



VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

July 17, 2024 at 6:00PM

FOR THE PROPOSED

**Bridge Replacement, B-10-001, Route 10 over the Fall River and Deck Replacement,
B-10-018, Route 10 over I-91
Project No. 612159**

IN THE TOWN OF BERNARDSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION**

**JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR**

**CARRIE E. LAVALLEE, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER**

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION
NOTICE OF A VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
Project File No. 612159

A Virtual Design Public Hearing will be hosted on the MassDOT website below to present the design for the proposed Bridge Replacement, B-10-001, Route 10 Over Fall River and Deck Replacement, B-10-018, Route 10 Over I-91 project in Bernardston, MA.

WHEN: 6:00PM, Wednesday, July 17, 2024

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed Bridge Replacement, B-10-001, Route 10 Over Fall River and Deck Replacement, B-10-018, Route 10 Over I-91 project. All views and comments submitted in response to the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: The proposed project consists of the full replacement of the bridge carrying Route 10 over Fall River and the preservation of the bridge carrying Route 10 over I-91 in the town of Bernardston. The project extends along Route 10 from just west of the intersection with Hartwell Street to just east of the intersection with Bald Mountain Road (0.5 mile). Work includes pavement milling and overlay, full depth pavement reconstruction and improvements to bicycle and pedestrian accommodations on Route 10. Bicycle accommodations have been provided in accordance with applicable design guides. The proposed bicycle lane varies from 5 to 8 feet in width and the bicycle buffer varies from 3 to 6 feet. Pedestrian accommodations consist of a 6-foot wide sidewalk that crosses to the south side of Route 10 via a crosswalk with a rapid flashing beacon.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands. MassDOT's policy concerning land acquisitions will be presented in the hearing.

Project inquiries, written statements and other exhibits regarding the proposed undertaking may be submitted to Carrie E. Lavallee, P.E., Chief Engineer, via e-mail to MassDOTProjectManagement@dot.state.ma.us or via US Mail to Suite 7550, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Project Management, Project File No. 612159. Statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the hearing transcript must be emailed or postmarked no later than ten (10) business days (14 calendar days) after the hearing is hosted.

This hearing is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (e.g interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, live captioning, videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), TTD/TTY at (857) 266-0603, fax (857) 368-0602 or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible and prior to the hearing, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten business days before the hearing.

This hearing will be hosted, or a cancellation announcement posted, on the internet at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events>.

JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

CARRIE E. LAVALLEE, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER



Dear Concerned Citizen:

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) is committed to building and maintaining a transportation infrastructure that is both safe and efficient for all who use our roadways, bridges, bicycle facilities and pedestrian paths, while maintaining the integrity of the environment.

As part of the design process for this project, we are conducting this public hearing to explain the proposed improvements, listen to your comments and answer any questions you may have. At the conclusion of the hearing, MassDOT will review all of your comments and, where feasible, incorporate them into the design of the project.

We recognize that road and bridge construction can create inconveniences for the public. MassDOT places a great deal of emphasis on minimizing the temporary disruptive effects of construction.

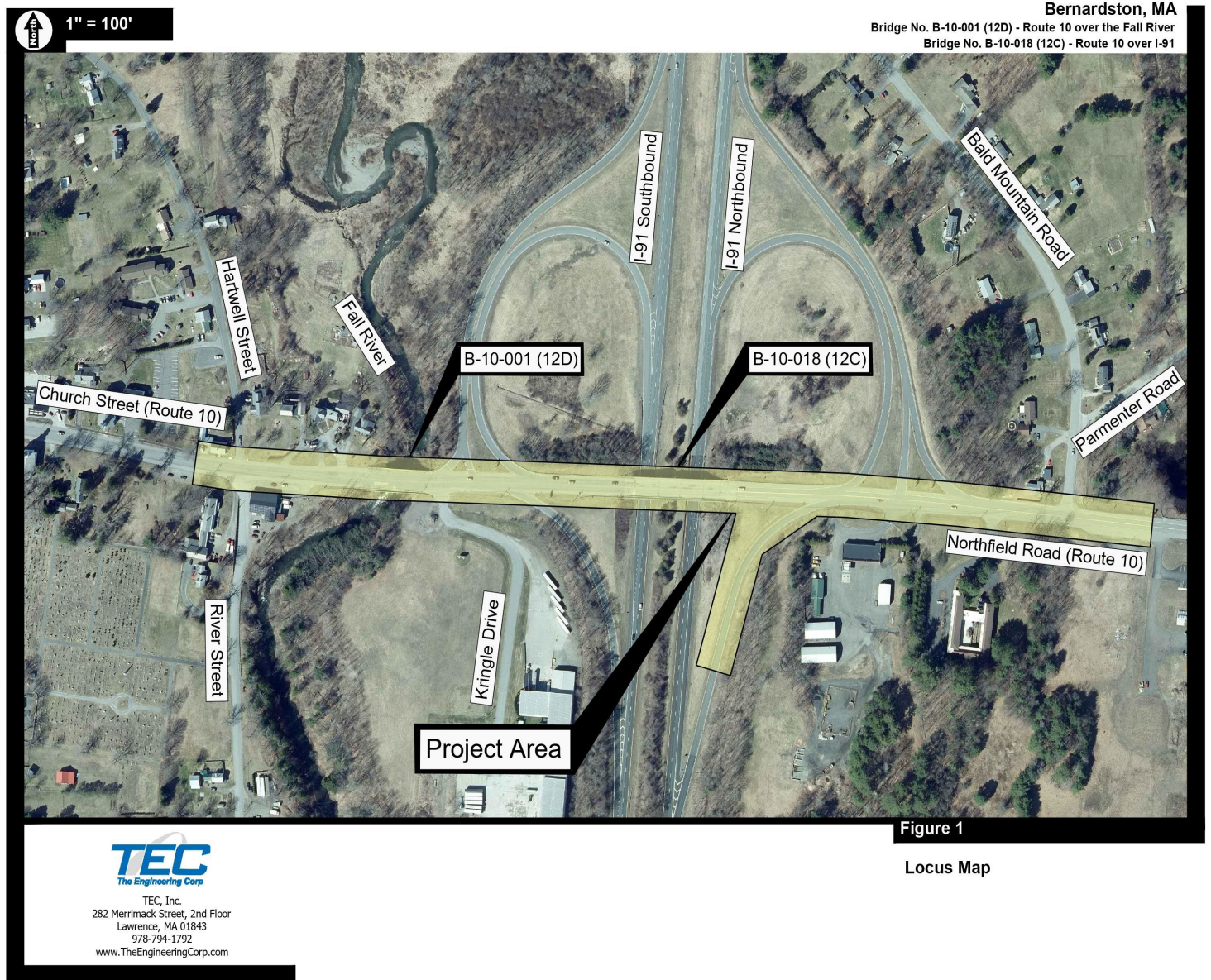
MassDOT encourages input from local communities and values your opinions. Please be assured that we will undertake no project without addressing the concerns of the community.

Sincerely,

Carrie E. Lavalley, P.E.
Acting Chief Engineer

LOCUS MAP

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WHAT IS A PUBLIC HEARING?

WHY A PUBLIC HEARING?

To provide an assured method whereby the Commonwealth of Massachusetts can furnish to the public information concerning the State's highway construction proposals, and to afford every interested resident of the area an opportunity to be heard on any proposed project. At the same time, the hearings afford the Commonwealth an additional opportunity to receive information from local sources which would be of value to the State in making its final decisions to what design should be advanced for development.

WHY NOT A VOTE ON HIGHWAY PLANS?

The hearings are not intended to be a popular referendum for the purpose of determining the nature of a proposed improvement by a majority of those present. They do not relieve the duly constituted officials of a State highway department of the necessity for making decisions in State highway matters for which they are charged with full responsibility.

WHAT DOES A PUBLIC HEARING ACCOMPLISH?

It is designed to ensure the opportunity for, or the availability of, a forum to provide factual information which is pertinent to the determination of the final alternative considered by the state to best serve the public interest, and on which improvement projects are proposed to be undertaken.

It is important that the people of the area express their views in regard to the proposal being presented, so that views can be properly recorded in the minutes of the meeting. These minutes will be carefully studied and taken into consideration in the determination of the final design.

RIGHT OF WAY CONCERNS

The State is responsible for securing the Right of Way for this project. If your property, or a portion of it, must be acquired by the State for highway purposes in the interest of all people of the Commonwealth, your rights are fully protected under the law. Briefly, here are some of the answers to questions you might ask.

1. WHO CONTACTS ME?

Representatives of the Right of Way Bureau of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's Highway Division. They will explain the impacts and your rights as protected under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 79.

2. WHAT IS A FAIR PRICE FOR MY PROPERTY?

Every offer is made to ensure that an equitable value is awarded to you for the property, or to appraise the "damage" to the property as a result of the acquisition. MassDOT appraisers, independent appraisers, MassDOT "Review Appraisers" and a Real Estate Appraisal Review Board may all contribute in arriving at an award of damages. The State also pays a proportionate part of the real estate tax for the current year for fee takings, and interest from the date the property is acquired to the payment date, on all impacts.

3. MUST I ACCEPT THE DEPARTMENT'S OFFER?

No. If, after the figure established as market value has been offered to the owner, the owner feels he or she is not being offered a fair price, he or she has the right, within three years, to appeal to the courts. Pending a court decision, he or she can be paid on a "pro-tanto" basis (or "for the time being") that in no way prejudices the court appeal.

4. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MY HOUSE?

The owner will have the opportunity to buy back his or her house, provided he or she has a location to which it can be moved, and the proper permits for its removal. If the owner does not wish to repurchase, the house will be advertised for bids. The highest bidder, who must also have a location and permits for removal, will be awarded the house. Otherwise, the structure will be slated for demolition.

5. WHAT HAPPENS IF I MUST RELOCATE?

In addition to the market value of the property, the Department pays certain relocation benefits for both owners and tenants of acquired residences and businesses who meet eligibility requirements. Assistance in relocation is also provided. Department brochures are available for details on these benefits.

BERNARDSTON – Bridge No. B-10-001 (12D) & B-10-018 (12C) (612159)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Location and Existing Bridge Conditions:

Route 10 within the project limits is currently a two-lane, east-west rural major collector under the jurisdiction of MassDOT. This roadway is designated as a rural major collector west of I-91 and a rural minor arterial east of I-91. Route 10 is also designated as a National Highway System (NHS) Map-21 principal arterial roadway. The roadway is generally 46 to 50 feet wide and consists of one 12- to 13-foot-wide travel lane in each direction with directional flow separated by a marked double-yellow centerline. A sidewalk is provided along the north side of Route 10, west of Hartwell Street. A sidewalk with substandard width is provided along the south side of the bridge structures over both Fall River and I-91. Although the roadway has wide shoulders near the interchange, formal bicycle accommodations are not provided. The posted speed limit is 45 miles per hour (mph) in the vicinity of the interchange but drops to 35 mph on the west side of the Fall River Bridge as Route 10 enters the more densely developed village area of Bernardston. The land use along Route 10 primarily consists of a mix of commercial, residential, and religious institutions.

Bridge No. B-10-001, constructed in 1959, carries Church Street (Route 10) over the Fall River and has fallen into a state of disrepair and requires a full replacement. Deficiencies in the deck include several spalls with exposed deteriorated rebar. Similarly, the existing concrete piers have several areas of spalling with exposed debonded rebar and evidence of previous scour. The latest routine inspection report from February 2024 lists both concrete deck and substructure with a rating of “3” or Poor condition.

Bridge No. B-10-018, constructed in 1959, carries Northfield Road (Route 10) over I-91 and requires repairs to the superstructure. The latest inspections by MassDOT report that the existing concrete deck is in Fair condition (rating of “5”) after recent repairs to the east end of the deck. Previously, the deck was reported to be in poor condition after a routine inspection revealed that the deck deflected under heavy loading. Deficiencies in the deck include several locations with cracks, spalls, and hollow areas.

Project Purpose:

The purpose of the project is to improve the existing structural infrastructure along Route 10 and to improve approximately one-half mile of the Route 10 roadway infrastructure by addressing existing multi-modal safety and operational deficiencies along the corridor.

Proposed Project:

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts working in conjunction with the Town of Bernardston proposes to completely replace the Route 10 over Fall River Bridge (B-10-001 (12D)) and replace the deck of the Route 10 over I-91 Bridge (B-10-018 (12C)). In addition, the project includes improving the roadway infrastructure along Route 10 from the intersection with

Hartwell Street to just east of the intersection with Bald Mountain Road (a length of approximately one-half mile), by proposing new pavement, stormwater drainage structures and pipes, sidewalk, granite curbing, signs, and pavement markings. Route 10 is proposed to be modified to feature one 12-foot wide travel lane in each direction. Bicyclists will be accommodated by 5-foot to 8-foot bicycle lanes with 3-foot to 6-foot painted bicycle buffers throughout the project limits. Pedestrians will be accommodated with a new 6-foot sidewalk throughout the project limits, predominantly on the south side of the roadway. High visibility crosswalks with Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFBs) will be constructed at mid-block crossing locations.

Maintenance of Traffic During Construction:

The Contractor will coordinate with MassDOT and Town Officials regarding work hours and traffic circulation. All temporary traffic control measures will be approved by the State prior to implementation.

A majority of the proposed improvements can be constructed with a work zone configuration that would allow for bi-directional travel along Route 10 guided by temporary traffic control measures.

There may be a limited time in which portions of the roadway(s) may require a full closure. Under this circumstance, a temporary detour would be established with advance warning signs. Closures would be carefully coordinated to take place during off-peak hours. Detour routes would be approved at the State and Town level and advance notice would be provided to the impacted areas.

Project Schedule:

The design reviewed at this meeting is at the 25% stage of completion. Comments made at this design hearing will be incorporated to the maximum extent feasible in the 75% design currently anticipated for Winter 2024. The 100% and final designs would then be completed in 2025, and the date for public bidding advertisement is scheduled for Federal Fiscal Year 2026. Construction is anticipated to start in Summer/Fall 2026.

Project Cost:

The estimated total construction cost for this project is approximately \$29.6 million. Funding for the construction will be through the Federal Highway Administration (80%) (FHWA) and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (20%).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How long will construction last?

It is expected that construction will take approximately four construction seasons.

What time of day will construction take place?

Work will take place Monday through Friday. No work that requires a lane closure will take place during peak traffic times, which is generally from 7:00 am to 9:00 am and from 3:00 pm to 6:00 pm. Short term night and weekend work may be necessary during bridge construction and will require approval by the Town and MassDOT.

How will construction impact my business or residence?

Access to all residences and businesses will be maintained during construction.

Will trees be impacted by the project?

Yes, due to the replacement of the Route 10 bridge over the Fall River, some trees in the vicinity of the bridge will need to be removed, including to make room for the temporary relocation of utility poles and overhead wires to keep these utilities temporarily further away from the bridge during construction.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION

FEDERAL AID PROJECT

Bernardston, MA
**Bridge Replacement, B-10-001, Route 10 over the Fall River and Deck Replacement,
B-10-018, Route 10 over I-91**
Project File No. 612159

This sheet is provided for your comments. Your input is solicited and appreciated. You may e-mail comments directly to MassDOTProjectManagement@dot.state.ma.us or you may mail this sheet with any additional comments to:

Carrie E. Lavalley, P.E., Chief Engineer
MassDOT – Highway Division
10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116-3973
Attn: Project Management

Statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be emailed or postmarked no later than ten (10) business days after the hearing.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY.

Name: _____ Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

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Carrie E. Lavallee, P.E.
Chief Engineer
MassDOT – Highway Division
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116-3973

RE: Virtual Public Hearing
**Bridge Replacement, B-10-001, Route 10 over the Fall River and Deck Replacement,
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