

What's New!!!

Blackstone River Bikeway Fact Sheet: April 2004

Construction / Design Update:

- * Worcester/Millbury, MA: One mile completed with another mile within the Rt. 20 contract currently under construction.
- * Lincoln, RI: Six miles are complete with another mile under construction.
- * Uxbridge / Millville, MA: A three mile stretch is currently at the 25% design stage.



Completed section within the Rt 146 project...



Bikeway construction in Worcester near Rt. 20.

General Overview:

The concept of a bikeway through the historic Blackstone River Valley, connecting Worcester, Massachusetts, to Providence, Rhode Island, has been championed by the John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. The highway and environmental agencies in both states have joined together to make the concept a reality, with six miles of the 20 miles of bikeway in Rhode Island already constructed, and nearly seven of the 28 miles of bikeway in Massachusetts under design or construction. The Route 146 Project, in Worcester, has provided a singular opportunity to construct an off-road bikeway from Millbury to Quinsigamond Village in Worcester, and portions of that route are already complete.

The Blackstone River Bikeway in Massachusetts was first given form in 1996 when the Conceptual Design and Feasibility Study was published. Beginning in 1994, under an agreement between the Massachusetts Highway Department (MassHighway) and the Department of Environmental Management (DEM), Cullinan Engineering Company, Inc., surveyed the potential bikeway route in

Massachusetts and developed a preferred alignment as well as several alternate alignments for the route. The route was divided into seven segments as indicated in the table below, from Segment 1 beginning at the Massachusetts-Rhode Island State Line to Segment 7 ending at Union Station/Worcester Common in Worcester, MA passing through the municipalities of Blackstone, Millville, Uxbridge, Northbridge, Grafton, Sutton, Millbury, and Worcester.

Summary of Bikeway Segments In MA (South to North)*

Segment 1: Blackstone/Millville - Total Length 15,425 ft (4,701 m) (2.92 miles)

Segment 2: Millville/Uxbridge - Total Length 17,427 ft (5,312 m) (3.30 miles)

Segment 3A: Uxbridge/Northbridge - Total Length 29,474 ft (8,983 m) (5.58 miles)

Segment 3B: Northbridge - Total Length 18,528 ft (5,647 m) (3.51 miles)

Segment 4: Northbridge/Grafton - Total length 7,324 ft (2,232 m) (1.39 miles)

Segment 5A: Grafton/Sutton - Total Length 13,807 ft (4,208 m) (2.61 miles)

Segment 5B: Sutton/Millbury – Total Length 10,311 ft (3,142 m) (1.95 miles)

Segment 5C: Millbury – Total Length 7,715 ft (2,351 m)(1.46 miles)

Segment 6: Millbury/Worcester – Total length 4+ miles (6+ km)

Segment 7N (Northbound): Worcester – Total Length 7,082 ft (2,158 m)(1.34 miles)

Segment 7S (Southbound): Worcester – Total Length 6,710 ft (2,045 m)(1.27 miles)

* Based on *Massachusetts Blackstone River Bikeway Conceptual Design and Feasibility Study*, Mass. Dept. of Environmental Management and Mass. Highway Department, September 1996

As of April 2004, the only bikeway alignments in Massachusetts that have been constructed or are under construction are located within the Route 146 Connector Project (Segment 6). The bridges of Segment 1 in Blackstone and Millville have been evaluated to determine their rehabilitation needs, and the design for Segment 2 in Uxbridge is at the 25% stage. The Massachusetts Blackstone River Bikeway Task Force, consisting of representatives of MassHighway, DEM, the National Heritage Corridor, Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce, CMRPC, and other bikeway stakeholders, is working to set priorities for the design and construction of the remaining bikeway segments.

The expected length of the Blackstone River Bikeway in each town in Massachusetts is as follows: (from *Trails & Greenways: A Vision for the Blackstone River Valley*, JHC BRVNHCC, February 2003)

| Municipality | Bikeway Mileage |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| Blackstone MA | 2.0 |
| Grafton MA | 3.0 |
| Millbury, MA | 3.5 |
| Millville, MA | 1.5 |
| Northbridge, MA | 5.5 |
| Sutton, MA | 1.0 |

| | |
|---------------|-----|
| Uxbridge, MA | 6.5 |
| Worcester, MA | 5.5 |

Funding: Current cost estimates for completing the bikeway from the Rhode Island state line to the southern end of the Route 146 Project are in the range of \$20 million. In 1998, congress provided about \$6 million to MassHighway for the bikeway that has been used for the design and construction to date. As the federal transportation authorization bill is going to be renewed this year, efforts are being made to obtain a specific authorization to complete this project. The Blackstone River Bikeway has appeared as a line-item project on the Central Massachusetts Region Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the past five years.

What Happens Next: The construction of the bikeway within the Route 146 Connector Project from Quinsigamond Village in Worcester to the Route 146/122A Interchange will be completed with that project. The design of Segment 2 in Uxbridge is undergoing the 25% design review. When the design is finalized, probably in the summer of 2004, the construction of Segment 2 will commence. Funding is believed to be available for the construction of Segment 2. The Task Force has advocated that Segment 5 (Grafton/Sutton/Millbury) be the next segment to be committed to design, and funding is believed to be available for that as well. Funding for the remaining segments is not currently assured.

Bikeway Segment Descriptions (South to North)

Segment 1: Blackstone/Millville - Total Length 15,425 ft (4,701 m) (2.92 miles) [bridge type study complete]

Alignment 1, Blackstone, 4,627 ft (1,410 m), Rhode island Line in Blackstone, MA & North Smithfield, RI, to SNETT junction with Church St in Blackstone via SNETT (DEM ownership, 10 bridges)

Alignment 3, Blackstone/Millville, 10,798 ft (3,291 m), Church St (Millville) to Central St (Millville) via SNETT (DEM ownership, 4 bridges)

Segment 2: Millville/Uxbridge - Total Length 17,427 ft (5,312 m) (3.30 miles) [segment in MHD design]

Alignment 6, Millville/Uxbridge, 5,877 ft (1,791 m), SNETT intersection with Central St (Millville) to River Rd (Uxbridge), 88% public/12% private property

Alignment 7, Uxbridge, 11,550 ft (3,520 m), River Rd (Uxbridge) to Millville Rd (Route 122) (Uxbridge), alignment recently altered in this area

Segment 3A: Uxbridge/Northbridge - Total Length 29,474 ft (8,983 m) (5.58 miles)

Alignment 8, Uxbridge, 4,712 ft (1,436 m), Millville Rd (Route 122)(Uxbridge) to Old Still Corner Rd near P&W crossing, primarily along Uxbridge sewer easement, 61% public/39% private ownership, requires one RR crossing and P&W r-o-w easement

Alignment 11, Uxbridge, 1,581 ft (482 m), Old Still Corner Rd (Uxbridge) to Newell Rd (Uxbridge) east of P&W crossing, 100% private property involving sewer easement and P&W r-o-w easement

Alignment 14, Uxbridge, 4,419 ft (1,346 m), Newell Rd (Uxbridge) to intersection of Cross & Oak Sts (Uxbridge), via dirt road to Depot St to Mendon St (Route 16) to Capron St to Cross St to Oak St, all on road, 65% public/35% private, tricky crossing of Route 16

Alignment 17, Uxbridge, 6,441 ft (1,963 m), Oak St (Uxbridge) to Hartford Ave East (Uxbridge), entirely on road, 100% public r-o-w, passes River bend Farm Visitors Ctr

Alignment 18, Uxbridge/Northbridge, 12,321 ft (3,755 m), Hartford Ave East (Uxbridge) to 900 ft south of Church St (Northbridge), via Goat Hill Trail to a dirt road to Plummer's Trail to end, requires 2-4 bridge structures, entirely off road, 94% public/6% private lands, access to historic Blackstone Canal

Segment 3B: Northbridge - Total Length 18,528 ft (5,647 m) (3.51 miles)

Alignment 20, Northbridge, 906 ft (276 m), from Plummer's Trail to Church St (Northbridge), entirely off road and within the Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park

Alignment 23, Northbridge, 1,698 ft (517 m), from Church St to point east of P&W crossing of historic Blackstone Canal, follows Northbridge sewer easement but is 98% on private land, requires one sub-grade RR crossing culvert

Alignment 24, Northbridge, 3,664 ft (1,116 m), from P&W RR crossing of Blackstone Canal to Riverdale St (Northbridge), entirely off road and on private property, requires one bridge structure but uses existing road and berm

Alignment 25, Northbridge, 4,003 ft (1,220 m), from Riverdale St to intersection of South Main St & Spring Hill Ave (Northbridge), uses about 1,500 ft of Providence Road (Route 122), entirely on road and probably within public r-o-w

Alignment 27B, Northbridge, 2,787 ft (849 m), from intersection of South Main St & Spring Hill Ave to Sutton St east of Fowler Rd, parallel to P&W RR and requires agreement with the P&W, entirely off road and within the P&W r-o-w, drainage features and wetlands alteration required

Alignment 28A, Northbridge, 5,470 ft (1,667 m), from Sutton St (Northbridge) to Tenneco Gas Pipeline north of the P&W lot line, entirely off road and on private property-mostly P&W r-o-w, requires agreement with the P&W and at least 3 wetland crossings plus one bridge structure, also requires wetland alteration

Segment 4: Northbridge/Grafton - Total length 7,324 ft (2,232 m) (1.39 miles)

Alignment 28B, Northbridge/Grafton, 5,526 ft (1,684 m), from Tenneco Pipeline (Northbridge) to intersection of Maple St & Depot/Ferry St (Grafton), alignment is 93% off road (7% on road), 93% private property, requires agreement with P&W RR and private parcel owner as well as wetland alteration and two bridge structures

Alignment 30, Grafton, 1,798 ft (548 m), from Maple/Depot/Ferry Sts (Grafton) to intersection of Ferry St & Old Ferry St, entirely on road and within the public r-o-w

Segment 5A: Grafton/Sutton - Total Length 13,807 ft (4,208 m) (2.61 miles)

Alignment 31, Grafton, 3,109 ft (947 m), from intersection of Ferry St & Old Ferry St to the intersection of Main St (Route 122A) & Elmwood St/Sunnyside Terrace (Grafton), entirely on road and within the public r-o-w along Ferry St and Route 122A

Alignment 33, Grafton, 704 ft (214 m), from intersection of Route 122A & Elmwood St/ Sunnyside Terrace to P&W RR at the end of Sunnyside Terrace (a dead-end residential street providing access to the elementary school), entirely on road and within the public r-o-w

Alignment 35, Grafton/Sutton, 7,690 ft (2,343 m), from Sunnyside Terrace at the P&W RR (Grafton) to Blackstone St west of Chase Rd (Sutton), via the P&W r-o-w and crossing Pleasant St and the river to the intersection of Follette & Depot Sts to Blackstone St, about 15% on road and 85% off road, with about 42% in the public r-o-w, requiring agreements with the P&W and other private property owners as well as a new bridge structure

Alignment 36, Sutton, 2,304 ft (702 m), from Blackstone St (Sutton) to the “Singing Dam” (Sutton), via Blackstone St, entirely on road and within the public r-o-w, requiring some widening of Blackstone St, and some grades will exceed the desired maximum 5%

Alignment 37A, Sutton, 3,220 ft (981 m),

Segment 5B: Sutton/Millbury – Total Length 10,311 ft (3,142 m) (1.95 miles)

Alignment 39, Sutton/Millbury, 2,664 ft (812 m), from “Singing Dam” on Blackstone St (Sutton) to Cross Rd (Millbury), entirely off road and on private property, requiring some wetlands alteration and general grading but no bridge structures

Alignment 41, Millbury, 646 ft (187 m), from Cross Rd (Millbury) on the north bank of the river to the intersection of Cross Rd and Providence Rd (Route 122A)(Millbury) on the south side of the

river, requiring two bridge structures of about 100 feet each, possibly utilizing existing stone abutments, may be entirely on private property but uses existing dirt roadway

Alignment 43, Millbury, 7,001 ft (2,133 m), from intersection of Cross Rd and Providence Rd (Route 122A)(Millbury) to the South Main St bridge over the Blackstone River (Millbury), via Providence Rd to Maple St to South Main St, entirely on road and within the public r-o-w

Segment 5C: Millbury – Total Length 7,715 ft (2,351 m)(1.46 miles)

Alignment 45, Millbury, 1,569 ft (478 m), from the South Main St bridge to the intersection of Elm & River Sts (Millbury), entirely off road with 64% on private property and 36% on town-owned land, requiring an agreement with the Millbury V.F.W. Post and the town but no bridge structures

Alignment 48, Millbury, 3,226 ft (983 m), from intersection of Elm & River Sts (Millbury) to a point on the P&W RR r-o-w 1900 feet north of the railroad bridge over the river, about 18% on road (River St) and 82% off road on private land (primarily P&W RR plus one other owner), requiring an agreement with the P&W and a bridge crossing the Blackstone River parallel to the existing RR bridge as well as some wetland alteration

Alignment 50, Millbury, 2,920 ft (890 m), from P&W RR r-o-w point to the southern terminus of the Route 146 Bikeway at Main St (Route 122A)(Millbury), entirely off road and 75% on private property (primarily Aquarion Water Company, formerly Mass. American Water Company), ending at the completed bikeway section near Route 146

Segment 6: Millbury/Worcester – Total length 4+ miles (6+ km)

This segment of the Blackstone River Bikeway is being constructed as part of the Route 146/Massachusetts Turnpike/Interstate 290 Connector Project and will roughly parallel the new Blackstone River Parkway (Route 146) from the Route 146/122A interchange (Millbury) to Quinsigamond Ave at Brosnihan Square (Worcester), a combination of on-road and off-road alignments

Segment 7N (Northbound): Worcester – Total Length 7,082 ft (2,158 m)(1.34 miles)

This segment carries the northbound leg of the bikeway on city streets from the intersection of Quinsigamond Ave & Ashmont St to Union Station at Washington Square via the one-way streets appropriate for northbound traffic

Segment 7S (Southbound): Worcester – Total Length 6,710 ft (2,045 m)(1.27 miles)

This segment carries the southbound leg of the bikeway on city streets from Union Station at Washington Square to the intersection of Quinsigamond Ave & Ashmont St via the one-way streets appropriate for southbound traffic