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Providence Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Commission

Jorge O. Elorza, Mayor

Staff Report: Henderson Bridge conceptual review – Wayland – Ward 1 (For Discussion)

Presented at April 17, 2019 BPAC meeting

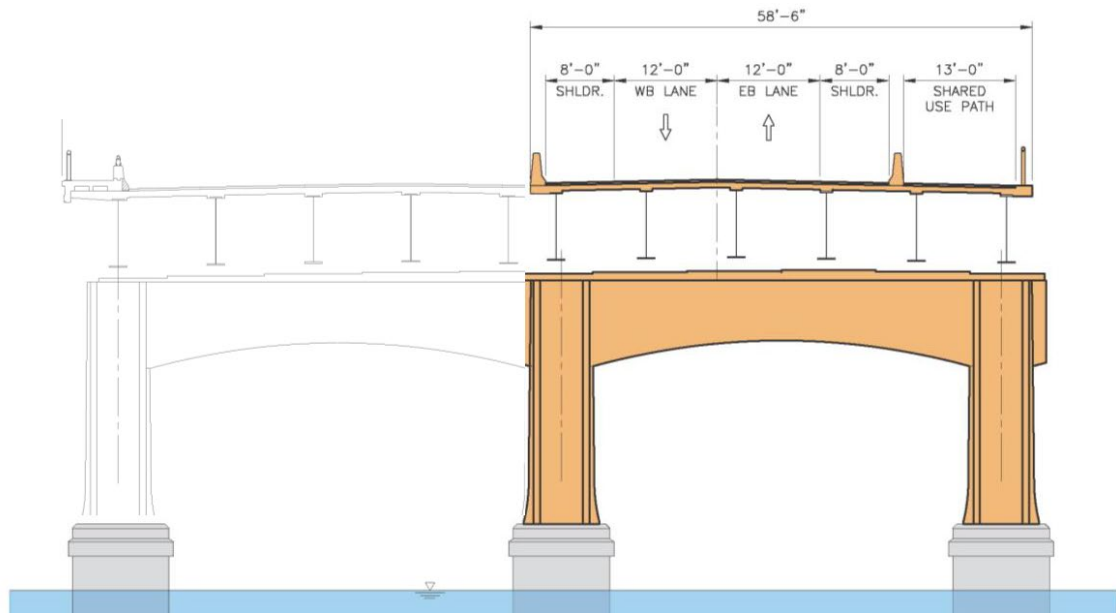
Project Background

The City of Providence Department of Planning and Development seeks comments from the BPAC regarding conceptual plans for the Henderson Bridge developed by the Rhode Island Department of Transportation. This will be a conceptual level review of the project.

RIDOT announced on February 25 their plans to accelerate replacement of the Henderson Bridge, narrowing it to one vehicular travel lane in each direction and incorporating bicycle and pedestrian paths. The project would free up land for development, especially in East Providence.

RIDOT Concept

Under RIDOT's proposed plan, the width of the Henderson Bridge will be reduced to approximately half of its existing width, which would align with its northern half. The proposed configuration includes one vehicular travel lane in each direction with shoulders on either side, separated from a 13'-wide shared use path on the southern edge of the bridge by a vertical barrier.



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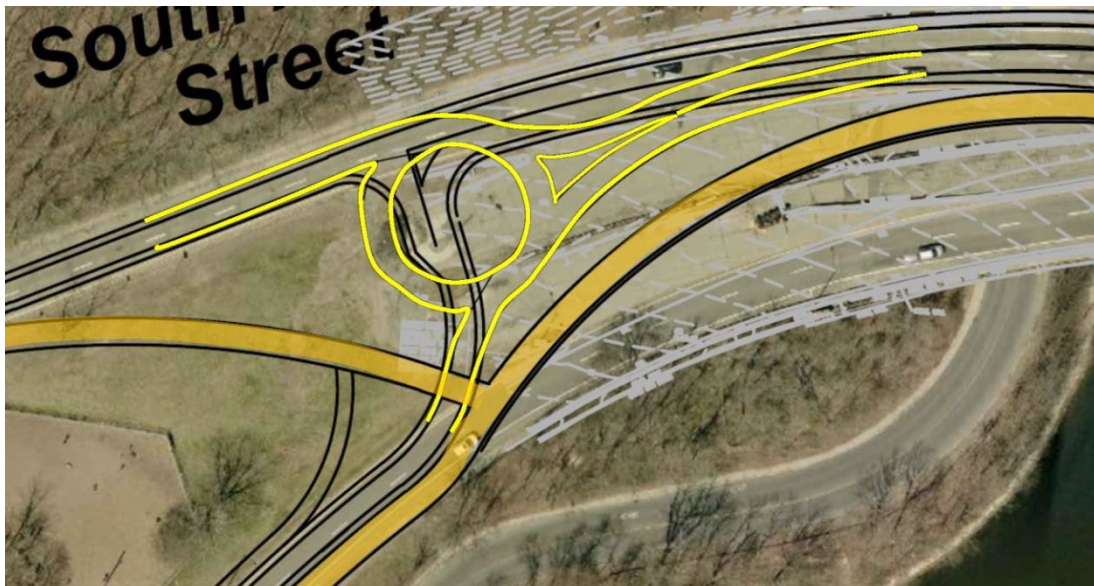
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On the Providence side, the concept includes an uncontrolled (no signal or stop sign) T intersection near the foot of the bridge at the intersection of the bridge and South Angell Street. An alternative concept (below) includes a small single-lane roundabout, which could potentially do more to slow down traffic coming off the bridge toward South Angell Street than the uncontrolled T intersection currently proposed.

The shared use path would diverge from the vehicular travel lanes coming off the bridge and cross the approach road from Waterman Street at a set-back distance from the T intersection or roundabout. The shared use path crossing would be signalized using a HAWK signal to stop oncoming traffic as needed. The path would then connect to a proposed urban trail on Waterman Street, as well as to River Road.





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Staff Recommendations

- The roundabout alternative or alternative options for slowing down westbound vehicular traffic coming off the bridge should be explored. If the T intersection concept is implemented, it should be modified to include traffic control or other traffic calming tools.
- Include traffic calming measures at the intersection of Waterman St with the bridge access road, such as aligning the intersection as close to a 90 degree angle as feasible, traffic controls such as stop signs or signals, bump-outs to narrow perceived width, and raised crossings.
- The HAWK signalized shared use path crossing across the connector road should be a raised crossing or should have advanced speed lumps installed to slow vehicular speed and further improve vulnerable road user safety.
- Along the connector road between Waterman and the bridge, a horizontal or vertical buffer should be included between the shared use path and the roadway to improve vulnerable road user safety.
- Special attention should be given to the vertical separation between the shared use path and vehicular travel lanes on the bridge to ensure safety for vulnerable road users and a visually pleasing environment.
- All vehicular travel lanes, including those over the bridge, should be reduced to no more than 11'-wide.
- The speed on the connector roads and bridge should be reduced from the existing 35 mph limit to 25 mph to improve safety.

Respectfully submitted by Alex Ellis.