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North Washington Street Bridge Replacement

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Project Status

As of January, 2016, the 25% Design Public Hearing has been held. Community comments from the hearing will be incorporated to the fullest extent possible.

25% Preliminary Design Public Hearing - December 16, 2015

- [Presentation](#)
- [Minutes](#)

The project will undergo the final design process, including environmental permitting and continued outreach to interested parties and stakeholders, throughout 2016. Construction of the project is anticipated to begin in 2017 and continue to 2020, using accelerated construction techniques.

Charlestown Neighborhood Council Briefing - April 6, 2016

- [Presentation](#)
- [Minutes](#)

Getting Involved

For more information, to join the stakeholder database, or to request a briefing, please contact:

[Michael O'Dowd](#) - Project Manager

[Nathaniel Curtis](#) - Public Involvement Specialist

Project Overview

The North Washington Street Bridge, also known as the Charlestown Bridge, is an essential connection between Charlestown and the North End. Currently, the bridge has two vehicle lanes in each direction; the center truss bay lanes have been closed to traffic since 2003. The Freedom Trail follows the north-eastern side of the span, but the sidewalks are narrow and no cycling facilities are provided.

The bridge is owned by the City of Boston, which currently spends between \$3 and \$5 million a year to maintain the functionality of the deteriorating structure. City of Boston and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) acknowledge the historical significance of the bridge and originally made attempts to rehabilitate and restore the structure. These were, however, deemed imprudent and impracticable. It has been determined that the span must be replaced to ensure safety, accessibility and long-term serviceability.

The need to replace the structure offers a unique opportunity to create a new link between the North End and Charlestown that will be livable, walkable, green and multimodal. To achieve this vision, the project is being led by MassDOT, in partnership with the City of Boston Public Works Department, Alfred Benesch & Company engineering consultants, and Rosales+Partners architectural consultants. The project limits extend on North Washington Street from Causeway Street in the North End to City Square in Charlestown.

The proposed design will provide improved pedestrian, cycling, transit, vehicle and boat navigation facilities, while visually complementing the iconic Zakim Bridge. As of the 75% design, the proposed bridge will expand the currently narrow sidewalks to provide a safer and more pleasant experience for pedestrians. Improvements will include architectural design elements, plantings, lighting and an improved treatment for the Freedom Trail. The sidewalk width will be expanded through the center navigation span, creating an outlook and pedestrian friendly environment. Interpretive signs at the overlook will inform visitors of nearby landmarks visible from the bridge. Additionally, the link in the Harborwalk from Lovejoy Wharf to the Prince Street Park that goes under the North Washington Street Bridge will be replaced to address current flooding issues

Separated cycle tracks on either side will create a safer connection across the Charles River and tie in to the Connect Historic Boston network on Causeway Street. Two vehicle lanes will be provided in both directions, and a new bus only lane will be accommodated in the southbound direction. The proposed design will create a more open channel for boats, while maintaining flood control measures associated with the Charles River locks. Finally, the proposed design includes a vertical trellis along the navigation span and "Y" shaped piers that visually mimic the geometry of the Zakim Bridge.



Managing vehicular, public transit, pedestrian, and cyclist traffic during construction is essential to the success of the project. In addition, many utilities have to be accommodated during construction. To maintain the greatest level of accessibility possible during construction, a combination of staging strategies, accelerated construction techniques, and temporary pedestrian and vehicle bridges will be utilized.

[View a printable fact sheet](#) summarizing the project.

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