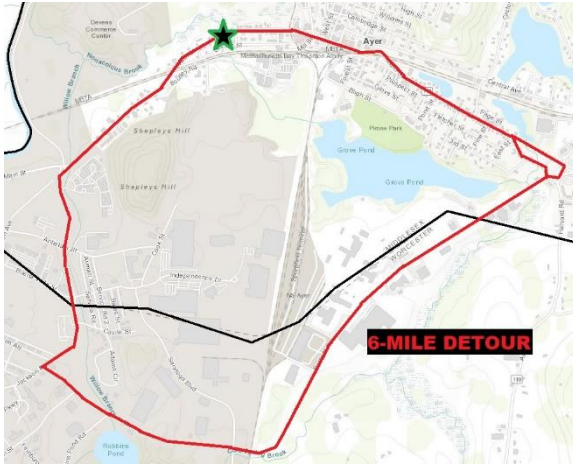
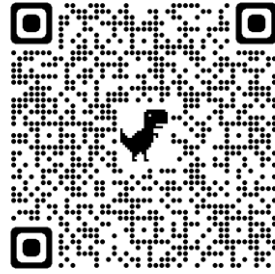


If the bridge were to be closed a detour would utilize Barnum Road in Devens, approximately a 6-mile route, would add approximately 15- minutes to emergency service response time:



For more information and details visit the project website at the link or QR code:
<https://www.ayer.ma.us/department-public-works/pages/west-main-street-bridge-over-nonacoicus-brook>



Contact Information:

Department of Public Works

25 Brooks Street

Ayer, MA 01432

<https://www.ayer.ma.us/department-public-works>

Ballot Question Information

West Main Street Bridge Replacement



Image: West Main Street Bridge, Ayer, MA

Additional information available on the project website:



Project Description

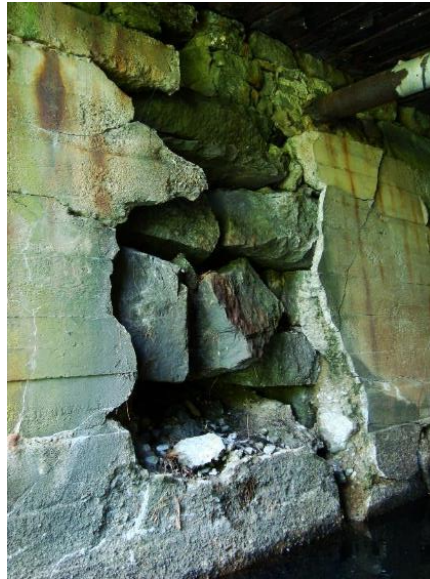
This project is to **replace the existing stone bridge on West Main Street** over the Nonacoicus Brook. The bridge construction date is unknown but it is believed to be in the late 1800s. The bridge is constructed of stone abutments and walls with a concrete deck supported by railroad rails. Some of the major issues include severe loss, cracking, and deterioration of concrete, exposed stone masonry, settlement, severe crack/separation of the walls.

The bridge cannot be rehabilitated and requires replacement. A replacement structure has been designed in accordance with current industry standards and regulatory requirements.

Why is the Project Critical?

The condition of the bridge is “serious”, and a frequent inspection schedule is mandated to ensure further deterioration does not occur. Further deterioration would change the condition of the bridge to “critical” and likely require closure of the bridge.

The only feasible West Main Street detour route that would satisfy traffic demand includes a 6-mile route which is unacceptable from an emergency response perspective. West Main Street is a critical link for Ayer connecting businesses and residents from the surrounding communities of Shirley, Devens and Lunenburg. School buses rely on West Main Street to transport students from surrounding communities to the two regional schools in the area. Emergency response, including ALS/mutual aid, rely on the link as well.



Concrete Facing Failure & Voids in Stone on East Sidewall

Background

In 2015, the Shirley Street Bridge was closed due to failure. The West Main Street Bridge, being of similar construction to Shirley Street Bridge, was subsequently inspected and the process of replacement began. In 2017, the project was funded in the amount of \$1.73M by Town Meeting approval (\$1.23M) and MassDOT’s Small Bridge Grant (\$500,000). The project went through a rigorous design, permitting, and MassDOT review process and was bid in 2020. Bid results were significantly over budget and the project could not be awarded.

Since that time, the Town has worked closely with MassDOT, bridge consultants, and other advisors to seek sources for the gap in funding

and evaluate alternatives. Alternatives such as redesign, temporary bridges, etc. have been evaluated, however, the recommended alternative is to replace the bridge expeditiously. Major factors include public safety and regional impacts.

Funding

The Town has approximately \$1M remaining of the original \$1.23M appropriation (the difference used for design/permitting/bidding). The MassDOT Small Bridge Grant of \$500,000 expired in 2020; however, the Town petitioned MassDOT to reinstate the grant and in early 2023, MassDOT followed through with reinstatement of the \$500,000 grant. Below is a breakdown of the current cost estimate and recommended funding:

Cost Estimate (includes construction, soft costs, and contingency):
\$4,500,000

Available Funding:
Remaining from FY18: \$1,000,000
Reinstated Grant: \$500,000

Funding Required:
\$3,000,000

Please note, the Town continues to seek alternative funding sources. Alternative funding sources would be used to reduce the local funding utilized for the project.

Impact to a Residential Tax Bill

The funding request at \$3.0M would add **\$63** to the average **FY2024 residential** tax bill in Ayer.