



MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF  
CONSERVATION AND RECREATION



THE LAWRENCE & LILLIAN  
SOLOMON FOUNDATION

# DCR Public Meeting Proposal for Riverfront Park Restoration along Greenough Boulevard



Thursday, March 6, 2014, 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.  
Cambridge Boathouse, Cambridge, MA



# Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Governor

**Deval L. Patrick**

Energy and Environmental Secretary

**Richard K. Sullivan, Jr.**

Department of Conservation and Recreation Commissioner

**John P. Murray**



## DCR Mission Statement

*To protect, promote and enhance our  
common wealth of natural, cultural  
and recreational resources for the  
well being of all.*

# Roles

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- **The Department of Conservation and Recreation:** is steward of 450,000 acres across the state - one of the largest state parks systems in the country. Responsible for Charles River Basin including its waterway, parklands, and parkways.
- **The Lawrence and Lillian Solomon Foundation:** A private foundation dedicated to enhancing the beauty, health, and accessibility of the public parks and greenways in Greater Boston
- **Vanasse Hangen Brustlin:** Planning, design, and engineering consultant



# Meeting purpose

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- Introduce the project team and the public/private partnership
- Explain the park restoration concept: its benefits and costs
- Listen to public input from users of the Charles River reservation
- Outline next steps and timeline

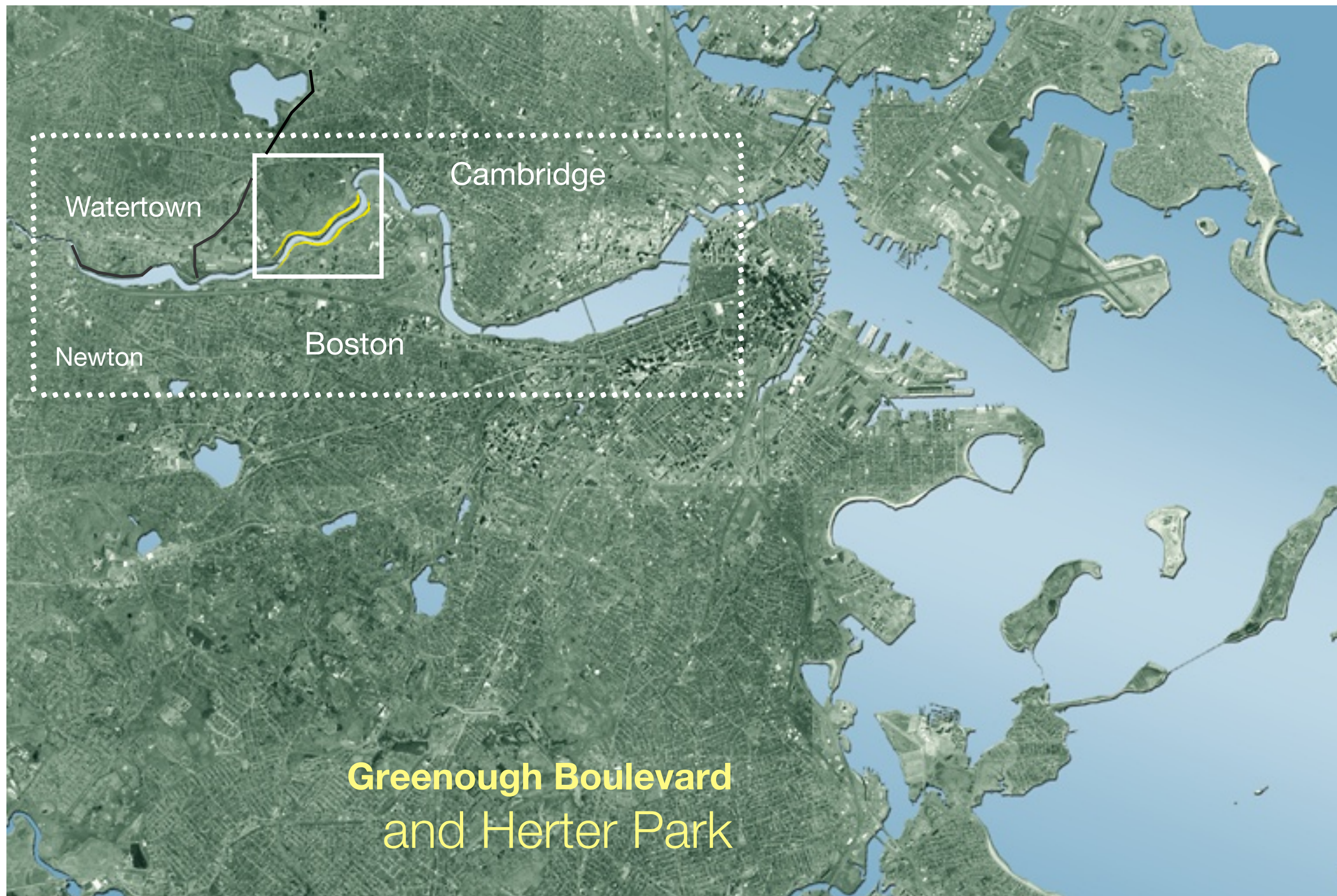


# Outreach

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- Preliminary briefings - 2012
- DCR kick off meeting - January 2013
- Consult city agencies and elected officials - 2013 ongoing
- Neighborhood meetings - February 2014
- **Public Meeting - March 6th, 2014**
- Public Meeting - Spring 2014



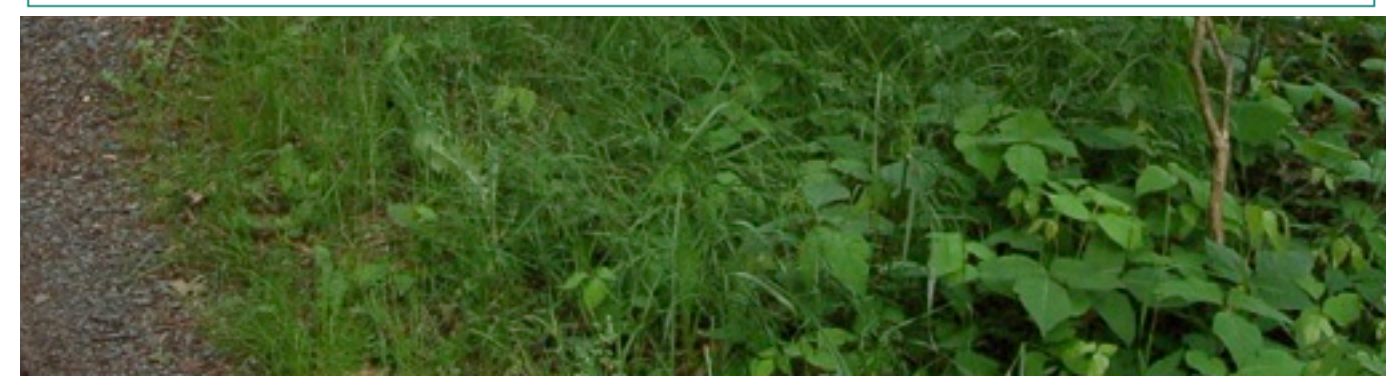
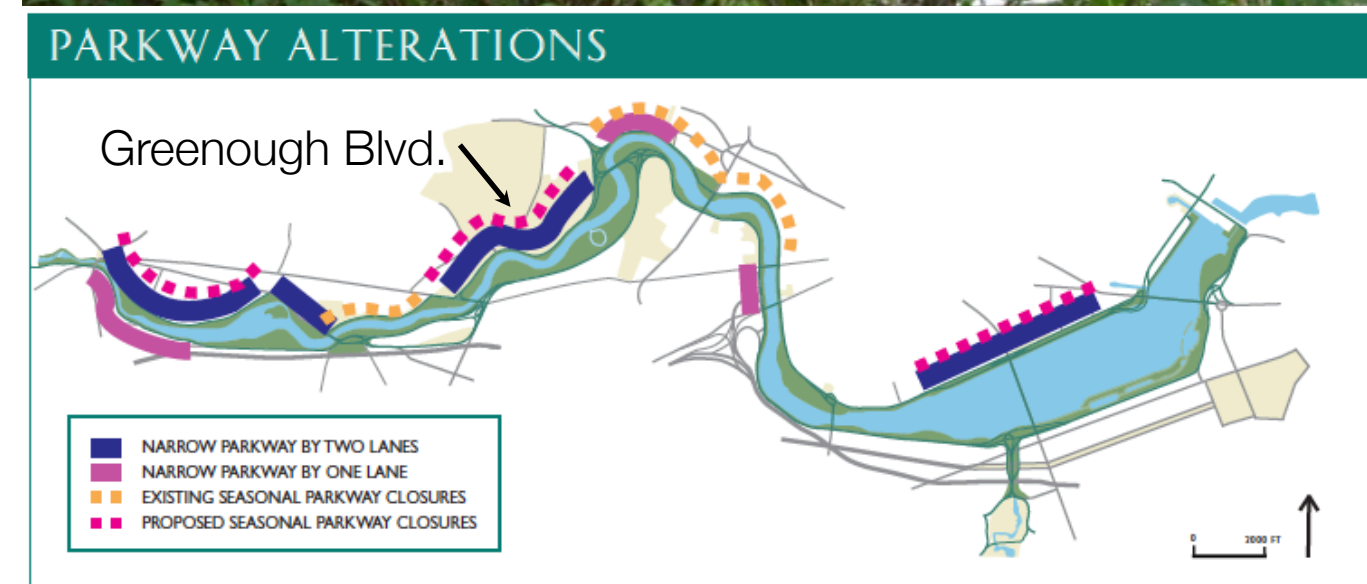


**Proposal:** To restore parkland along Greenough Boulevard which when linked to Herter Park will create a 2-1/2 mile recreational path directly accessible to tens of thousands of residents in four cities

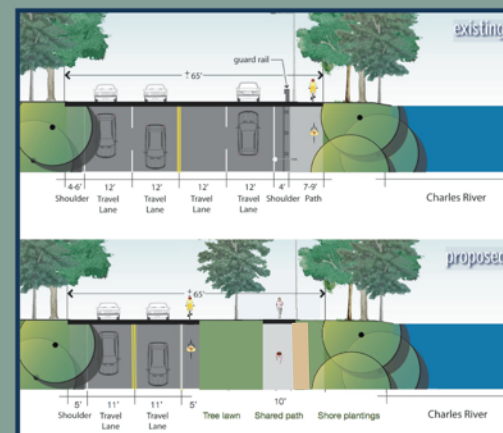


# Planning Background

- **Charles River Basin Master Plan, 2002:** *Recommends narrowing key parkways where fewer lanes can handle projected traffic volumes in order to tame traffic, increase public safety, provide access to restored parkland, and protect the environment.*
- **The Charles River Basin Connectivity Study, 2013:** *Recommends partially narrowing Greenough Boulevard and improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities.*







Proposal: Reclaim 1.5 acres of parkland and establish a new landscaped path along a mile of the Charles River between Eliot Bridge and Arsenal Street



# Project Goals

- Enhance public safety along the river
- Provide a fully accessible multi use path next to the water
- Reclaim parkland and enhance the scenic value of the reservation
- Improve the environmental quality of the Charles River
- Maintain Greenough Boulevard as a fully functional parkway
- Demonstrate an efficient and cost effective Public / Private partnership





Who benefits ?

•80,000+ residents in Cambridge, Watertown, and Boston are within walking distance of Greenough





**Existing Conditions:** Greenough Boulevard and Herter Park frame one of the most beautiful stretches of river within the Charles River basin





**Existing Conditions:** Greenough Boulevard crowds the river edge leaving little room for park users





**Existing conditions:** A wide open four lane road encourages high speeds and threatens public safety





**Existing conditions:** Excessive pavement impacts the environmental quality of the river





**Greenough Boulevard:** Before





Photo simulation

**Proposed:** After - By reducing roadway width a shared use path can be accommodated with room for future park improvements such as scenic overlooks, trees, meadows, and benches.





Photo simulation

**Proposed:** Invasive plants and hazardous trees should be managed to open key views to the river.





**Proposed:** Parkway trees could be added incrementally over time or all at once.





Photo simulation

**Proposed:** Trees and wildflower meadows would provide visual delight and environmental benefits to the river. Benches would be provided in shady spots along the river.





Photo simulation

**Proposed:** A track could be added to accommodate runners and walkers who prefer a soft surface





**Meadow:** The wildflower meadow at the Arnold Arboretum research facility is an example of a colorful and more environmentally beneficial approach to mowed grass.





**Proposed Marsh Path and Cemetery gateway:** A new pathway around the marsh and an new gateway to Cambridge Cemetery would help link the West Cambridge neighborhood to the river.



Project area

Eliot Bridge

Grove Street

Greenough Boulevard

Soldiers Field Road

Arsenal Street Bridge

North





# Proposed Roadway Concept

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## **KEY POINTS**

- Meet Current Design Standards
- Increase water quality to the Charles River
  - Addition of 1.5 acres of pervious areas
  - Address existing stormwater issues
- Provide a cost effective project
  - Utilize as much of the existing infrastructure as possible
  - Pavement
  - Lighting
- Design project to accommodate future enhancements





Existing Conditions





Proposed Pavement Removal





Proposed Roadway Concept





Existing Conditions





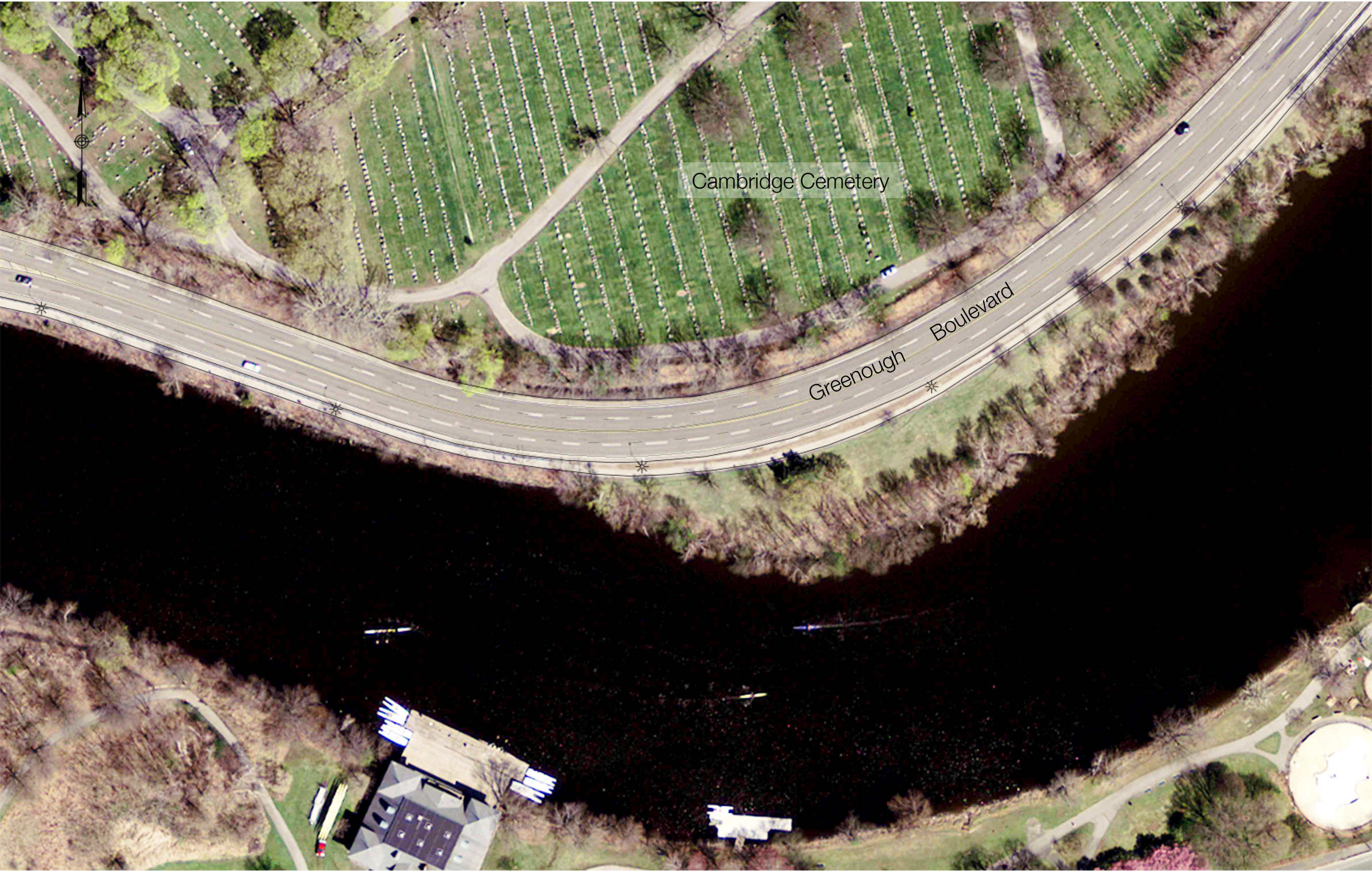
Proposed Pavement Removal





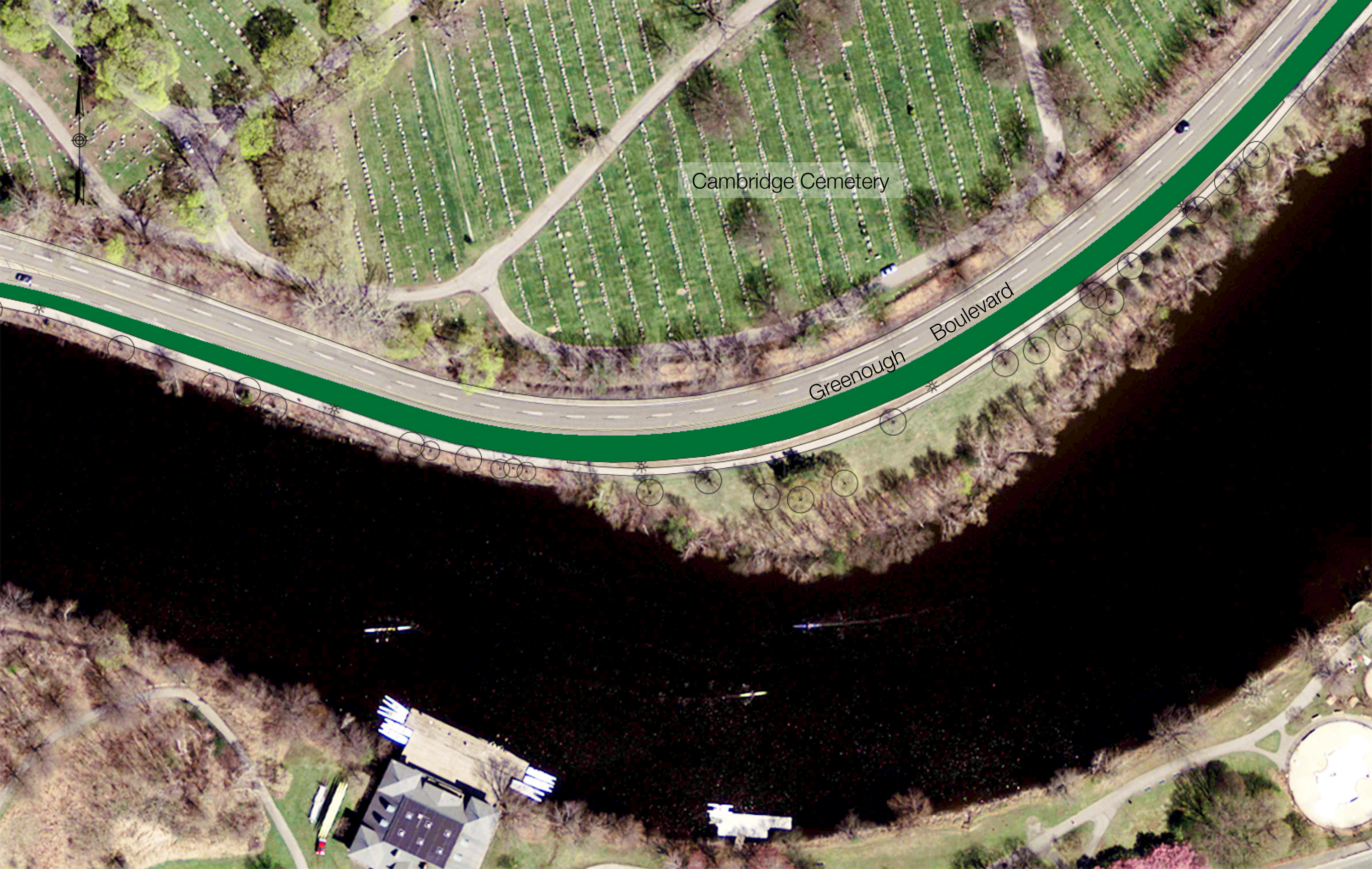
Proposed Roadway Concept





Existing Conditions





Proposed Pavement Removal





Proposed Roadway Concept





Existing Conditions





Cambridge Cemetery

Greenough Boulevard

Proposed Pavement Removal





Proposed Roadway Concept





Existing Conditions





Proposed Pavement Removal





Proposed Roadway Concept



# Preliminary Traffic Analysis

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- Preliminary Analysis
  - Collected traffic counts along Greenough Boulevard and at the Greenough/Grove St intersection
  - Seasonally adjusted data to represent average annual conditions.
  - Projected 2034 volumes along Greenough using regional growth projections consistent with long range transportation plans
  - Performed analysis to assess impacts related to narrowing the roadway
- Preliminary Analysis Results
  - Potential for increased queuing during a portion of the morning peak hour
  - Speed Reduction
- Next Steps
  - Develop a localized growth rate considering potential redevelopment plans for Arsenal Street and the surrounding areas
  - Refine findings and recommendations

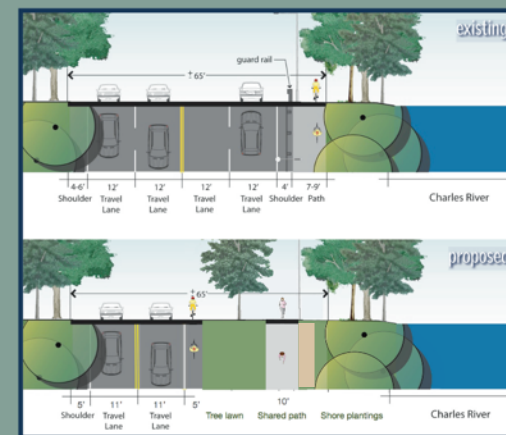




## Traffic analysis

Speed reduced on Greenough  
Longer queue for AM traffic  
Ample road capacity remaining





Enhance public safety. Provide greater accessibility. Reclaim beauty of the river. Improve environmental quality. Maintain a functional parkway. Achieve efficiency and cost effectiveness. Demonstrate a partnership approach.



# Preliminary cost projections

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## ***River path – core framework***

***\$776,300\**** *design, admin. & construction*

## ***Value added elements***

***\$200,000+***

## ***Marsh path***

***\$263,500\****

## ***Cemetery path***

***\$59,500\****

***Total: 1.3M***



\*Costs based on 4/1/13 conceptual cost estimate by VHB.  
Design service cost from VHB; DCR to provide construction phase services.



# Timeframe

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## **Fall - 2013**

- Draft Memorandum of Agreement with the DCR - **Complete**
- Contract with design consultants - **Complete**
- Complete topographic survey - **Complete**
- Traffic counts and analysis - **Complete**

## **Winter / Spring - 2014**

- Public meetings - **underway**
- Design - **underway**
- DCR review - **ongoing**
- Permits
- Cost estimates

## **Summer / Fall - 2014**

- Put all or part of project out to bid if funding sources are identified





# Additional Information

The presentation from this meeting can be viewed at  
<http://www.mass.gov/eea/agencies/dcr/public-outreach/public-meetings/>  
or <http://www.solomonfoundation.org>

If you have questions, concerns or comments:

**Email:** [dcr.updates@state.ma.us](mailto:dcr.updates@state.ma.us), entering “Greenough” in the subject line.

**Write:** Department of Conservation and Recreation, Office of Public Outreach, 251  
Causeway Street, Suite 600, Boston, MA 02114

**Comment period:** March 6<sup>th</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>

**Note:** Public comments submitted to DCR by email or letter will be posted on the DCR website in their entirety, and no content, including personal information, will be redacted.