



**DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING**

**MARCH 14, 2024**

**FOR THE PROPOSED**

**BRIDGE STREET OVER BASS RIVER (HALL-WHITAKER DRAWBRIDGE)  
TEMPORARY BRIDGE REPLACEMENT  
PROJECT NO. 608514  
BRIDGE NO. B-11-001(T)**

**IN THE CITY OF BEVERLY, 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 PUBLIC HEARING**  
**Project File No. 608514**

A Design Public Hearing will be held to present the design for the proposed BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, B-11-001(T), BRIDGE STREET OVER BASS RIVER (HALL-WHITAKER DRAWBRIDGE) TEMPORARY BRIDGE project in Beverly, MA.

WHERE: Beverly Middle School, Auditorium  
502 Cabot St, Beverly, MA 01915

WHEN: Thursday, March 14, 2024  
6:30-8:00PM

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, B-11-001(T), BRIDGE STREET OVER BASS RIVER (HALL-WHITAKER DRAWBRIDGE) TEMPORARY BRIDGE project. All views and comments submitted in response to the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible. In addition, updates to the permanent replacement of the Hall Whitaker and adjacent Kernwood Avenue Bridge (Beverly-Salem) will also be discussed.

PROPOSAL: The proposed project consists of the installation of a TEMPORARY BRIDGE replacement for the existing BRIDGE STREET OVER BASS RIVER (HALL-WHITAKER DRAWBRIDGE) and the demolition of the existing bridge. The Temporary Bridge will have bicycle and pedestrian accommodations consisting of a 5' bicycle lane in each direction and a 5' sidewalk on the south side of the temporary bridge structure.

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 [massdotmajorprojects@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:massdotmajorprojects@dot.state.ma.us) or via US Mail to Suite 7210, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Major Projects, Project File No. 608514. Statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the hearing transcript must be emailed or postmarked no later than ten (10) business 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](mailto: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.

In case of inclement weather, a cancellation announcement will be 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 Lavalley, P. E.  
Chief Engineer

## **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 ISSUES**

A secure Right of Way is required for this project. If your property, or a portion of it, must be acquired by the State or Municipality for highway purposes in the interest of all people of the Commonwealth, your rights are fully protected under the law. Procedures are different depending on whether the State or Municipality is making the acquisitions. Briefly, here are some of the answers to questions you might ask.

### **State Acquisitions**

**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.

MassDOT also provides for dispute resolution through the administrative settlement process. You can initiate this by providing documentation and information relative to the value of your property, including but not limited to, an appraisal for our review. If resolution cannot be reached through the administrative settlement process, you can still bring a claim in court for additional monies at any time during the three-year period.

**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.

## Municipal Acquisitions

### 1. REASON FOR PROJECT?

The construction of this project will serve the needs of local users as well as those of the greater surrounding communities. The proposed enhancement has been designed to service and provide for the public good.

### 2. WHO CONTACTS ME?

Representatives of the municipality have already contacted, or will contact you. They will explain the process and procedures used in acquiring any necessary rights required for the proposed project.

### 3. APPRAISALS, DONATIONS, RIGHTS OF ENTRY?

Impacted Property owners are entitled to an appraisal and Just Compensation, however, municipalities will often seek donations of parcels as this procedure will minimize the acquisition cost for your community.

A Right of Entry is a document that is signed by the owner. It allows the Contractor to perform certain types of temporary work on the owner's land. The work is usually minor in nature and frequently consists of loaming/seeding behind sidewalks, new driveway apron work, grading/sloping, etc.

### 4. WHAT IS A FAIR PRICE FOR THE ACQUIRED PARCELS?

When donations or Rights of Entry are not considered, or completed, every effort will be made to ensure that an equitable value is awarded. Municipal and/or outside appraisers will complete an appraisal and review appraisal. Consideration is given to the type of rights needed, whether in fee, permanent or temporary easements. The appraisal will be the basis for arriving at a fair price (Just compensation), for the rights to be acquired.

### 5. MUST I ACCEPT THE MUNICIPALITY OFFER?

No, if the owner feels that the offer is not fair the owner may petition the courts. This action does not stop or delay the acquisition. The action must occur within 3 years from the date of the recording of the acquired parcel(s). The owner(s) may be paid pro tanto (for the time being). The pro tanto payment will not prejudice the court's final decision.

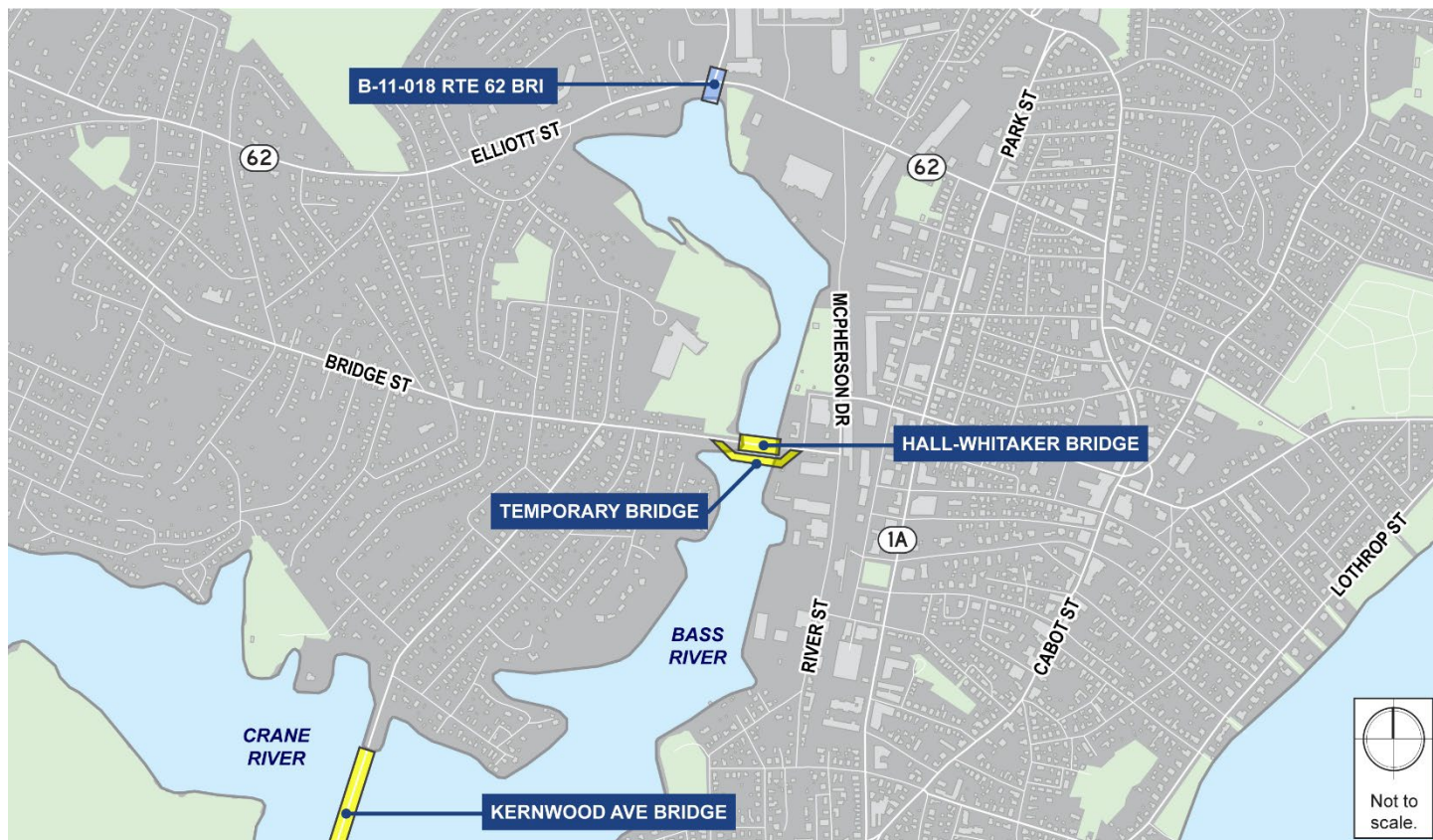


Figure 1: Project Locus Map

**Project Location:**

The Hall-Whitaker Bridge connects Ryal Side to Downtown via Bridge Street over the Bass River in Beverly, Massachusetts.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this project is to safely restore vehicular traffic to Bridge Street. The project entails constructing a temporary fixed bridge south of the existing bridge to restore vehicular traffic and to provide a reliable traffic route during the future full bridge replacement, and then demolishing the existing bridge. The permanent bridge replacement will be completed under a separate and future construction contract.

**Existing Conditions:**

The Hall-Whitaker Bridge is closed to vehicular traffic but remains open to pedestrians and bicycles, and navigation. Prior to closure it was posted for 10-ton vehicles limiting truck, emergency response, school bus, and other access across the bridge. The existing structure is beyond its useful life, and due to the extent of deterioration and necessary repairs, the bridge cannot be repaired and requires a full replacement.

**Proposed Project:**

The project entails constructing new foundations supported on temporary piles, maintaining the existing navigational channel location, constructing piers, and erecting a fixed steel-framed and prefabricated panel bridge immediately south of the existing bridge alignment. The temporary bridge will carry two 10-foot vehicle lanes, one in each direction, two 5-foot shoulders (for shared bicycle use), and a 5-foot sidewalk on one side. Following the opening of the temporary bridge, the existing bridge and part of its substructure will be demolished.

**Maintenance of Traffic During Repairs:**

During the temporary bridge construction, pedestrians and bicycles will continue to use the existing bridge northern sidewalk. The existing vehicular detour will remain in place until completion of the temporary bridge.

**Project Schedule:**

Construction on the temporary bridge is anticipated to start in 2025 and open to traffic in 2027. Construction of the permanent bridge replacement is scheduled to begin following the opening of the temporary bridge.

**Project Cost:**

The conceptual cost estimate for this project is \$10 million.



## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**Q:** Why does this project need to happen?

**A:** While currently safe for pedestrians and bicycle users, inspections in 2022 identified deficiencies in the structure. Major repairs and total replacement are necessary to ensure future safety and to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century infrastructure standards.

**Q:** During construction, how will pedestrian access be managed?

**A:** Pedestrian access will be maintained on the existing bridge northern sidewalk.

**Q:** Will there be any improvement to pedestrian and bicycle access?

**A:** Currently pedestrians and bicyclists are sharing the existing bridge sidewalks. Once the temporary bridge opens, bicyclists will have a 5-foot bike lane in each direction, and pedestrians will have a protected 5-foot sidewalk on the south side of the temporary bridge.

**Q:** Are you coordinating with other projects in the area?

**A:** Yes. The project team is fully aware of the projects in the area, including the Bridge Street Reconstruction (MassDOT Project No. 608348), and is committed to actively coordinating with respective project teams, to mitigate construction impacts.

**Q:** What will the environmental impacts of this project be?

**A:** MassDOT is actively coordinating with State and Federal Agencies to understand, avoid, and minimize environmental impacts.

**Q:** Will there be impacts to Bass River access during construction?

**A:** As part of the construction, there will need to be some restrictions to the River in order to remove bridge piers and build new supports. However, the project team will have provisions to maintain access for boaters, and for notification and coordination with the Harbor Master and Coast Guard.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
HIGHWAY DIVISION

NON FEDERAL AID

Beverly, MA  
BEVERLY- BRIDGE STREET OVER BASS RIVER (HALL-WHITAKER DRAWBRIDGE)  
TEMPORARY BRIDGE REPLACEMENT  
BRIDGE NO. B-11-001(T)

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

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

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.**

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Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

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

RE: Public Information Meeting  
BEVERLY- BRIDGE REPLACEMENT, BRIDGE STREET OVER BASS RIVER  
(HALL-WHITAKER DRAWBRIDGE)  
Project No. 608514  
**BEVERLY**  
Project File No. 608514

Attn: Major Projects

