



KENMORE

Time to start planning routes to get around BU Bridge work

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With a three-year, \$20 million makeover on the horizon, the Department of Conservation and Recreation will host a public meeting later this week on the Boston University campus to give residents, commuters, and neighbors an opportunity to hear details about the massive Boston University Bridge rehabilitation project.

DCR officials are preparing to put this second part of the three-phase project out to bid later this fall, said spokeswoman Wendy Fox. DCR officials and representatives from STV Inc., the Boston-based design consultants overseeing the repairs, will be on hand to lay out the plans and answer questions about how the work will affect those who use the busy 80-year-old bridge connecting Cambridge and Boston, she said.

Though some work to repair crumbling sidewalks on and leading to the bridge has been underway since last spring, the bulk of the rehabilitation will begin in earnest some time in spring 2009, she said.

Work in this latest phase includes repairs to structural steel and concrete and granite stone support blocks. Additionally, the deck will be replaced and two storm water management systems will be created on both sides to filter and minimize the amount of polluted rain water that runs off into the Charles River.

Some of the most frequent complaints from bridge users have been over traffic backups caused by the loss of one (and sometimes two) of the four travel lanes, as well as a newly redesigned feeder lane from Commonwealth Avenue that forces two lanes of traffic into one.

Though it's still too early to say precisely how traffic will be affected by the deck work, Fox said, narrowed travel lanes will continue to be a part of the equation.

The meeting is slated for Thursday from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Boston University College of General Studies, 871 Commonwealth Ave., Room 129, in Boston.

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