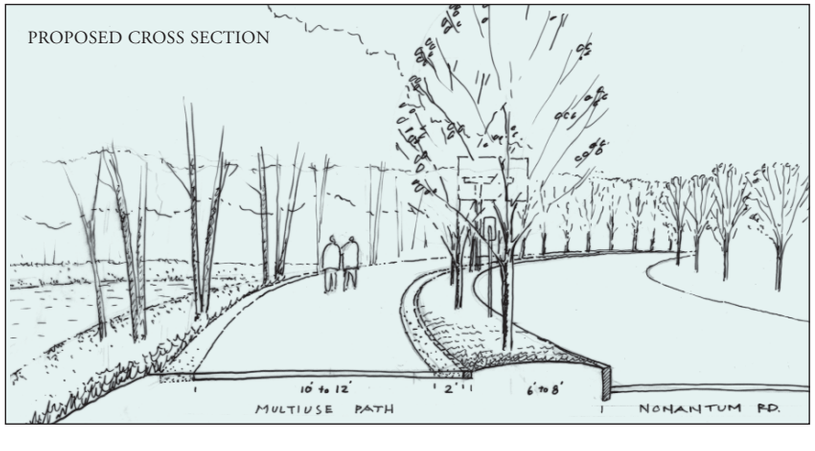
- **Eliminate guardrails made obsolete by this additional setback from the embankment.** Where guardrails are necessary, use the recommended MDC standard to blend well with the landscape.

- **Establish a new pedestrian bridge in the vicinity of Maple Street or at the bend in the river where long views are afforded in two directions.** This new bridge would shorten the walking loops in the Upper Basin and mark the transition from the open boat basin to the narrow river channel at Watertown Square. The bridge design must reflect the special character of the Charles River Basin.

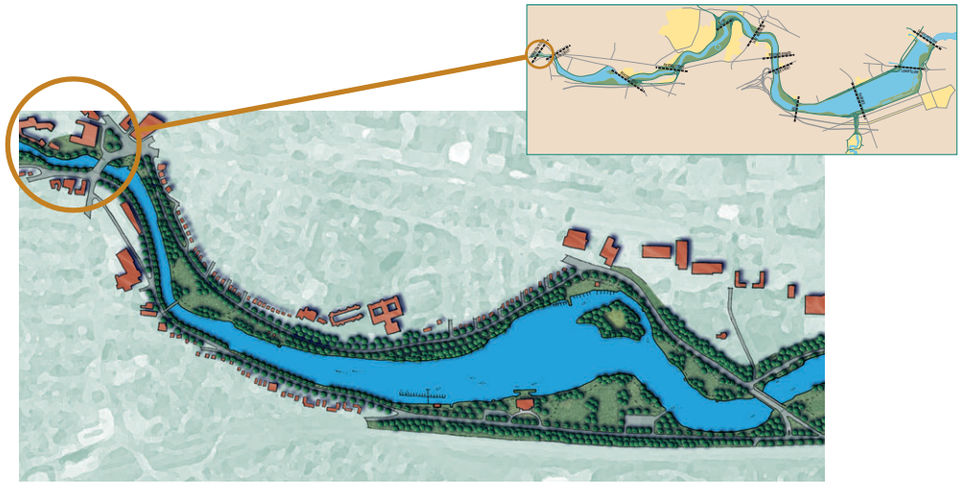


THE EXISTING CONDITIONS ALONG NONANTUM ROAD NEAR THE GALEN STREET BRIDGE.

- **Add a pedestrian phase to the existing signal at Galen Street and place a pedestrian crosswalk across Nonantum Road.**

- **Establish and maintain scenic vistas at bends in the Charles to capture long views up and down the river.**

- **Develop a memorandum of understanding with abutters—including the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority, the Perkins School for the Blind, and the Arsenal development group—that supports maintenance of the wooded banks on the landside of the parkways that give the Upper Basin its rural feel.**



WATERTOWN DAM (11N&S)

Key Resources

- *Possible prehistoric sites*
- *Possible industrial and historical archeological sites*
- *Watertown Dam (pre-1893, 1966)*
- *Galen Street Bridge (1907)*
- *Fish Ladder (1972)*
- *Boardwalk and dam overlook (1999)*

Introduction and History

As the head of tide on the Charles, this site has been intensively used. Native Americans set up temporary fishing camps here, and early industrialists dammed the river for waterpower. This long-active stretch of river is now quiet and intimate. The short segment of river between the Galen Street Bridge and the dam marks a fundamental shift in character from the Basin to the Upper Charles River Reservation with its wooded banks, narrow channel, and absence of parkways. Old mill buildings, converted

to other uses, back onto the north riverbank. The first two phases of an ambitious river path system for the Upper Charles River Reservation, including a lengthy boardwalk and overlook at the dam, have been completed.

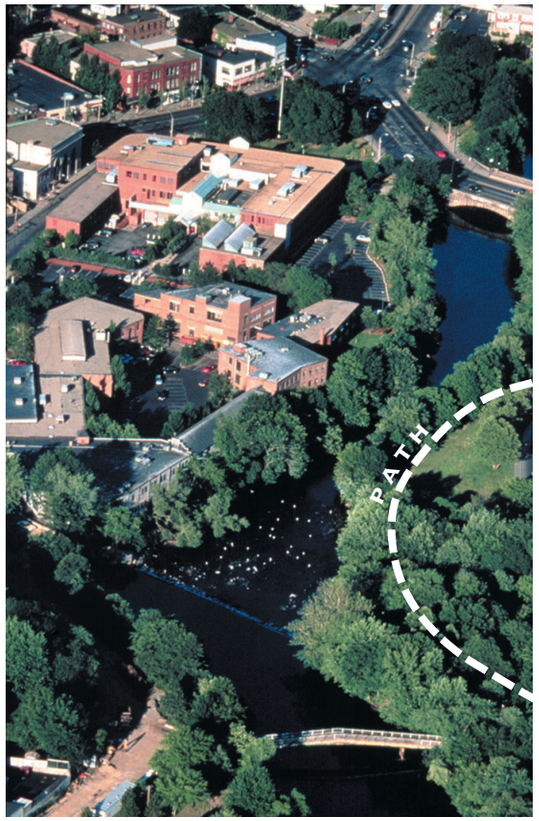
This stretch is the terminus for the parkways lining the Charles River Basin. Charles River Road ends at Watertown Square, while Nonantum Road changes to Route 16 and California Street before it too turns away from the river just beyond the Watertown Dam.

Existing Conditions and Issues

A broad park area between California Street and the south shoreline is underused and provides little access to the shore where views to the dam are possible. Few notice an open stream entering the river from the south at this point. With its rushing water and fish ladder, the dam itself is fascinating to watch during the spring fish runs when sea gulls and night heron feed.

Goals

- **Extend the access improvements already in place along this stretch eastward into the Charles River Basin.**
- **Improve the landing area at Watertown Square.**
- **Improve visual access from the area.**



Recommendations

- **Provide a path along the south shore with a wooden bridge across the tributary stream.**
- **Provide a canoe and kayak landing above and below the dam on the south shore as a portage.**
- **Rehabilitate the fish ladder at Watertown Dam.**
- **Determine the feasibility of removing the Watertown Dam.**

BOARDWALK AND OVERLOOK AT THE WATERTOWN DAM (PHOTO AT LEFT). AN AERIAL VIEW OF THE RIVER AT WATERTOWN (PHOTO ABOVE) SHOWS THE GALEN STREET BRIDGE (UPPER RIGHT IN PHOTO) AND THE WATERTOWN DAM UPSTREAM OF THE BRIDGE (LEFT CENTER).