

Northern Avenue Bridge

May 6, 2020 Online Open Public Meeting

Responses to Written Questions and Comments

The following is a summary of responses to written questions received during the Q&A portion of the online meeting, some of which the team was unable to address during the meeting. The responses are grouped by main topic. The questions are summarized and paraphrased to capture the similar nature of many of the questions asked.

Cost/Funding

Where will the funding come from? And, what is the cost of a pedestrian/bicycle only structure versus this alternative? *The project will be funded by the City of Boston. Costs for the range of design concepts was discussed extensively during Mayoral Advisory Task Force (MATF) meetings. Details can be found in documents posted on the website at <https://www.northernavebridgebos.com/meetingmaterialsandreports>.*

How will the City ensure funding is secured to complete the project? *This is a once in a lifetime chance and the Mayor is committed to an iconic new structure that commemorates the historic bridge and accommodates potential needs in the future while being as bold as Boston.*

What is the anticipated annual maintenance cost? *The maintenance cost will vary year over year. Maintenance costs will be low in the years immediately following construction, with a relatively large mid-life preservation/rehabilitation cost.*

Structure

Will the bridge and promenade be above projected future sea level rise? *Yes, the promenade will be above 2070 projected sea level rise.*

What percent of the bridge is dedicated to pedestrians and what percent to bicyclists? *The full bridge experience dedicated to pedestrians is 30,200 square feet (SF), or 75%. The full bridge experience dedicated to bicyclists is 10,400 SF, or 25% (a portion of which is a shared Bus/Bike Lane).*

Why was the bridge allowed to fall into such disrepair between 1997 and 2014? And, why was it not moved as requested in 2016? *The original bridge lasted its intended service*

life. The City was not able to acquire the necessary permits in 2016 to relocate the superstructure to dry land.

How does the height of the promenade section of the bridge compare to the height of the vehicular crest of the Moakley Bridge? *The promenade elevation is approximately 10 feet lower than the high point of the Moakley Bridge.*

Why must the ribbons (sections of bridge on either side of the central promenade area) be 24 feet wide? Can they be narrower, or must the Harbor ribbon be symmetrical with the Moakley ribbon that will carry transit/shuttle traffic? How does the overall width of the new bridge compare to the existing one? *A width of 24 feet provides maximum flexibility of use for the planned transit lane as well as emergency vehicle access. The existing bridge is 80 feet wide.*

Galvanized refurbished members and stainless steel for handrails and finish steel should be used. The job should be 100% union. The substructure should be tub type design as with Big Dig structures. *These decisions will be made later in the process, as construction bid documents are prepared.*

Architecture

What are the protections for people using the promenade area from vehicle fumes, splashed water, and large shadowed areas during daylight? *The City will coordinate with the MBTA for transit use. The bridge deck is graded so water will not puddle and will be directed to scuppers (drains) where flow can be directed to avoid impacting pedestrians below. Daylight shadows will vary depending on the time of day.*

What security measures will be in place for those walking under the bridge? The area under the Moakley feels unsafe. *BPW will coordinate with other City agencies to ensure appropriate lighting is provided for underpasses.*

Has there been any consideration to blocking wind? *To block wind, additional structural members would be needed to provide appropriate support and meet standards for wind loads. These would change the profile of the bridge, user experience, and increase cost.*

What is the square footage of space available on the promenade? *In the base design, the promenade square footage is approximately 10,000.*

For historic preservation, consider using a drone in addition to LIDAR. A video of the old bridge opening and closing would be a good addition to the archive. *Part of the virtual reality experience being developed includes the ability to show the bridge opening and closing. Drone footage of the bridge has been obtained.*

Transportation Mode Management

How will the transportation mode interactions (pedestrian, bicycle, transit) at the approaches be managed, and across the bridge? *The project team has presented a 25% design concept and safety is an essential and important priority. As the design evolves, the City will pay significant attention to appropriate mode separation (active and passive controls) to ensure the safety of all travelers.*

Will the current dimensions allow for adequate social distancing for bicyclists? *The design team will review best practices for social distancing related to bicycle travel.*

What MBTA bus route will cross the bridge and will diesel buses be used? *The City is coordinating with the MBTA and with BPDA for the Seaport Strategic Transit Plan, and it will continue to do so as the design is further developed.*

Why is transit needed on this bridge when the MBTA will make the nearby Summer Street a Transit Priority route? Also, the Better Bus Project will eliminate the use of Atlantic Avenue to reach North Station. *The City needs to maintain maximum flexibility and multimodality to serve the current and future needs of the Seaport District.*

What will the City do to ensure private vehicle traffic is not allowed in the future? *On day one, the City is committing to no private vehicle traffic.*

How will the City enforce the transit/shuttle-use-only commitment and keep personal vehicles and Transportation Network Companies, i.e., Uber, off? *Appropriate signage and markings will be used, as in other areas of the City, to control the type of traffic able to use the bridge.*

Could pedestrians be above vehicles? *The current design does not allow for this. The goal is to create a **Harborwalk Promenade** that connects the current Harborwalk to a more exciting place, closer to the water's edge. A true "People First" experience.*

Is the promenade level wheelchair accessible? *Yes, the promenade level will be fully accessible.*

Can light rail be added in the future? *There is no existing light rail network in this location, so this is not currently being considered.*

Why is only outbound transit included? *Based on traffic evaluations, the most beneficial routes are outbound to Boston.*

Are ramps and stairs used for the Harbor Walk connections and access to the promenade? *Ramps and stairs are provided to and from the Harborwalk on the Boston and Seaport sides of the bridge.*

What traffic studies have been done to support including transit? *Evaluations of potential trip time savings for trips from the Seaport to North Station have been prepared.*

What measures will be used to prevent skateboarders from using the structure and causing damage? *The design team will introduce anti-skate boarding details as the design progresses.*

Programming

Why are transit and shuttle buses necessary on the bridge? *The goal is to move the most people out of the Seaport with the highest degree of efficiency while still avoiding private vehicle use. This is accomplished by permitting transit and shuttle use; however, the primary use is pedestrian and bicycle.*

What are the next steps for the public art process? *The Mayor's Office of Arts & Culture is managing this process. Updates will be provided on the Northern Ave Bridge website www.boston.gov/northern-ave.*

Why does the promenade shown vary from previous versions? *Previous versions were conceptual. The project team has begun more detailed design development to incorporate community interests and project needs. These refinements have resulted in changes to previously presented concepts.*

What other programming will be included, i.e., farmer's market, etc.? *The specific programming on the bridge has not been determined. It will be part of ongoing discussions as the project progresses.*

Community Engagement

When is the next community engagement event? *Comments and questions can continue to be sent to the project inbox at team@northernavebridgebos.com. The City will continue to brief stakeholder groups and provide updates on the website at www.boston.gov/northern-ave. Public meetings will be announced via website and eblast. Visit the website to sign up to receive project update and meeting notices.*

How will people who can't attend be informed about the meeting proceedings? *A recording of the meeting, the PowerPoint presentation and handouts, and meeting summary are posted on the website (www.boston.gov/northern-ave) on the project documents page (www.northernavebridgebos.com/meetingmaterialsandreports).*

Other

Why is the tower proposed for the Hook property not shown? *The Hook proposal must go through City permitting, which requires coordination with all abutters and projects. The project team will monitor developments and coordinate with them as designs are presented.*

How will impacts to abutters be mitigated – Barking Crab, Envoy Hotel? *The impacts to specific properties are highly specific. The project team has been and will continue to meet with immediate abutters to discuss property specific issues.*

Can the bridge be named to memorialize veterans who have died of PTSD? *The naming process is ongoing and any final decisions will be made in the future.*

Please provide background on the design team, i.e., experience on similar projects, Boston based, etc.? *The project team is made up of internationally recognized and Boston-based engineers, world-class architects and other discipline teams that are locally based and leaders in their field.*