



VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING WEBINAR

AUGUST 11, 2021

FOR THE PROPOSED

**ROUTE 30 OVER THE CHARLES RIVER
PROJECT FILE NO. 110980
HIGHWAY DIVISION**

IN THE CITY of NEWTON and TOWN OF WESTON, 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 WEBINAR
Project File No. 110980

A Live Virtual Design Public Hearing will be hosted on the MassDOT website below to present the design for the proposed NEWTON-WESTON BRIDGE REHABILITATION, N-12-010=W-29-005, COMMONWEALTH AVENUE (ROUTE 30) OVER THE CHARLES RIVER project.

WHEN: Wednesday, August 11, 2021, 6PM-8PM

WHERE:[Virtualmeeting.link/Newton-Weston-Bridge](https://virtualmeeting.link/Newton-Weston-Bridge)

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed NEWTON-WESTON- BRIDGE REHABILITATION, N-12-010=W-29-005, COMMONWEALTH AVENUE (ROUTE 30) OVER THE CHARLES RIVER 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 replacement of MassDOT-owned bridge N-12-001/W-25-015 to address the condition of the existing structure. The replacement bridge will remain within the footprint of the existing structure. In response to recommendations provided from the 2011 CTPS report for “Low-Cost Improvements to Bottleneck Locations,” this project also proposes to apply operational improvements to I-95 NB through the relocation of interstate access from the current Route 30 eastbound (EB) on-ramp to the Collector Distributor (CD) Road to I-95 NB via modifications to the current Route 30 WB to I-95 NB ramp. The eastern project limits will also include the reconfiguration of the Auburn Street intersection to support the phased reconstruction of bridge N-12-001/W-25-015 and improve access and safety for all modes. The project will also provide pedestrian and bicycle accommodations within the project limits to improve connectivity and access. Multimodal accommodations consisting of accessible pedestrian facilities, separated bike lanes, and a shared use path have been provided in accordance with applicable design guides.

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., Acting Chief Engineer, via e-mail to dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us or via US Mail to Suite 6340, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: **Major Projects**, Project File No. 110980. 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 is posted to the MassDOT website listed below.

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 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.

JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

CARRIE E. LAVALLEE, P.E.
ACTING 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

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is responsible for securing the right of way for this project. If your property, or a portion of it, must be acquired by the Commonwealth 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 Commonwealth 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. The Commonwealth 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 COMMONWEALTH'S 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.

FIGURE 1: LOCUS MAP

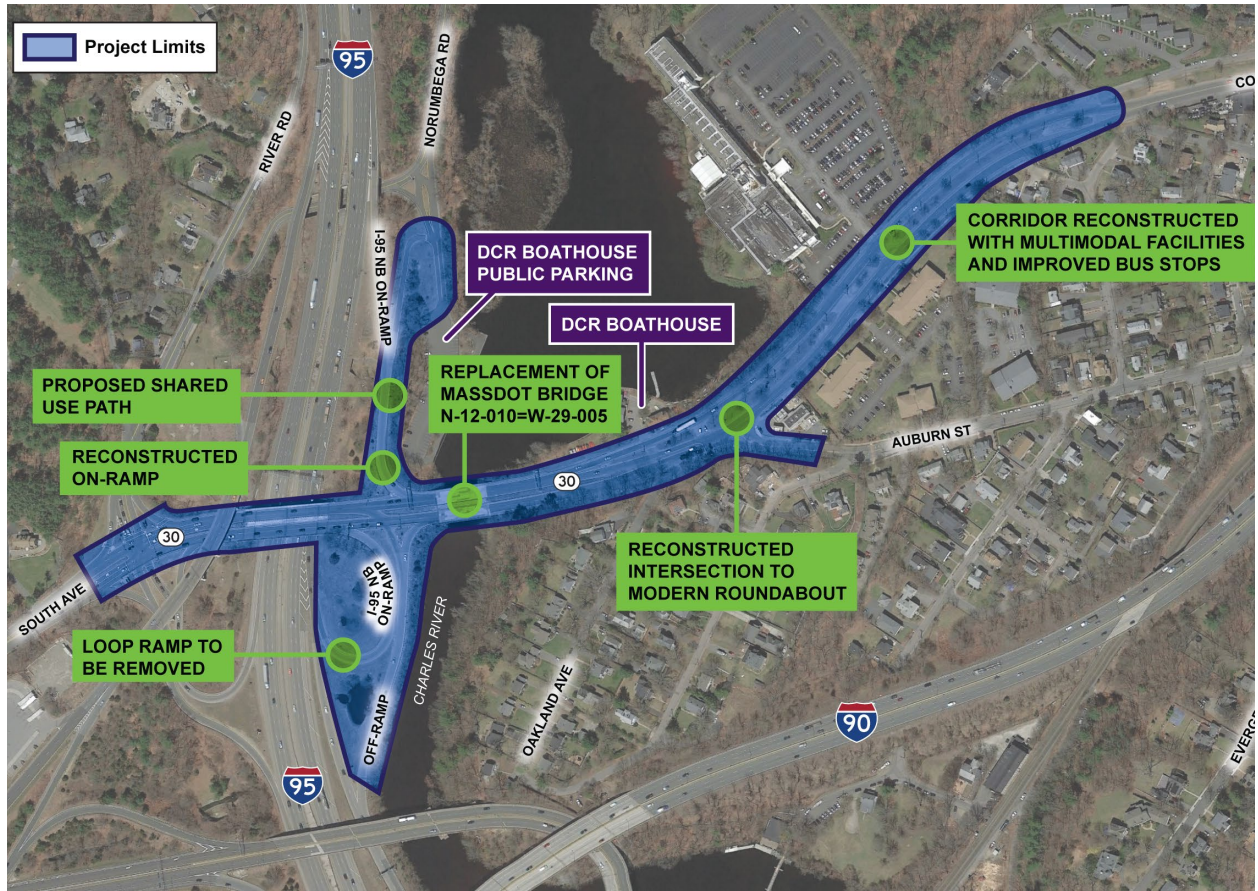
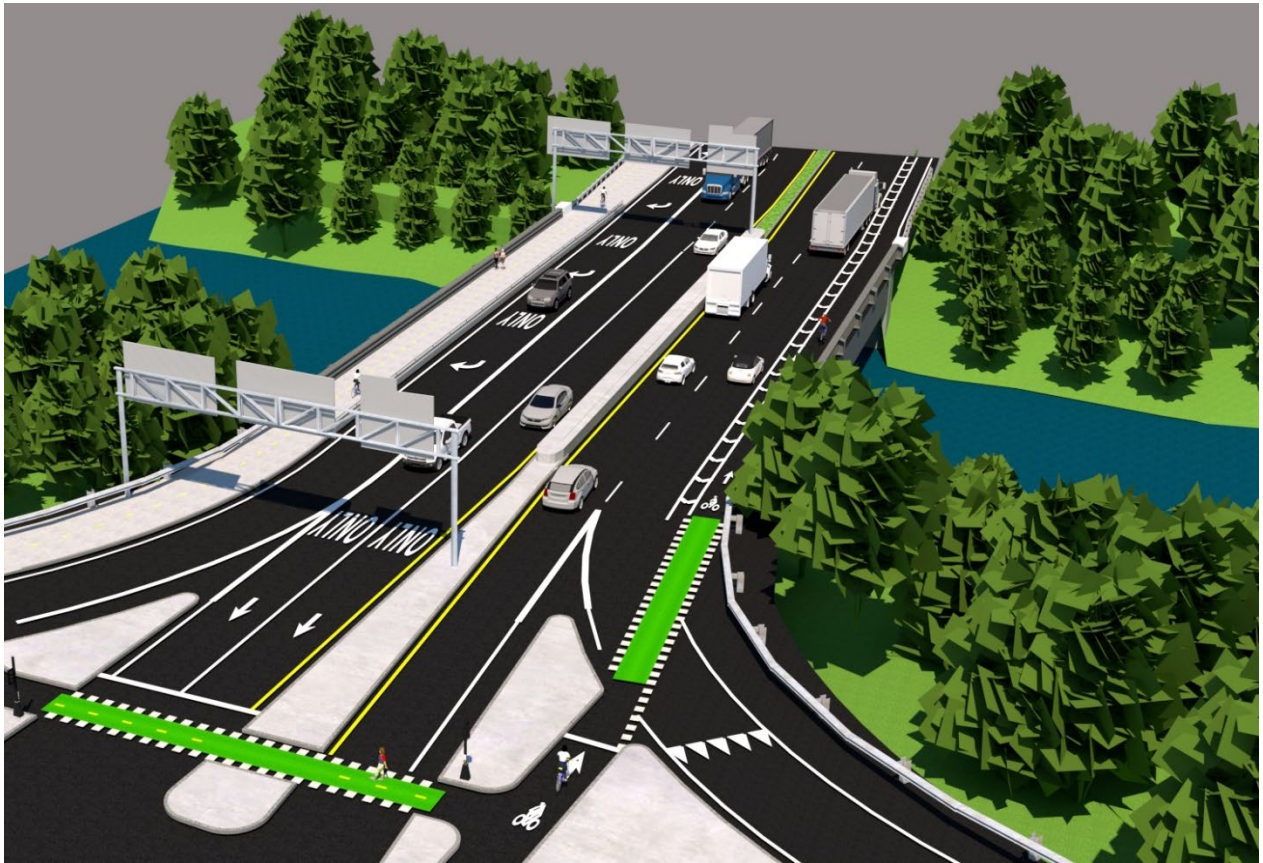


FIGURE 2: PROPOSED BRIDGE



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Location:

The project is located on the Weston/Newton town line and extends into the Auburndale neighborhood of Newton. The majority of work will take place in Newton with Weston work confined to the state right-of-way on Route 30 and Interstate 95. The project area encompasses approximately 0.8 miles and includes Route 30 (Commonwealth Avenue), the bridge carrying Route 30 over the Charles River, Auburn Street, and the I-95 northbound ramps.

Route 30, classified as an urban principal arterial that primarily runs east-west, provides connectivity from Central Massachusetts to Boston. Within the project area, to the west of Oakland Avenue Route 30 is under MassDOT jurisdiction. To the east of Oakland Avenue Route 30 is under the City of Newton's jurisdiction. I-95 is the main East Coast interstate highway which services major cities such as Washington D.C., New York City, and Boston. In addition to regular commuter and individual trips, I-95 is a major freight artery for the Commonwealth. The immediate area is primarily residential and is home to the Newton Historic Boathouse on the Charles River and the Boston Marriott Newton. The Leo J. Martin Memorial Golf Course and the Woodland Golf Course are located nearby.

Purpose:

The purpose of the proposed project is to address the structural and functional deficiencies along Route 30 and at the I-95 interchange in Newton and Weston. The bridge carrying Route 30 over the Charles River will be replaced with a structure that meets current design and safety standards and improves access for all road users. Route 30 within the project area will also receive safety and accessibility improvements with the introduction of Complete Streets Accommodations and the reconstruction of the Auburn Street intersection into a modern roundabout. Modifications to the I-95 northbound ramps will also seek to improve safety and reduce congestion on I-95 and connecting streets within the project area.

Existing Conditions:

The bridge carrying Route 30 over the Charles River is structurally obsolete. While the bridge is currently safe for travel, its advancing age contributes to its deterioration. The bridge also lacks pedestrian and cyclist facilities, contributing to poor connectivity in the area.

A safety analysis of the Auburn Street intersection called attention to poor sightlines, high speeds, and confusing geometry that has resulted in a significant number of automobile crashes in recent years. The locations of business' driveways and a lack of crossings on Commonwealth Avenue cause concerns for pedestrian safety.

The merging areas onto I-95 northbound are closely spaced. The weaving length on the collector-distributor road is substandard which leads to frequent congestion.

Proposed Project:

This project will replace the bridge carrying Route 30 over the Charles River. Route 30 will receive roadway and multimodal improvements including repaving, ADA compliant facilities, and a bi-directional shared use path on the north side. These improvements will extend into the Auburn Street intersection which will be reconstructed as a modern roundabout. At the Route 30/ I-95 interchange, the eastbound on-ramp to I-95 northbound will be removed and the existing westbound on-ramp will be modified.

Maintenance of Traffic During Construction:

The proposed scope is anticipated to span the duration of approximately three years to provide a phased construction approach that will maintain all traffic and pedestrian movements throughout the work zone. The bridge is anticipated to be demolished and reconstructed in a manner that supports enough lanes to meet the demand of the average daily traffic. It is anticipated that temporary signage, signals, and lighting will be employed where necessary to manage traffic flow and provide visibility for safety throughout construction. Existing pedestrian areas will continue to have safe and accessible pedestrian accommodations provided throughout construction as well.

Project Schedule:

The project plans on display this evening are at the 25% design stage. Comments from this Public Hearing will be incorporated into the final design plans to the maximum extent possible. It is anticipated that the final design plans will be completed, and the project advertised for construction bids in 2022 with construction beginning in 2023.

Project Cost:

The estimated construction cost for this project is approximately \$23 million. Funding for the construction will be Federal Highway Administration (80%) (FHWA) and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts (20%).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Are there examples of successful modern roundabouts handling similar traffic volumes?

A: Yes, including: Lake Avenue at South Avenue in Worcester, Washington Street(Route 85) at Broad Street in Hudson, Route 28 in Chatham, Main Street/ Route 146 in Millbury, Route 115 in Norfolk, Route 116 in South Amherst, and Boylston Street/ Lincoln Street in Worcester.

Q: Is the roundabout safe?

A: Yes. Roundabouts have been proven to reduce overall collision severity. They manage vehicular speeds to 20-25 mph at the intersection. They contain fewer vehicle-to-vehicle and vehicle-to-pedestrian conflict points than a signalized intersection. They are proven to reduce the likelihood of future severe crashes, practically eliminating right-angle, left-turn, and head-on collisions.

Q: How will cyclists navigate the roundabout?

A: Cyclists can use the provided shared use path and separated bike lanes proposed outside of the travel lanes in the roundabout.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION

FEDERAL AID PROJECT

Newton and Weston, MA
Route 30 Over the Charles River
Project File No. 110980

This sheet is provided for your comments. Your input is solicited and appreciated. Please 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

The final date for receipt of written statements and exhibits for inclusion into the official hearing transcript will be ten (10) days after the Public Hearing Webinar.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY.

Name: _____ Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

Please Fold and Tape



Please Place
Appropriate
Postage Here

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

RE: Virtual Public Hearing
ROUTE 30 OVER THE CHARLES RIVER
BOSTON, MA
Project File No. 110980
Highway Division

