

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of this feasibility study?

CTDOT is completing this feasibility study to advance planning work for future multimodal (or “shared-use”) path connections to the Route 3 Putnam Bridge from Wethersfield and Glastonbury.

In 2011, approximately \$5 million of State and Federal funds were committed to providing a new walkway on the northbound side of the Route 3 Putnam Bridge as part of the on-going bridge rehabilitation project. Because the scope of the rehabilitation project does not provide access to the new walkway from either end of the bridge, one or more separate projects will have to be undertaken to design and construct the new path connections. This study is evaluating possible alternatives for these connections; the study findings will provide a basis for future design of the connections.

Why are the future path connections and walkway on the bridge so important?

The path connections and walkway would create new and viable commuting and recreational travel options for non-motorists in the area by providing a 1.3-mile link over the Connecticut River between Great Meadow Road in Wethersfield and Naubuc Avenue in Glastonbury.

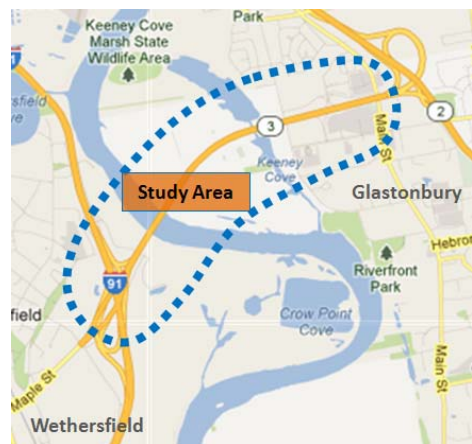
By comparison, the total distance currently traveled between these points by pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-motorized users via one of the existing river crossings in the area is:

- 8 miles using the Route 15 Charter Oak Bridge between Hartford and East Hartford;
- 11 miles using the Route 160 ferry between Glastonbury and Rocky Hill; and
- 26 miles using the Route 17/Route 66 Arrigoni Bridge between Portland and Middletown.

When would the path be built and open for use?

The precise timeline for when the path would be open for use is not currently known.

Generally, the overall project implementation process will include design, environmental permitting, and construction and will be initiated once project funding is secured. The duration of the process, once initiated, is anticipated to take up to three years.



Top: View of Putnam Bridge from Heritage Way Bike Path, Wethersfield.

Bottom: Study Area Map (from Google).

How much use would the path and walkway get?

It is not possible to know how many people would use the path for either transportation or recreational purposes. However, the feasibility study is considering how the path can be planned and designed to maximize its year-round use by providing the most reliable, accessible, and comfortable facility possible within the context of various limitations (including physical, environmental, and fiscal constraints).

It is anticipated that users could include regular bicycle commuters, as well as other area residents and employees who will travel “out and back” on the path from either Wethersfield or Glastonbury for a variety of weekday or weekend activities. These activities could include exercising, dog walking, nature watching, and traveling between local destinations, among other recreational and transportation-related activities.

How much could it cost to build the path connections to the walkway?

Construction cost estimates vary for each path alternative that has been evaluated to-date. The four preliminary alternatives for a connection from Great Meadow Road in Wethersfield range from \$350k to \$600k. The six preliminary alternatives for a connection from Naubuc Avenue in Glastonbury range from \$2 million to \$3.9 million.

The construction cost estimates for the favorable/preferred alternatives in Wethersfield and Glastonbury are \$600k and \$2.6 million, respectively, as of June 2013.

What is included in the cost estimates and how are the estimates developed?

The cost estimates include estimates for major construction items (such as earthwork, pavement items, sidewalk, curbing, concrete barrier, retaining walls, drainage structures, among others), minor construction items, lump sum items (such as mobilization, maintenance and protection of traffic, among others), and construction incidentals and contingencies.

The estimates for major construction items for this study are based on approximate quantities and estimated prices for those items. Because the *Putnam Bridge Multimodal Trail Connections Feasibility Study* is a planning initiative and not a final design project, the quantities are approximated based on planning-level “design” and best-available existing data. Consequently, these quantities are variable and will change as new and better information is developed or obtained. Estimated prices for major construction items are derived from various sources including CTDOT’s bid price history databases and published references (such as CTDOT’s *Preliminary Cost Estimating Guidelines*, Capitol Region Council of Governments’ (CRCOG) *STP Urban Program 2013 Cost Estimating Forms*, and RSMean’s *Heavy Construction Cost Data*, as applicable).

The estimate for minor construction items is based on a percentage of the cost estimate for major construction items. For planning-level estimates, this percentage is 25%.

The estimates for lump sum items are also based on a percentage of the cost estimate for major construction items. These percentages vary by item.

The estimates for construction incidentals and contingencies are based on a percentage of the sum of the estimates for major items, minor items, and lump sum items. These percentages vary based on the overall dollar value of the project, but are generally 25% to 30% for incidentals and 10% for contingencies for projects valued at \$5 million or less.

All percentages for minor items, lump sum items, incidentals, and contingencies are prescribed by CTDOT's latest *Preliminary Cost Estimating Guidelines*.

The total construction cost estimate for each alternative is equal to the sum of major items, minor items, lump sum items, incidentals, and contingencies. The estimates have been rounded up to the nearest tenth of a million dollars for reporting purposes.

It is noted that the construction cost estimates do not include costs for design and permitting, wetland mitigation, utility relocation, property acquisition, or inflation costs at this time.

What purpose do the cost estimates serve?

The construction cost estimates that have been developed for this study to-date are intended to provide a basis of comparison among alternatives. Since costs are a factor in the selection of a preferred alternative, it is important to understand the relative differences in the cost of each alternative so that appropriate comparisons can be drawn during the selection process.

In general, the construction cost estimates developed for planning initiatives like the *Putnam Bridge Multimodal Trail Connections Feasibility Study* are intended to provide an order-of-magnitude understanding of what the cost of the project could be. Because these costs are developed based on planning-level information, they are subject to change throughout the planning process and throughout the subsequent design process as the information is further refined and becomes more complete.

As such, it is anticipated that the construction cost estimates for the favorable/preferred alternatives in Wethersfield and Glastonbury will be subject to change as refinements are made to the plans, details, and estimates for these alternatives. At the completion of the study, the construction cost estimates for the favorable/preferred alternatives can be used as a basis for determining the level of funding likely needed to advance the project to design and construction.

Why have the cost estimates changed during the course of the study?

In general, the cost estimates for the preliminary alternatives in Wethersfield and Glastonbury have been updated as necessary throughout the planning process to reflect changes in the layout and physical elements of the plans; changes in assumptions used during the estimating process; and changes in the level of detail of the estimate as more specific information has been developed to-date.

More specifically, some of the notable changes that have affected the cost estimates include: a change in the type of retaining wall assumed for Alternatives 1 and 5 from segmental block wall to sheet piling wall; a reduction in the path length from 4400 feet to 4100 feet; better-defined sidewalk and parking improvements on Naubuc Avenue; better-defined compensatory flood mitigation costs; and modifications to the estimated prices for various major construction items to provide consistency with

pricing guidelines published in CRCOG's *2013 Cost Estimating Forms* for STP-Urban program applications (this is the form that Wethersfield, Glastonbury and other CRCOG municipalities use to apply for project funding under the STP-Urban program – a Federal funding program for which the path would likely be eligible).

Would the towns be responsible for funding the path connections?

It is not anticipated that the towns of Wethersfield and Glastonbury would be responsible for funding the entire cost of the path connections.

In order for design and construction of the path connections to move forward, town representatives will have to work with CTDOT and CRCOG to identify potential funding sources for the project (or projects) through traditional State and Federal transportation funding programs. Depending on the funding program and project eligibility, each town's funding responsibility could be limited to 20% of the total project cost with 80% of the funding from State and Federal programs.

For their 20% share, the towns could utilize a variety of funding sources that may or may not include their local tax dollars. These sources could include other State and local grant programs (subject to availability and project eligibility), as well as donation, sponsorship, or fund-raising programs that could be established to draw on private funding sources.

How can I find more study information or provide comments?

For more information, visit CTDOT's study webpage at www.ct.gov/dot (search "Putnam Trail Study").

You can also contact CTDOT's project manager, David Head, with questions or comments at:

David.Head@ct.gov or (860) 594-2149.