



**VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING**

**OCTOBER 21, 2021  
6:30 PM**

**FOR THE PROPOSED**

**CIRCLE STREET over NORTH NASHUA RIVER  
BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT**

**Project No. 605296  
Bridge No. F-04-011 (1JT)  
Project Management**

**IN THE CITY OF FITCHBURG, MASSACHUSETTS**

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

**JONATHAN GULLIVER  
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR**

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

**THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**  
**MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION**  
**NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING**  
**Project File No. 605296**

A Virtual Design Public Hearing will be published on the MassDOT website below to present the design for the proposed Circle Street over the North Nashua River Bridge Replacement project in Fitchburg, MA.

**WHEN: Thursday October 21, 2021**

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed Circle Street over the North Nashua River Bridge Replacement 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 a superstructure replacement and substructure rehabilitation of the existing Circle Street Bridge over the North Nashua River and associated approach roadway work along Circle Street. The abutments and wingwalls will be repaired and modified to accommodate the proposed bridge superstructure. The bridge will consist of one (1) 12'-0" travel lane, an 8'-8¾" parking lane, and one (1) 7'-7¾" sidewalk. Sidewalk access ramps along Circle Street will be added to accommodate pedestrians as part of this project.

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

Written statements and other exhibits regarding the proposed undertaking are to be submitted to Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E., Chief Engineer, MassDOT, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Major Projects, Project File No. **605296**. Mailed statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be postmarked no later than ten (10) business days after the hearing is posted to the MassDOT website listed below. Project inquiries may be emailed to [dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us](mailto:dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us).

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 prior to the meeting, 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 Virtual Design Public Hearing or a cancellation announcement will be posted on the internet at [www.mass.gov/massdot-highway-design-public-hearings](http://www.mass.gov/massdot-highway-design-public-hearings).

JONATHAN GULLIVER  
LEAVENWORTH, P.E.  
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

PATRICIA A.  
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. Lavallee, P.E.  
Acting 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 CONCERNS**

Your Municipality is responsible for securing the right of way for this project. If your property, or a portion of it, must be acquired by the Municipality 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. REASON FOR PROJECT**

The completion of this project will serve local needs. The proposed enhancement will also be in the interest of others in the greater community, 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 procedures used in acquiring any necessary rights in land.

### **3. WHAT ABOUT DONATIONS? WHAT IS A RIGHT OF ENTRY?**

Town officials will often seek donations, of parcels, where permanent rights are required. 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 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, and wetland protection, etc. The rights granted are temporary in nature.

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

In the event that donations 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. 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 (for damages that result).

### **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. The owner(s) may be paid pro tanto (for the time being). The pro tanto payment will not prejudice the court's final decision.



### **Project Location and Limits**

The project area extends along Circle Street for approximately 418 feet west of Main Street to just about the edge of the field house on Circle Street.

### **Project Purpose**

The purpose of this project is to replace the existing structurally deficient bridge that carried Circle Street over the North Nashua River. The proposed project will increase the load carrying capacity of the bridge and improve vehicle and pedestrian safety in the area.

### **Existing Conditions**

Circle Street is a single-lane roadway with westbound traffic coming from Main Street. While sections of Circle Street have sidewalks for pedestrian safety, the availability of ramp access is limited. The existing bridge concrete deck and steel beam are below satisfactory with multiple deficiencies. The existing substructures are satisfactory with minor concrete spalling found throughout.

### **Proposed Improvements**

The work includes demolition of the existing bridge. The existing bridge will be replaced with a new steel beam and reinforced concrete deck supported on rehabilitated existing concrete abutments. Sidewalk ramps will be installed on the south side of the bridge. Approximately 418 feet of Circle Street will be reconstructed as part of this project. A 7.5-foot sidewalk will be constructed along the south side of Circle, an 8-foot parking lane will be provided on the north side of the bridge, and 12-foot wide travel lane will be provided across the bridge. The improvements include upgrading the existing abutment drainage system and construction of accessible ramps along Circle Street, which are consistent with standards set by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

### **Traffic Management**

Due to the condition and geometry of the existing bridge, staged construction is not a viable option for this project. The project will be constructed in one stage utilizing a proposed detour. Only Fitchburg Fire and Safety is anticipated to be affected by the detour.

### **Utilities**

Overhead utility line and utility poles will be relocated to accommodate this project. Drainage will also be updated with the project limits.

### **Right of Way**

The City of Fitchburg shall obtain the necessary rights to access property that is impacted by the construction of the improvements. Permanent Right of Way takings, Temporary Construction Easements and Permanent Utility Easements will be required for this project.

### **Project Cost**

The cost of the proposed project is approximately \$3,099,000.

### **Project Status**

The design is currently at the 25% Design Stage. Comments received during the ten (10) day review period will be considered in determining the final design. The design is anticipated to be complete in the spring of 2022 and construction is anticipated to be completed within 15-18 months.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
HIGHWAY DIVISION

FEDERAL AID PROJECT

Fitchburg, MA  
Circle Street over North Nashua River Bridge Replacement Project  
Project File No. 605296

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](mailto:MassDOTProjectManagement@dot.state.ma.us) or you may mail this sheet with any additional comments to:

Carrie E. Lavallee, P.E., Acting 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.**

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Please Fold and Tape

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

RE: Virtual Public Hearing  
Circle Street over North Nashua River  
**FITCHBURG**  
Project File No. 605296  
Attn: Project Management