

# Project Update: Sherman's Bridge Deck Repair

**Date:** February 12, 2026

The Municipal Project Team is pleased to provide an update on the Sherman's Bridge repair project. We remain committed to balancing modern safety standards with the preservation of the bridge's historical character and the recreational needs of the Wayland and Sudbury communities.

## Core Design Philosophy

In recognition of the site's historical significance, the Project Team has opted for a design that closely preserves the well-regarded structure currently in place. We have worked diligently to ensure the new deck feels authentic to its surroundings.

## Public Input Integration

Following our Visioning Workshop and ongoing public feedback, the following features have been successfully integrated into the project scope:

- **Material Changes:** We have eliminated the previously proposed asphalt layer over the wood deck to maintain a traditional look.
- **Timber Aesthetics:** The walkway will be built from timber boards, and the driving surface will feature a timber wearing surface over GluLam decking.
- **Improved Access:** Access to the walkway from both the Wayland and Sudbury sides has been enhanced since the initial design concept.
- **Guardrails & Barriers:** We are keeping the steel-backed wood guardrails on the North-side approaches, proposing steel-backed wood guardrails on the South-side approaches and lowering the barrier between the driving surface and the 5' wide walkway.
- An additional horizontal rail is included below the glulam bridge railing along the South-side, mitigating concerns from residents of the "large gap" from top of roadway surface to bottom of railing.
- **Future-Proofing:** Conduit will be included beneath the bridge, attached to the existing stringers, to allow for the future relocation of overhead utilities.

## Scope Limitations

To keep within the scope of a deck repair for the purposes of extending and preserving the bridge life, the below request could not be accommodated at this time:

- **Second Walkway:** A South-side walkway is outside the current scope, as it would require significant structural work to the bridge substructure and require complex federal easements from the US Fish & Wildlife Service. MassDOT has affirmed that their funding is Non-Federal Aid and specifically for repairs and to extend and preserve the life of the current bridge layout. It would also detract from the historic look that we know is so important to many.

## Key Project Facts

Category	Details
<b>Material</b>	The bridge will be constructed entirely of <b>wood with metal fasteners</b> . GluLam is the only material that meets required crash-test ratings for this traffic volume.
<b>Weight Limits</b>	Weights remain <b>unrestricted</b> (as per 1992 design standards), allowing for buses and large trucks.
<b>River Access</b>	There will be <b>no impact or restrictions</b> to current river access as a result of the project.
<b>Below-Deck Repairs</b>	Nominal repairs to one piling and several cross-members are included in this effort.
<b>Funding</b>	MassDOT will pay for all deck repair materials and provide contractor services for installation—a significant financial benefit to both Towns and their taxpayers.
<b>Guidance from Town Counsel and MassDOT</b>	Town Counsel has advised, with no evidence of an executed agreement from 1971, there is no need to renegotiate nor exercise any inferred conditions.  Prior to the construction of the 1992 bridge, there was a 2 ½ Ton Weigh Limit. However as the bridge built in 1992 was designed and constructed to accommodate large trucks and buses, weights are unrestricted as per MassDOT.

## Next Steps

The Project Team is finalizing the Project Design Concept with strong support from MassDOT (See attached Confirmation letter from MassDOT). We are now moving toward the execution phase to ensure the bridge remains a safe and beautiful landmark for years to come.