

ALLSTON MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION PROJECT



TASK FORCE

GENERAL UPDATE

February 2026

1. Project Goals (Updated reflecting Task Force input)

At the January Task Force meeting, MassDOT presented the overarching project goals for the Allston Multimodal Transportation Project and received valuable feedback from Task Force members. Based on this input, MassDOT has revised the project goals to better reflect Task Force guidance, community input and partner agency plans.

1. To improve multimodal access reconnecting the Allston neighborhood and the regional transportation network and Charles River Reservation;
2. To provide and upgrade infrastructure needed to support improved highway including I-90, bicycle and pedestrian, rail and transit connections among Metrowest, Central Massachusetts, Western Massachusetts, and the Boston metropolitan region; and
3. To advance the Commonwealth's transportation and environmental priorities, including multimodal options, climate resiliency, and protection of natural resources.
4. To facilitate the future redevelopment of Beacon Park Yard.

2. Lincoln Street Noise Barriers

The Lincoln Street Noise Barrier project, being advanced by MassDOT as an early action component of the Allston Multimodal Transportation Project, proposes two noise barriers along the westbound lanes of I-90 between Market Street and Franklin Street. Both barriers are located entirely within the state highway layout and being designed to mitigate highway traffic noise while enabling the City of Boston's future Allston-Brighton Shared Use Path and other mobility improvements.

On February 5, MassDOT held a Lincoln Street Noise Barrier Open House at the Fiorentino Center in Allston. The event was widely publicized and well attended by residents, Task Force members and representatives from the City of Boston and DCR.

The open house focused on three primary topics:

- Wall placement, including cross sections to demonstrate how barrier placement is being refined to accommodate the City of Boston's long-term Allston-Brighton Shared Use Path along Lincoln Street, which requires substantial grading, additional retaining walls and coordinated utility relocation.
- Wall texture, finish and landscaping treatments, including textured surfaces, vines, and potential public art elements, which would require coordination through appropriate City of Boston programs.
- The project noise study, conducted in accordance with federal and state regulations, which forms the basis for the proposed barrier locations and heights.

The project is advancing toward 100% design, with subsurface investigations and utility coordination ongoing. Final design is anticipated in summer 2026, with construction expected to begin in 2026 and most of the wall construction occurring in 2027.

MassDOT will continue to coordinate with the City of Boston, DCR, Allston residents, and the Task Force as the project moves forward. Materials from the February open house will be posted on the Mass.gov project website.

3. Cambridge Street Preservation Project

MassDOT continues concrete and steel repairs beneath the Cambridge Street bridge and is installing shielding to allow sidewalk repairs on the outbound side of the bridge as weather permits. Progress has been temporarily slowed by recent snowstorms and other weather conditions.

The traffic management setup implemented in January is anticipated to remain in place through October 2026. Outbound traffic on Cambridge Street is reduced from two lanes to one, with the right lane serving as a fixed work zone. The bike lane and sidewalk remain open, with appropriate signage and traffic controls in place.

Following community feedback at the January Allston Multimodal Transportation Project Task Force meeting, MassDOT made adjustments to the Traffic Management Plan and work zone layout. MassDOT continues to review the setup for safety and compliance

while balancing space for all users and construction crews. We appreciate the Allston community's patience as these necessary repairs move forward to restore full use of the bridge.

4. Independent Review Consultant Procurement Update

The procurement process for an independent cost analysis and engineering review of the Allston Multimodal Transportation Project is ongoing. MassDOT has received proposals in response to the public Request for Responses, and the internal selection committee review process is currently underway in coordination with MassDOT's Office of Transportation Planning.

As previously outlined, this effort is intended to realign project scope, cost, and delivery strategy with available resources and policy objectives. The selected consultant will be responsible for two major tasks:

- Task 1 – Independent Cost Analysis: Conduct a detailed, inflation-adjusted cost analysis to establish a realistic project baseline and identify cost drivers.
- Task 2 – Independent Engineering Review: Evaluate engineering alternatives, including full-build and hybrid solutions, to identify opportunities for cost savings, assess schedule assumptions, and recommend strategies for sequencing, contracting, and prioritization.

The consultant may also assist MassDOT in developing visual and informational materials to support ongoing engagement with project partners and the public.

Task Force members will be notified once an entity has been selected to conduct an independent review of the project