.

Describe the financial need for this grant.

As of end of December 2021, the MC Association has in the bank ~ \$200,000 with the majority, \$130,000 restricted in the endowment fund. More than \$500,000 will be needed this construction season to give the contractors the go ahead.

Describe local support for the project and provide whatever specific evidence you can.

Community preservation grants, \$380,000 total as of Jan 2022.

ARPA earmark of \$50,000.

Private donations of \$1,000,000 as of Dec 2021.

The Sudbury, Asabet, Concord River Stewrdship Council granted \$11,500 total as of Jan 2022.

Financial Capacity

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

More than \$1,000,000 has been raised and spent as the "Additional Materials" IMAGEs manifest.

The \$500,000 more or less for construction this year is proven by past performance.

What percentage of 1:1 matching requirement is committed at the time of this application submission?

100%

What percentage of the total project costs are committed?

75%

Does your organization have capital replacement cash reserves?

No

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

The rent at 71 Faulkner St has been \$1,700/month for many years, funded by dues, annual appeal, and donations. The non-endowment cash in the bank is ~70,000. Likely cash reserve will increase once the monthly rent is ended.

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

"Dues, annual appeal, and donations."

The possibility exists to rent the ground floor for parties but the Town would have to give permission.

Planning

Are you making capital improvements to a building or site that is currently offering cultural programming?

Yes

Do you have a capital needs assessment for your facility/s, done either in-house or by a third-party qualified professional? (if yes, please submit it with your supplemental materials)

Yes

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

With twenty years of experience of operating a visitor center/museum, the volunteers are well able to do maintenance with the occasional contractor.

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

Yes

Do you have a business plan for this expansion?

No

Please describe the "market demand" that justifies the expansion, and what planning and preparation your organization has undertaken to address the impact the expansion will have on staffing and operations.

The move to 2 Old Elm from 71 Faulkner, 700' between, was due to the historic location on the Concord River where the ceremonial groundbreaking for the canal was in 1794. The size of the 2½ story Old Elm St building was not significant in the decision. Nor the fact that a free standing, prominent building at a busy Concord River bridge crossing would attract more visitors.

Transformative Impact

Is your project for a new cultural facility (this includes substantial rehabilitation or new construction) in an urban or village center that will have a "transformative impact" on the host community/immediately surrounding area?

Yes

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.

The new visitor center/museum is an adaptive reuse of a dilapidated 150-year-old woolen cloth storehouse and parking lot. The Billerica Conservation Commission took nine months of suggestions before approval of a park plan, my words, for the property. The Middlesex Canal is at the center of Billerica Mills Historic District which center will now be a river front park supervised by the Association.

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.

The parking for the visitor center is a small part of a 1½ acre lot with 72x40' 2 story, 1890s brick storehouse so-called 6 Old Elm St. The Pace Industries manager has said the storehouse is river front condo. The most recent prospective purchaser was proposing a brew pub. The Talbot Mills across Old Elm St from the visitor center has ground cleared of old buildings and relatively modern vacant buildings, four blocks or so from North Billerica train station, 35 minutes from Boston.

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.

The Town will re-build Old Elm St south of the bridge as it has Faulkner St north of it once the Association has finished tearing up Old Elm for 300' of sewer.

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

A prominent building at a riverfront park at the Billerica Falls of the Concord River less than fifteen minutes on a direct route, Billerica Avenue, from I-495.

Transformative Impact Map

Provide a map identifying the location of your project and sites in the vicinity of your project that are in need of additional private investment and could be positively impacted by your project.

[Development_Map_GIS_220114__37x77'_6_Old_Elm_St_north_arrow.jpg](#)

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[Development_Map_old_parking_lot.jpg](#)

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Total Files: 2

Transformative Impact Partners

Provide letters from or agreements with the local partners (public or private) who you have identified as participants in your efforts to spur transformative impact as a result of your project.

Transformative Impact Municipal Plan

If your project is part of or consistent with any municipal plan to improve the area, upload a brief summary of such a plan, a link to the plan if available electronically, and a letter from the municipality saying your project is consistent with the plan.

Summary of municipal plan

Link to municipal plan.

Letter from Municipality

Implementation

Describe how the project will be ready to proceed by June 2023. Be specific about any preparation that supports your implementation timeline (e.g., financial readiness, contracts, design plans, project planning).

Its being built now.

Key Project Team Members

Please identify the key members of the project planning, design, construction, or renovation team. Briefly describe their qualifications, roles, and responsibilities on the project. Please specify whether they are staff, board, or contracted personnel. Resumes and CVs should also be included for contracted personnel as supplementary materials, but they should complement, not substitute the descriptive information provided in the narrative. Click on the "Members Details" button below, and fill in the relevant information in the pop up window.

Members

Name	Title	Organization	If a third party, are they currently under contract?	Describe this person's role in the project and provide a brief summary of their relevant experience
Bill Cogley	general contractor	Cogley Construction	Yes	Recommended by the steel fabricator. 52 years old.
Christina McMahon	lead architect	Caveney Collaborative	Yes	MS in Architecture, 15 years experience.

Additional Materials

The following materials are required. Please upload and label each file clearly according to the bolded text for each item below.

Budget Document

Project Budget for Capital Project, or Planning Budget for Feasibility/Technical Assistance Project. Please list both the "sources" and "uses" of funds in the project budget. In the "source" column indicate whether the funds are: "committed", "pledged", or "projected". In the "use" column indicate whether the costs are based on: a "contractor bid", "architect estimate", or "in-house estimate".

In addition, for Capital Projects, please indicate your most critical needs and less critical needs. See a [sample project budget \(XLS\)](#).

BUDGET_DOCUMENT__Project_Budget_3_.xlsx
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Total Files: 1

Timeline

Be sure to include the scope-of-work accompanied by dates

[Timeline.pdf](#)

13.1 KB - 01/14/2022 3:00PM

Total Files: 1

Financial Information

Nonprofit Organizations:

- Audited financial or draft audit statements for the two most recent fiscal years. (If your organization's annual budget is less than \$500,000 and no audited financials are available, please provide the review statement by the accountant or internally prepared income and expense statements and balance sheets for the two most recent years. Audit statements are not required if the applicant is a municipality, but are required for all 501(c)3s including colleges and universities.)
- Year-to-date Income Statements and Balance Sheets since your last audit, accountant's review or 990.

Municipalities:

- Facility-specific operating financials for the last two years for the subject facility. Municipal financial audited statements are not required.

Colleges and Universities:

- Audited financial statements for the two most recent fiscal years.
- Facility-specific operating financials for the last two years for the subject facility.

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[Financial_Information__210505_IRS_990_pw=6731.pdf](#)

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[Financial_Information__treas220105.xlsx](#)

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Total Files: 3

Resumes, CVs, or other summaries of qualifications

Provide for all key project personnel (e.g., project manager and/or general contractor, architect, fundraising consultant, key organizational staff). [Please note: Project managers and general contractors must meet insurance and bond requirements appropriate to the nature and size of the project.]

[Resume__CV__other_general_contractor.pdf](#)

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[Resumes__CVs_architect_Caveney_Overview.pdf](#)

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Total Files: 2

Board list and affiliations

[Board_List__curriculum_vitae_190110.docx](#)

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Total Files: 1

IRS 501(c)3 tax exemption letter

[IRS_501_c_3_IRS_determination_of_exemption_.pdf](#)

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Lease, deed, or ground lease for your facility

Required for Capital Grants NOT required for Feasibility and Technical Assistance Grants

[Lease_Deed__1_deed_as_recorded_March_6_2014__2_Old_Elm_St.pdf](#)

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Total Files: 1

Business plan & strategic plan materials

Required for acquisition, expansion of an existing building and/or programs, and new construction.

Signed Purchase & Sale Agreement

Required for for acquisition projects only.

Images

Of the overall site as well as specific areas of work.

[0_11_Image_-_210831_Christina_MOTTO_Sep_10_1794.jpg](#)

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[Zoning_Variance_Off-site_parking_200108_ZBA_variance_AS_RECORDERD_one_year.pdf](#)

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[bldg_on_spit_south_wall_and_east_point_cropped.jpg](#)

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Optional Additional Materials

Depending on your project, the following list of materials may help you make the case for funding. Please submit any and all materials you think will help the review panel understand your project and its readiness to proceed.

Architectural plans for the building or renovation

Summary plans are acceptable.

[Architectural.pdf](#)

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Total Files: 1

Project costs/estimates from a contractor bid set or from an architect.

Zoning Variances, ZBA hearing dates, building permits or other evidence that regulatory approvals are in place or in process.

[Zoning_Special_Permit_Parking_200108_ZBA_AS_RECORDED_two_years.pdf](#)

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[Zoning_Variance_Off-site_parking_200108_ZBA_variance_AS_RECORDED_one_year.pdf](#)

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Copies of any feasibility and planning work done to date: market studies, fundraising assessments, project and business feasibility studies, operating pro-formas, etc.

Architect and construction contract.

Summary pages of contracts acceptable

[190925__Construction_Management_Agreement_200_000.pdf](#)

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[Architect_-_180402_contract_revised_and_signed_180903.pdf](#)

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Maintenance plans and replacement schedules for the facility.

Mechanical as well as the structural components of the facility, i.e. plumbing, electrical, HVAC, roof, siding, foundation, etc.

Letters of Support

Current and no more than six

Press clippings, editorials, or other materials that demonstrate community need and local support for the project.[Press_Sun_1_page_1A_1024.pdf](#)

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DataArts Funder Report

If you are registered in DataArts you can submit your data with your application by searching for the Mass Cultural Council under "Find Grants." Submit a funder report to the Cultural Facilities Fund: FY22 pool by the final application deadline, 11:59pm (ET) on January ##, 2022. Contact the DataArts Help Desk with any questions at: 877-707-3282 or help@culturaldata.org.

Other - please describe

Acknowledgement

Ready to Submit?

Once you click "Submit" below, you will no longer have access to make changes to your application. A copy of your application will be sent via an email attachment upon submission.

Please note: You have not successfully submitted your application until "Congratulations" appears in blue text at the top of the page.

Authorized Signature: I certify that all the information contained in this application, including all supporting documents and materials, is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I hereby release Mass Cultural Council, its members, and employees, from any liability and/or responsibility concerning the submission of materials to this program. In addition, I agree that the required public acknowledgment will be given to Mass Cultural Council if this application is approved. I understand that failure to respond to any of the items requested in this application may seriously hinder its consideration. I certify that we are committed to the completion of the proposed activities in compliance with legal requirements and granting procedures and will file the report required by the Mass Cultural Council.

Clicking "submit" below serves as an authorizing electronic signature.

Authorized Signature

I agree