



## **PUBLIC COMMENTS FROM THE ONLINE SURVEY**

**April 2023**

**Is there anything else you would like us to know as we develop this feasibility study?**

I love the idea.

I'm fine if it includes electric shuttles, but bikes and walkers are a must. The plan must include an ample parking area where people can park on one end and use the full length and then come back.

This is fabulous - so happy this is being considered. I live less than 1/4 mile from the Webster St. tracks and would LOVE this to become reality.

LOVE this idea - I was very disappointed when the bridge was not replaced during Rt. 95 reconstruction. Needham residents could use it as a safe way to access businesses along the corridor and to bike to the end and get on the T at Newton Highlands. I would also be in favor of shuttles but that will be a battle with abutters. Filling this out before the hearings but will be attending.

We need to move away from roads being hogged by cars and buses. We need to encourage people to walk, run and bike

This project does not solve or even address any of Needham's pressing transportation problems. The site is in an infrequently accessed area, rather than being near shopping or public facility buildings or any mainstream private residences. I would NOT devote Needham tax dollars toward such a project. Its only purpose is for recreation, but Needham already has enough luxurious and elaborate recreation facilities. The cost of bridging the Charles River and I95 is too expensive to even imagine. Needham has some complex problems needing resolution. This is NOT one of them.

This is a powerful and important project that links communities and businesses, provides an ideal substitute to driving in an already high traffic zone, and creates more opportunities for community engagement and wellness. As an addendum to this feasibility study, please consider a phase 2 of the project that extends the electrified bus route to Needham Heights station and possibly all the way to Needham Junction. This would continue to provide the access currently provided by the Commuter Rail from Needham Heights to Needham Junction, however electrified buses can do so without toxic or noise pollution. In fact, this electrified bus extension to Needham Junction would eliminate all train horns in Needham, as well as add a recreational path that could be joined with the existing and popular Dover-Needham rail trail. Thank you for your consideration.



Great idea!

Wonderful idea to revive this path

We should work to build this corridor and then connect it to other trails to enhance safe commutability and recreation/healthy lifestyles. Our family enjoys biking the Minuteman Trail on the weekends. It would be wonderful if Metrowest could have a similar option closer to home.

This would open up a whole new world to the entire neighborhoods along Needham and Highland Ave. Could eliminate many of the vehicles traveling along those corridors and relieve congestion in the area.

This is such an important regional connection and is necessary as a safe walk/jog/bike connection to Needham! Thank you for making it happen.

As more cars come to the area with the Northland project in Newton and Muzi and Wexford rebuilding, it's important to provide a path for walking and biking but also an electric shuttle to move people between all of the business districts and get people out of cars. Not everyone can walk or bike effectively. Multimodal is the solution!

For the shuttle, please consider the model of Little Rhody. There will be a ton of community opposition to motorized vehicles but these might be an easier sell. A logical strategy would be to get the path resurfaced for pedestrian and cyclist use ASAP, then propose these as an optional add-on at a later time - <https://www.wgbh.org/news/local/2019-05-14/little-roady-takes-to-the-streets-of-providence>

Also, if you initially commit to electric vehicles then the bridge across 128/I-95 is going to take forever to get built. If the bridge were pedestrian/cyclist only, then there are prefab options that could (just barely) span the width of the highway via the median.

This project has been under consideration for so long and should have been completed a decade ago, so the goal should be to get it done as realistically and as soon as possible. There are significant economic and social losses incurred by the continued delay.

I live in Newton Highlands and don't have a safe way to bicycle to the Greenway, but the proposed extension to Needham is a wonderful idea to encourage more safe bicycling paths. I would use it if I could bicycle to it safely. I have driven to the path several times in order to walk it with friends.



I am strongly in favor of developing this way. It would be a major boost the community (and my company and employees), it would take traffic off the streets, and promotes healthier living. I hope this is something that can get done quickly.

It would be short sighted to construct a better pathway only for bikes and peds. These are critical - but the residences and development along this corridor would benefit tremendously, and more over time, if better connected to the public transit options at both ends.

I am a regular walker. It might be nice if there were electric shuttles but that would require a much wider pathway. As it is if two people pass two people walking in the opposite direction that is just about how wide the current greenway is. I am not opposed to the electric shuttles but not if the greenway remains the same width. Also, I would like benches put at intervals for older or less than able bodied people can walk further. Also, there should be well constructed pathways off to access shops. There also should be one of those blinking pedestrian signs at crosswalks where a pedestrian needs to cross an actual road that cuts across the walking path. I would also like to see a widening of the bridge over the Charles where people might sit a minute and perhaps take a picture or just admire the view. I would like the pathway to be paved if there are electric shuttles and if not those "wooden" walkways that are raise about the walking area for good drainage.

path should be well lit, include benches and restrooms

Encourage Dover to allow their connection to extend the usability further.

I'd also like to see the MBTA Greenline extension go through there to Needham. What can be done to extend at least a walking /biking trail from Easy St. to Newton Center?

This is an excellent opportunity and I sincerely hope the communities can come together in support. We desperately need more protected/off-road recreational paths.

This would be so nice especially for youth in the Heights area where there just isn't much interesting retail/restaurants for them to walk or ride safely to. I'm on the fence a bit about the use of electric shuttles. But, with the Wingate near the Gould St access point, maybe that would be a nice option for those residents. With the Bullfinch development going in where the Muzi site was, I imagine there might be employees who would walk across for lunch/shopping etc.

More protected bike/running areas!

This would be a terrific addition to the available bike and hiking routes in the area and allow cyclists and walkers to bypass heavily trafficked streets.



While I support public transportation and understand the role electric shuttles might play, I believe we are unlikely to get shuttles in the foreseeable future and should pursue the walking/bike path option now.

This will be a huge boost to our quality of life in Newton and Needham. Please get it done!

Build more bike paths in Newton! Make it safe to ride to Brookline too!

This survey is too biased. Does not give an option to disagree with all. For instance, you say use of path. two options either bicycle or all options. Does not say none. The assumption is to build something there. While as my house is behind this path, any construction and usage would impact me and my family negatively. It would violate our privacy and safety. I disagree in total.

We must connect the towns with a safe and protected pathway.

We need more bike paths!

I hope this helps. Unfortunately, the planning board and other town and state leadership groups are horribly corrupt and motivated by self-interest rather than community benefit and quality of life for those who live in Needham. The morons who put bike lanes on Highland Ave is a prime example. This walking path, away from high volume traffic actually makes sense, and should be a no-brainer.

No electric shuttles

At a bare minimum, let's try to connect the existing Upper Falls Greenway to the other side of the Charles and across I-95 with pedestrian/cyclist access. I-95 creates a terrible boundary on Newton's western edge, with almost every crossing being dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists: Route 30/Comm Ave, Route 16/Washington St, Route 9, Highland Ave/Needham St, Kendrick St. All of these are dangerous for anyone outside of a car. (Only Central Ave/Elliott St is remotely safe for humans, but its location doesn't connect commercial centers the way Newton's Needham Street could be connected to Needham's central locations.)

This would be a huge quality of life improvement for anyone who lives near these regions and improve the vitality of these commercial centers.

Please build the bridges!

This sounds very dangerous; the path is very narrow with steel hills on each side. Has anyone who even came up with this idea been to the site?



I'd love it if the path were paved, more like the minuteman trail and if not, it would be good to know why that choice was made. Feels like a paved path is much better for biking and running, esp for families.

I'd love to see this extended. It's too short now!

There is no need for this, waste of taxpayers money

This is bad for the people who live along those lines. You are putting a lot of traffic in their backyard!

This is a bad idea

There are already plenty of options to get to from newton and Needham and vice versa

This is awful to create this and destroy the privacy of the residents there.

This is an invasion of privacy for the residents in the area that this will be built.

I would never use this. There are much better options.

This is a waste of taxpayer money

This is a fantastic idea that I fully support!

I support this project and am very excited about its potential! The Community Way would also provide a link of safer bike access from Newton to the Needham Heights commuter rail station. The Upper Falls Greenway is an amazing resource and I visit it often for recreation & transportation; expanding the path into Needham would be incredible, especially with the additional housing units being added to Needham Street in Newton. I would love to use the path to visit friends and restaurants in Needham.

This project is a significant opportunity for Needham and Newton to partner on development of both of recreational asset as well as high-density, clean transportation to facilitate future build-out of higher-density, affordable housing and supporting businesses along the corridor. Please keep an eye on the generational opportunity this presents rather than focusing on the inevitable short-term funding discussions and NIMBYism that will be raised as a challenge to this project by a limited number of constituents. At present, this is an underutilized and, in many places, derelict corridor that would help transform the adjacent neighborhoods and the communities and towns as a whole.



I think this is a great idea. I do not know enough about the electric shuttle idea to share an opinion on them. I am in favor of reducing congestion in Needham St if the shuttles would help with that.

I think this should be the HIGHEST priority for our local government.

How might it be connected to other paths in the future

It would be a great extension of the Greenway. I enthusiastically support it.

Please thought carefully about cost and how return will be. I know Newton takes many project but sometimes you need to say No to good ideas. If this goes on live, please do not just stop at this project, consider if this pass can be connected with other commuter/recreation depends on the residents how they utilize. Think though connect with Bus, Train, Zip car, Park-and-Ride, rent bicycle. Other parks, local shops, make the road tree/flower friendly etc. Newton/Needham invested the project then not many people use are sad things to see. Either say no or invest for greater good. Think though if this is worth it even though we are not investing enough to school and road etc.

This project should not harm the Upper Falls Greenway, which is one of the best things to happen to Upper Falls in years!

Please consider connection(s) and/or easier access(es) to other nearby rail-trail bicycle path network(s).

This seems like a great idea to provide more healthy recreational and transportation options!

We see electric bikes on the Greenway & sometimes motor scooters, + electric scooters. It is very dangerous to combine because someone or a pet is going to get hurt. The places where people enter the greenway need to be improved (behind fire station, at New TV, at Mechanics St, at end of chestnut St & behind Especially for Pets need to be improved so accessible to all.

make it future proof for electric shuttle buses

This could be such a great resource, but please keep it for pedestrians and bikes only. And the bikes should be limited as to speed, right now often they go far too fast and with their speed intimidate people walking slowly such as families out with strollers or children and/or dogs.

There are better places to spend money than build a new bridge over 12 lanes of Rte 128 traffic for a pedestrian path, right? Sharing a single-lane rail-trail with electric buses is unrealistic. And who is paying for operating these electric buses? This all seems like unrealistic, fanciful dreams.



Newton and surrounding towns need more safe biking routes. Many would be willing to opt out of driving if biking (including with children) could be done more safely.

No

The path is 12 feet wide. It is already crowded at times with people walking side by side, people walking several dogs, pushing stroller or in walkers, or bikers riding next to each other. There is no way to safely add a shuttle bus of any kind safely.

It would be great to one day connect the Bay Colony Rail Trail from Newton to the existing Needham Rail Trail.

The path is a calm, beautiful, forest walk. I strongly oppose allowing shuttle buses on the path in any way. Adding such vehicles would destroy the ambiance.

I am hearing impaired and electric shuttles would create a danger for me as I am currently unable to hear such vehicles approaching from behind me when walking.

It would be super to create this connection between Needham and Newton for walkers and cyclists! We've been hoping for this for years and it would make this part of Newton so much more inviting.

There are many walkways without cars in this area. Newton should focus on pedestrian and bikeways in parts of newton where there are fewer, and the current situation is dangerous to pedestrians. A corridor along cheesecake brook from Watertown (or Washington) st to the Charles River would serve a part of newton greatly in need of more walking and biking opportunities. It is also a growing part of newton with the new Washington st development which would be far better served by cheesecake brook development.

This should be an outdoor quiet sanctuary for non-electric or vehicle access. Walking and bicycles, only, please!

I hope it will before too long extend south to the Needham bike path

we are enthusiastic if it is a pedestrian and bicycle use only path!

The idea of the Greenway was for recreation as a safe passage for pedestrians and cyclists. Vehicles of any type should NEVER be allowed. By allowing vehicles, this becomes another dangerous roadway. It is great to connect Needham and Newton with this passageway but DO not allow vehicles!!!



I feel very strongly that such a path be used only by pedestrians—biking only if there is a designated bike lane. Bikers can pose a serious danger to pedestrians. Definitely no vehicles or motorized modes of transport of any kind. This pathway should not become a shortcut to bypass Needham St. Or Central Ave. This will surely happen if a shuttle is put in place. There are roads available for that.

Electric shuttles are incompatible with pedestrian and cyclist use. This path has the potential to become part of a larger emerging network of safe and separate off road facilities that link the region and allow pedestrians and cyclists to move safely without danger of vehicular traffic. Emphasis should be on planning and implementing safe connections to other non-vehicular uses like transit (eg, Needham commuter rail and Newton Green Line stations) and other multi use trails.

A wonderful idea for the general community and to elevate some pressure off traffic on Needham St.

Great for biking. And I would shop more / access various local restaurants more if I had this path open to my family.

LOVE the idea of an electric shuttle bus.

Need to know more about shuttle, size of vehicle and frequency of run and stops. Walkway should be beautiful with garden berm as in CA and Ireland.

Wasn't a feasibility study already completed several years ago? What has changed and created the need for another feasibility survey?

I strongly disagree with the idea of adding any public transportation use to the pathway. We need to maintain this as a pathway for bicycle and pedestrian use only - like all of the other rail trails in the state.

It would be a lot safer to have a dedicated multiuse path/trail even with shuttles than to navigate the Highland St 128 overpass as a pedestrian or bicyclist. I said yes to shuttles for the benefit of the elderly population who may no longer have the ability for active transportation, but the shuttle should extend to regular streets on both ends to get reduced mobility people to destination (CATH/Needham Heights, etc) and to connect to MBTA trains.

Electric shuttles are an awesome idea! I would love to ditch my car and not have to deal with the hassles of driving and parking along Needham Street.

I don't understand the electric shuttle aspect - would that block pedestrians and bikes? I would use a shuttle but not at the expense of a nice wide walk/bike-way





I use the Upper Falls Greenway quite frequently for dog walking. I didn't see any reference to dogs in this survey. There should be.

Also, there is no mention of the side path, the Upper Falls Riverwalk, which extends south to Williams St, and north past the Bobby Braceland Park to a dead-end at private land. The Riverwalk skirts around the base of the bridge at the end of the Greenway at the Charles. That part of the Riverwalk definitely needs improvement. I use the Riverwalk frequently for dog walking also.

The Community Way should extend to Avery if at all possible, to allow safer access for the large community of families south of Cricket Field.

Please consider a connection to the Green Line. This is an easy connection, and it would provide an alternative to the commuter rail, which could then be converted to the Orange Line terminating at Needham Junction. While this is likely decades away, we need to future proof this new path and allow the ability to add rail, not just an electric shuttle. If people are serious about cutting greenhouse emissions, we must increase public transportation options.

No one is going to really use this to commute. We don't live in that type of area or have that type of people. It's purely for recreation and more paths without traffic stops would be ideal. Webster woods gets used a ton and a road bike option would be nice.

An access point should be added east of I95 and west of the Charles. Many people live and work east of I95 and south of Highland, and more stay in hotels in the same area. There is currently no safe way for pedestrians to cross the Charles to get to the Upper Falls Greenway access point from this area.

Love the idea of extending the existing path! With the new residential construction, the path will get even more pedestrian, bike, dog walking use and it seems that electric shuttles would be an issue

I would love to see this project extend to Newton Lower Falls!

If there was a "Darwin Award" for infrastructure projects, then removing the former rail bridge over rt 128 would win, hands down. Constructing a new one would be intelligent. Turning the entire route of the former Charles River RR into a rail trail would also add significant value to Newton, Needham, and all the communities which it would serve.



We try to walk the area proposed once a month, in addition to my partner working in Needham and my child begging to walk to Panera alone like he used to before they took out our sidewalk. But it's so dangerous most of the time we just give up and have stopped going to Needham unless absolutely necessary.

We need access across the river at BOTH sides of Needham Street, and soon. The intersection on highland/Needham is too dangerous for us to walk with kids (especially for kids walking without adults and wheelchair users- as both are short and slower.)

There is a pedestrian setting at the highland Christina intersection, but it doesn't work - left-turning cars are allowed to ignore it and don't stop for the pedestrian signal. Past construction on highland and Needham for about half a mile, there just isn't a crossing light.

Our side of Needham st has always been an afterthought - previously the bridge sidewalk had a sign pole smack in the middle of the sidewalk making it impossible to use with wheelchairs and strollers.

So even though we live in Christina st, we can't safely get to the proposed walkway since there are no real pedestrian crossing signals, with unprotected crosswalks that drivers completely ignore or lights actively tell turning drivers to disregard.

With the rail bridge on Christina closed and not due for repair anytime soon, and the copious poison ivy and lack of sidewalk on Nahant St, only people with cars are allowed to cross from Newton to Needham

Newton needs to be a walkable city with safe routes for bicycles. The Newton/Needham Corridor project is \$31 Million dollars to improve cars access. A few dollars can be dedicated to bring these communities together that has been destroyed by the monstrosity of RT128 cutting through.

What is the feasibility of converting new car lanes across highway for electric buses or transit priority? Plenty of existing asphalt for vehicles.

I can see this Community Way being an excellent contribution to reducing traffic congestion between Newton and Needham, particularly if electric shuttle is introduced, but also as a bike path. With the new commercial and residential developments in the N2 corridor and Muzi bringing new workers and residents, increased commuting/residential traffic could be managed better with more options including biking and shuttle.

I don't think this would be used much.

Nature should be a heavy priority. PLEASE prioritize making this area friendly for birds and pollinators (i.e. appropriate flowers to help hurting butterfly and honeybee populations). Thank you!



A great idea to connect the communities and offer accessible and "green" use. Makes it feel more like a community and human scale, hope this will happen.

Love this proposal! We need more bikeways for all!

In my opinion, the most important decision is whether to pave the path. I'm *\*strongly\** in favor of paving. Unpaved paths are unavailable to roller-bladers and many (most?) cyclists.

Make sure to keep the trees on both side of the trail...just like the Upper Falls Greenway currently has. It is beautiful and provide shades in summertime.

Land sitting idle is wasted. Cycling improves health, and access to safer pathways improves cycling.

Explore extension into Needham Center (if MBTA could be enticed to end commuter rail service to Needham Heights) and make certain the trail system extends through Newton almost to Route 9

Shuttle use would depend on type of shuttle, shuttle impact on total space use and hours of operation. Please make it rollerblade accessible.

I think the engineering requirements for electric shuttles would slow the whole thing down.

And extend it to Winchester Street.

Should be an extension of the Green line. Over 1,200 housing units coming in Newton. Unknown number from Muzi

The Upper Falls Greenway is already heavily used by community and abutting office workers. Let's keep up the usage and extend the trail to allow more people to access it. While a shuttle service would be nice, a Needham-commissioned transit study several years ago showed that it would get little usage. Ask Jerry Reilly, George Kirby, or Jim Lerner for a copy if you need one.



I regularly bike to this area for recreation, doctors appointments, shopping etc. and use the Upper Falls Greenway whenever possible. I try as much as possible to avoid Needham Street - it is a meat grinder for bikes! And as an older person who likes to bike, I use bike lanes and multi-user pathways whenever possible. This particular bikeway is very appealing as it opens up the possibility of loop trips that avoid car roadways (and particularly Needham Street!!!) I don't mind sharing the trail with electric shuttles as long as the trail is wide enough that I don't have to get off my bike to let them pass. My feeling toward multi-user paths is the more the merrier! (The only thing I don't like are electric bikes or scooters speeding along at unsafe speeds and/or being operated irresponsibly. There should some signage to encourage safe operation by these users if they are going to be allowed.) Please let's get on with this trail and get it open so I can still use it during my lifetime!!!!

This is a great project!

I live on Davenport Road in Needham, very close to the Gould Street entrance to the Community Way. My family and I would use this path daily and I think it would be an excellent resource for the neighborhood. I fully support this idea and would be thrilled if it became a reality!

I travel by bicycle often and getting over 128 to access Newton, Brookline, and Boston is a major challenge, with the dangers of riding on Highland Avenue past the 128 on/off ramps. This path would solve that problem in a way that is safe for everyone to use.

I've walked the proposed path and I don't think there is enough room for a bus lane and a pedestrian/bicycle greenway, without significant expansion of the existing path. I have children and the greenway would become much less appealing for use with children if there were a bus running back and forth in the same lane as pedestrians/bicycles. This should be a greenway for pedestrians, runners, dog walkers, and bicyclists to enjoy without the threat of motorized vehicles.

Active transportation has so many benefits to physical health, the environment, and the overall livability of the area. Please do all you can to make this happen!

Thank you

I live in Needham and commute to Newton. There is not a great bike path to get there at the moment. Crossing over 128 (which does have a bike lane) and then highland avenue is very busy. A dedicated bike lane here would be an incredible way to get to and from work and also access shops along Needham Street.

Any path should include lots of trash receptacles to keep it as clean as possible. Both a paved and unpaved options would be ideal. Separate walkers from bicycles.



I feel conflicted on the shuttle question vs. no-shuttle. I love the wooded pathway that's away from cars, particularly for the kids to have a safe space to run around and explore. I can also see the practicality of adding more public transportation to the area.

I also live in Newton and drive a car 2x a week to get to the Crossfit gym. Having the bridge right there, but not usable is something I notice often per being able to easily walk to a business right across the bridge.

It is important to support the full range of low-speed transportation: cycling, ebikes, and other new battery applications that are now appearing. I am not sure how electric shuttles fit in. If they are high-speed or too large, they should be separated. But I would be open about allowing novel low-speed human-scale vehicles (say, electric scooters or delivery robots or other weirder items)

Create better spurs for walking to dog park and Cutler Park.

It's rather unclear what an "Electric Shuttle" would be, so I'm saying no to them at the moment. But could be easily convinced if I knew what they were. e.g., is it the size and scale of a golf cart or is it bigger, would it be autonomous etc.?

I am unclear what an electric shuttle is... is it a scooter? an electric bus-like thing?

I'm the more paths there are, the more likely people will be to make a habit of biking places, like for errands along Needham St. I would love to see Winchester St. Be viable for bikes to connect this project with Newton Center.

This trail is an important link for anyone who bikes in Newton, and for encouraging more people to get around without cars.

I love to bike, but never bike in Newton, the town I live in. It would be such an asset to have this walking and biking path for both cities to enjoy for recreation mostly. Lexington has a bike path but we don't want to drive our bikes in our cars to get there. Old railroad track bike paths are common in other towns and are used a lot. This is exciting!

Electric shuttle transportation should be a free service to community members

It's very exciting to hear about this as the Cochituate Rail Trail, Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, and Central Mass Rail Trail are all making tons on progress to the north side of MetroWest. I'm really excited for a non-road based way to cross over route 95 south of highway 90 (Mass Central Rail trail would be a north of I-90 I-95 crossing).

more bicycles/electric scooters/non-car commuting are better for people and for traffic!!



I support any pathway that will remove carbon producing vehicular traffic

I think this would be an important asset for the community

Often when these paths are created, they are too narrow. In order to have walkers, runners and bikers all use the pathway, they need to be as WIDE as possible. NO, NO to electric shuttles. Not enough room for those.

I am only okay with electric shuttles if they are small and low speed, like golf carts, and the path is sufficiently wide.

If it is for both bikes and pedestrians, then it should be very wide (so people can walk 3 abreast and bikes can safely pass them)

the only transit that makes sense is green line extension. I don't believe there is enough demand even with the large developments to have a separate shuttle running, any shuttles should run on Needham Street itself to be useful

I think the Community Way is great idea for bicycle and pedestrian use but not electric shuttles. It would run on the back of my property, and I'm concerned about people potentially throwing garbage off it. I would like to see garbage cans maintained at the access points.

I would prefer no electric shuttle. There will be enough noise and traffic from the increased traffic at the new Muzi development

If transit service is provided, how would those vehicles be separated safely enough from pedestrians, cyclists, etc. so that parents would feel it is at least as safe as it is now for older kids (say 10 yrs. and up) ride bikes on the path without adult companions?

I am strongly in favor of this project. I bike the Upper falls greenway nearly daily and I am always sorry it is not extended

I think this would be a great project that would alleviate traffic in the area and provide a meaningful recreation and commuting opportunity for Needham Heights residents, including hundreds of residents of the two Needham Housing Authority properties nearby and the Needham Heights Senior Center. As this area becomes increasingly congested, having off-road recreational opportunities will become much more important for the health and safety of our community.



We have no safe paths from Needham to Newton for cyclist, runners, and walkers. I cycle everywhere — thousands of miles a year — and even I find the Needham St / Highland St and Kendrick St overpasses dangerous and intimidating. It's time to build a path that is ONLY for cyclists, pedestrians and other non-motorized transportation. Please do not include a bus — just run that bus down Needham St.

This is a great idea! We should figure out a way to link this proposed community way, through designated bike lanes on local streets or other means, with the Needham rail trail.

I think it would be a great help to people living in East Needham Heights and the new apartment complex in Newton to get close to the commuter rail in Needham.

An electric shuttle could worsen traffic on Webster St leading up to the intersection of Webster and Highland Ave, which already is a dangerous intersection when cars are dropping kids off at TBS in the morning. Having an electric shuffle would also make it unsafe for pedestrians and bikes on that trail. This area of Needham is severely lacking in pedestrian walkways-- walking along the highway is unpleasant-- and a trail would be an aesthetic improvement. The abandoned rail on Webster feels unsafe.

Can it extend further into Newton? Would love to have it go all the way to National Lumber. That would help take traffic off of Needham St.

Wonderful to create paths. They're a real benefit to the community.

It's important to think about the Easy St end. How does northbound traffic cross to the other side of Winchester? Do they ride north on the sidewalk to the intersection at Dedham St? Ideally the path goes around the back of the cemetery to connect with Newton highlands. Having lights at Rt 9 will improve the dynamic, I can see.

(I guess the far end of the greenway is out of the study area. Nevertheless :-))

Being able to take the bike path to the Nexus from Needham would be awesome

These paths are great for recreation, but understand they are not practical for work/shopping. The Needham Street corridor is a mess because it's not being properly for vehicular traffic on account of misguided expectations that if you make it inconvenient to drive, people will look to other transportation methods. They won't - they'll just go elsewhere. However, most roads in the area are not safe for biking, so any dedicated rights-of-way for such activities are good ideas.

The more opportunities to walk and bike on such paths, the better. And the land is there, just waiting to be used in this way. It's a wonderful opportunity.

Ultimately this should connect up with other multi use trails —Needham rail trail, Wellesley path system.



Extend the shuttle to the Eliot Green line station.

Allowing motorized vehicles on the path would simply create another street, eliminating the safe and relaxed path. Effective public transport is already available on the 59 bus and this route should be supplemented instead of motorizing the foot and bike path.

I am not really sure about how electric shuttles would work on the path but as long as they are similar speed as a bike that should work fine. I hope they can build this trail. Thanks!

I would be SO SO excited for this! I live probably two-tenths of a mile from the proposed Webster Street origin point and have long wished that there was a nicer way to get to the Needham Street area of Newton than traipsing along Highland Ave over the highway.

and I said I hadn't attended an information session - that's because they have not yet taken place.

It would great if there was a way it connect to the MBTA or help provide access to the T

I would be a daily user.

N/A

this is great and overdue.

This would be FANTASTIC to have!

Community Way has the ability to alleviate car traffic on Highland Ave. and Needham Street if there are easy ways to access the stores. There should be ample signage encouraging people to use it rather than driving their cars from parking lot to parking lot. I recommend separate lanes clearly marked for pedestrians, bikes and electric shuttle. Or the electric shuttle could be on Highland Ave where the bike lane is now and move all bikes over to the path.

For us in Needham, this bicycle path would enable us to get to the green line without having to travel on busy Highland Ave or hilly Westchester Street. This would be HUGE!

I would love an electric shuttle/walk and bicycle path to connect us to public transportation hubs

Please develop public pathways for people to access without direct contact with motorists fighting for right of way. These pathways are critical for encouraging families to get out and about without worrying about motor vehicles. I would use these types of pathways every day if it could connect town to town that would encourage safe "biking"

This project represents the future and will position Needham and Newton as progressive, desirable communities. Let's go for it!





I'd like to think that I would use it for commuting to Newton, but believe I'd only use it for recreational purposes

There are lots of recreational bicyclists and walkers that would use this path; but not sure you'll get them via a Facebook post

I would love this bike path!

Peter Sutton, MA DOT, sees a potential to extend this bicycle path to Rhode Island. A path out to Medfield would be as long as the Minuteman Bike Path (7 miles) and would go by the Charles River Peninsula. It would be safer than biking on Central Avenue. It also has similarities to the Central Mass Rail Trail in Wayland, Weston, (under construction) Waltham, (perhaps) Sudbury.

I find it very interesting that Massachusetts "supersized" this section of the 128/95 (including the demolition of the RR Bridge) on a State Level yet is burdening the Needham and Newton with the restoration of this important and comparatively easy and inexpensive project.

The corridor should be used to extend the Green line between Newton Highlands and Needham Heights. Prior MBTA studies showed that >8000 transit riders would utilize the corridor as a light rail extension. A prior study found that nobody would use a shuttle bus on the corridor.

I am glad to see this project moving forward, we pay way too much deference to cars for transportation

The trail would be unusable to elderly pedestrians if there were electric vehicle use on it.

The path would offer a great improvement in human mobility and recreation

Thank you! Very excited to have more walking paths

I have lived near the Monon trail in Carmel IN. It is awesome! Adds value to the town. A cyclists can be in downtown Indianapolis faster than a car. This type of trail adds great value to the community.

Multi modal is very important for linking access to the Green Line. This is true both for residents of Needham and Newton especially along Needham Street. It also helps open up businesses in this area to offer other means of getting to work using public transit. This is true both for commuter rail and Green Line passengers.

There are many businesses in Needham I would love to be able to bike to and not being able to bike to them means I go to them less frequently.



Not only is the shuttle version less safe for children riding bicycles alongside, it seems much more costly to create a path that includes a shuttle. The Engineering Company admitted that they are unaware of a bike/shuttle path anywhere else.

Adjacent to our Community Way study area, the Highland Ave bridge is a major new multi-lane high-speed vehicular structure with highway entrance and exit ramps, perfect for cars and buses but very dangerous for cyclists. The Community Way along with the Upper Falls Greenway should be the safe refuge for cyclists and pedestrians between Newton and Needham.

I would need to know more about the electric shuttles. If it interfered with bicycle and pedestrian access, I would not like it. Otherwise this is a fantastic idea. I didn't realize there was a meeting until after it was over tonight. I was sorry to miss it.

A pedestrian/bicycling only path could be constructed much more easily and cheaply than a multi-modal way that includes an electric shuttle bus. As was pointed out at the Needham public meeting, there are multiple existing roadway connections between Needham and Newton and no truly safe connection for pedestrians and bicyclists. While the long-term vision of a busway connection from the Needham Heights station to the Newton Highlands station is laudable and attractive theoretically, given various land-use constraints, financial constraints, MBTA's disinterest in a transit connection, and substantially greater potential impacts on abutters, inclusion of a shuttle bus connection would likely significantly delay, if not completely derail, the project.

supportive of recreational - bike, running, walking.

Most all rail trails offer parking, for those not close enough to bike to the trail. Parking should be considered when considering feasibility of project. Also, with the increase in the number of electric bikes, will this not negate the need for electric transportation, such as golf carts, as was mentioned at the meeting?

The cost of building a new bridge over Rte 95 that supports electric buses will be extremely expensive.

The recently constructed bridge over Rte 95 that runs from Highland Ave in Needham can certainly support additional bus traffic.

While I chose "include electric shuttles" above, I would support either option, depending on which was more feasible. The changes required to support the shuttles would cost considerably more, however the economic support this would provide for our industrial area might offset that.

A think a protected route for bicycles/pedestrians to Newton is sorely needed and long overdue. The other bridges have bike paths and sideways but are terrifying with so many cars flying by.



This path would be a boon to abutters property value and huge asset to the town of Needham and Newton. If relevant the feasibility study/design should include safety entrances, exits and crossings (@ webster, gould and oak st).

The most logical would be to extend the green line along that way. That would take a lot of traffic pressure off of Needham Street especially when new housing is built towards the Charles River! It should be considered a no brainer to restore light rail to that corridor.

If path connects to MBTA green line then electric shuttle a good idea and I would use that to get to T vs drive and park at Eliot

Get the Railroad bridge rebuilt and continue the path past Needham Centre.

Motorized vehicles should be limited to the roads running adjacent to the trail. There is no reason to add buses that would endanger pedestrians on a recreational path. The whole point of bike & walking trails is that they are not roads.

Electric shuttle would be more useful if it connected Needham Center with the D line

Would pedestrians be separated from electric vehicles? Otherwise, it could be a conflict. Bikes and pedestrians are sometimes a conflict but should be made compatible.

It's very important to have climate safe options to cars. Walking or biking on Needham St is not safe or pleasant. The Community Way would be a wonderful addition to bike safety in the area.

If the path on the Needham end starts at Webster Street there should be some thought given to vehicle parking for walkers and people wishing to use electric shuttles.

The path should include electric shuttles "if" it connects to the Newton Highlands T Station.

Safety is an issue due to the steep elevation change between the existing rail way and Evelyn Rd

I feel a bike path would be great. I do not support a bike path with an electric shuttle. The cost to build and the cost to maintain the shuttle vehicles and road maintenance due to wear from car-type tire use and snow plowing etc would be cost prohibitive. In addition, if the path can't go all the way to a green line t station, then it doesn't make sense overall. I think I put from Wingate (900 ft) and Bulfinch (1,250 ft) would be critical since they are abutting neighbors to large portions of the path.

Given that the already paved Needham St/Highland Ave runs parallel only 1/4 mile way it makes no sense to run electric buses on this corridor since this would seriously detract from the recreation uses for no significant gain.



Consider how this path, if constructed for electric shuttles, would serve employees of office, lab and institutional buildings in Newton and Needham in the vicinity of Highland Avenue/Needham Street.

I like the idea of electric shuttles but think this isn't a good route for them. I would like to see the corridor extended as close as possible to Avery Square in Needham.

You all rock!

There appear to be too many unanswered questions that the feasibility study does not intend to address. Cost should be a paramount decision and it seems secondary at best. What are the options if Needham moves forward separately from Newton? Will you move forward with the project if moving over the highway is not an option?

this path could & should connect to Newton Highlands and the Needham commuter rail and greenway as possible!

Preference to using asphalt on the paths and adding a restroom/portapotty. Need a safer crossing of Needham Street, Newton to get to the path.

If electric or any other vehicles are allowed to use this, it will destroy the experience for walkers. Safety will be compromised, and nature will be discouraged.

As an avid bicyclist and a walker, it is important to create this safer way to get from Newton to Needham. It currently is very dangerous to bicycle to the area. I often bike to and from Newton to and through Needham and would love to have a safer way to get there. I also would love to volunteer to be involved with this process

Electric shuttles will put both bicyclists and pedestrians at risk. There will be good intentions, but the vehicles are too large to safely mix. Electric vehicle space will cause bicyclists to be too close to pedestrians.

The electric shuttles should be speed limited to 8 mph and max every 15 minutes. They should be as narrow as possible, not standard electric vans. Possibly the right design doesn't exist yet.

The surface should be suitable for inline skating.

Electric shuttles will absolutely destroy what is already an important community green space in Newton Upper Falls. We have places for buses - they're called roads. The Greenway is a peaceful, safe place for walkers, runners, bikers, families, and dogs. It's an attractive place for recreation and nature time precisely because it is not a road. It's not a place for motor vehicles.



I like the possible use of the path for walking, biking, running. The introduction of electric shuttles would, in my view, severely diminish the path's attractiveness for walking or running.

Adding a shuttle/large vehicle to this path will destroy the safety of pedestrians, pets, and non-motorized users and completely undermine the entire point of the project. If you want to add a shuttle, add them to Needham Street which will be directly parallel. If you want to be green and do something novel add electric bike charging infrastructure.

I would not want the electric shuttle to be used for the route.

Strict rules that are enforced to reduce electric shuttle and bike/pedestrian interaction- if a problem emerges, vehicles should be removed. Otherwise, no motorized vehicles

I think this would be a great/safe addition to the travel corridor between Needham and Newton. I was part of a group many years ago that tried to get this done in association with the widening of 128. Hopefully, with a new Select Board, this will have better luck at seeing the finish line and getting the connection made.

A bike path would be a good idea, but an electric shuttle should NOT be included. No matter what, it would cause some potential for danger for walkers/bikers/people with strollers and young kids. It would also be disruptive to houses on the path, even if it is electric.

Needham street is very crowded, and any alternate form of access is important.

Please increase the number of electric shuttles within Newton connecting the villages. Also consider something similar along Commonwealth Avenue to connect the most western part or newton to the Boston College T stop!

I am not agree with any developer

I didn't attend the meetings but watched the recording. I find Question 9 mixing public transportation and electric shuttle misleading as it appears the shuttle may not be public as most people understand it.

Sense of safety and serenity for pedestrians is key. Quiet electric vehicles may sneak up on folks. Strongly suggest keeping this to pedestrian use.

In creating this community way, please do not preclude a future Green Line Extension to Needham along this stretch (<https://amateurplanner.blogspot.com/2019/12/everything-is-interconnected.html> ).



The Greenway is a beautiful space that would be enhanced by extending it over the scenic and serene Charles River, and I would love to see this happen. The Greenway is a valuable space in a nature where people engage the outdoors away from vehicles and roadways peacefully and safely. Adding vehicles will eliminate what little natural space we have. Please do not pave the pathway. If a shuttle is needed, one can be added on Needham Street.

Please build in public restrooms along the route - too many public spaces have been developed without them, and we all suffer for it. It's also the empathetic, humane way to design a recreation path and will 100% drive more use. I don't see how you can call a path "accessible" without meeting this basic need. We absolutely factored in restroom availability in setting our weekend plans when our children were very young.

If this cost to Newton I would disagree. You should use the tax dollars to education to support schools before adding more projects.

I answered a survey earlier where I indicated I'd use the electric shuttle regularly. That's not true. I would, however, bike over from Newton with some frequency.