

Focus Area 13: Hammond Pond Parkway



Parkways

- Hammond Pond Parkway

Communities

- Newton
- Brookline

Existing Conditions

Overview

Hammond Pond Parkway is an approximately two-mile long corridor extending from Beacon Street at the northern end to Horace James Circle at the southern end. The parkway alternates between a three and four-lane, bidirectional roadway.

The parkway is uniquely situated to provide access to acres of conservation area in the midst of the heavily developed Chestnut Hill area. The northern segment bisects a popular conservation area including DCR's Hammond Pond Reservation and the Webster Conservation Area. The area around Route 9 is a major commercial node. South of Route 9, the parkway alignment is adjacent to the Lost Pond Conservation Area and Skyline Park.

Pedestrian

Pedestrian access is relatively limited except in the vicinity of Route 9. North of Route 9, a sidewalk extends up to the driveway to Shops at Chestnut Hill. Goat paths on both sides of the parkway extending northwards towards Beacon Street indicate pedestrian demand. Several trails cross the parkway in this area. South of Route 9, sidewalks extend as far as Heath Street. Between Heath Street and Horace James Circle, there are no sidewalks on either side.

Bicycle

Hammond Pond Parkway does not feature any bicycle facilities or a shoulder that is usable by bicyclists. The high volume and speed of traffic is a significant deterrent to bicycling.

Recommendations

Hammond Pond Parkway Segment 1—Beacon Street to Route 9

Segment 1 of Hammond Pond Parkway is divided into two sub-segments.

Segment 1A, which extends from Beacon Street south to the Shops at Chestnut Hill Driveway, features a four-lane, undivided bidirectional roadway (see Figure 5-66).

Segment 1B, which extends from the Shops at Chestnut Hill Driveway, features three with one lane in the northbound direction and two going southbound (see Figure 5-67).

Along the entirety of Segment 1, curbing is present on both edges of the roadway, with grassy shoulders extending 6 – 7 ft. on both sides. The roadway has a typical width of 44 ft. A sidewalk is present on the west side starting near the driveway to 300 Hammond Pond Parkway.

The average daily traffic between Beacon Street and Route 9 is 19,000 vehicles, which suggests that four-lane to two-lane road diet may be feasible.

Existing

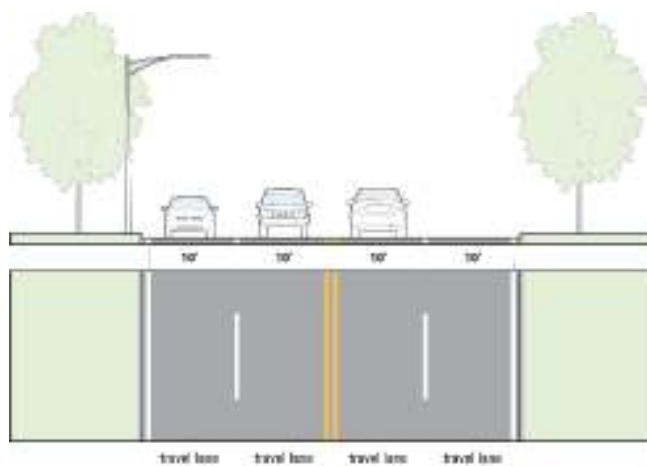


Figure 5-66: Hammond Pond Parkway Segment 1A Existing Typical Cross Section

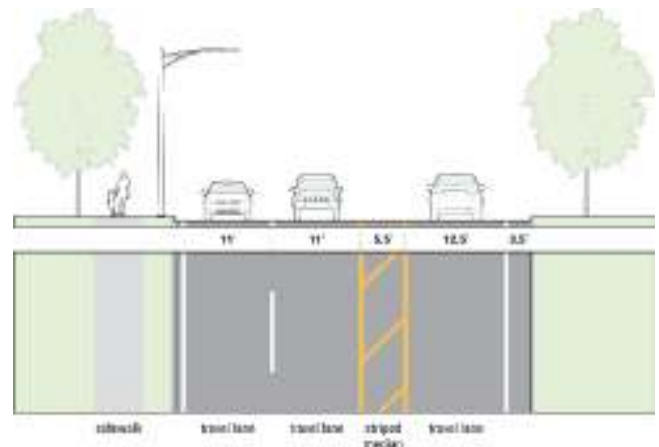


Figure 5-67: Hammond Pond Parkway Segment 1B Existing Typical Cross Section

Short-Term Recommendation

Short-term, bike lanes can be installed through restriping only and could be implemented as a stand-alone project or as part of repaving. Segment 1A features two travel lanes and buffered bike lanes in both directions. Segment 1B retains the existing number of lanes and provide standard bike lanes.

A crosswalk at the Shops at Chestnut Hill driveway is recommended to connect the two existing sidewalk segments. Extending the sidewalk northward to Beacon Street from its current terminus should be considered. Finally, crosswalks should be considered at the locations indicated in Figure 5-76 to provide a location for trail users to cross the parkway.

A new crosswalk at the Shops at Chestnut Hill Driveway would necessitate the addition of curb ramps and pedestrian indicators at that location. No other curb modifications or physical alterations would to signal equipment would be necessary.

With a corridor reconstruction project, new curbing could be added to create separated bike lanes within the same typical cross section.

Long-Term Recommendation

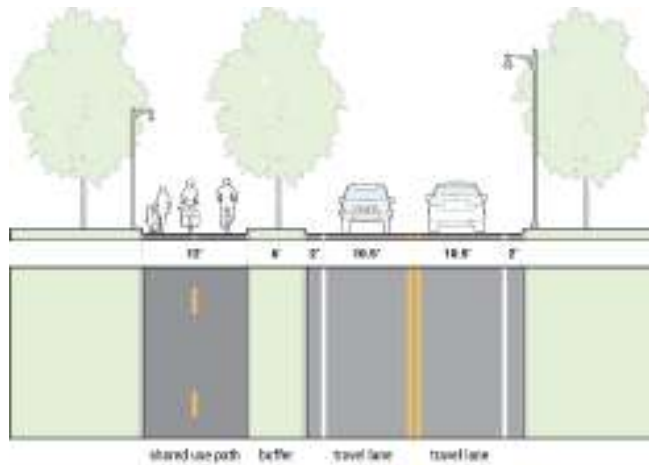


Figure 5-68: Hammond Pond Parkway Segment 1A Long-term Typical Cross Section

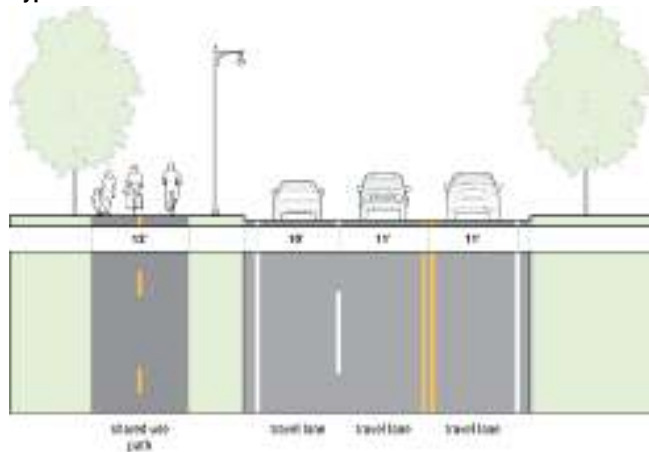


Figure 5-69: Hammond Pond Parkway Segment 1B Long-term Typical Cross Section

Long-term, a shared use path is proposed to provide improved pedestrian and bicycle accommodations. The west side of the parkway is the preferred location of the shared use path to align with the existing sidewalk segment. Segment 1A features a 12 ft. wide shared use path separated from the roadway by a 6 ft. buffer, which features formal plantings (see Figure 5-68). Modifications to the curbs are not required, as the proposed cross section is within the existing roadway width.

Segment 1B provides a continuation of the shared use path, which could feasibly be extended south to the signalized crossing at the Route 9 westbound onramp (see Figure 5-69). The existing number of travel lanes are retained. Construction of the shared use path and buffer

requires narrowing the existing roadway. Starting near the Street at Chestnut Hill driveway and extending northward, a large sloped retaining wall is present along the edge of the sidewalk. There is enough width between the existing guardrail and the retaining wall to provide a shared use path, though it would require some removal of informal vegetation along the edge.

Reconstruction of the intersections at the Shops at Chestnut Hill driveway and at Beacon Street, including potential impacts to existing signal equipment. The signalized intersections at the Street at Chestnut Hill driveway and at Route 9 would likely not need modifications.

Hammond Pond Parkway Segment 2 – Route 9 to Heath Street

Between Route 9 and Heath Street, the parkway widens to a divided roadway with four through lanes and additional turning lanes at intersections. Route 9 crosses over the parkway on a historic stone arch bridge. A 6-ft. wide sidewalk is provided on both sides featuring a variable width landscaped buffer. Residential apartment buildings are located on both sides of the parkway. Recent retail development in the area has increased pedestrian and bicycle activity; during field observations, bicyclists were observed using the sidewalks and crosswalks to traverse the area. Since sidewalks are already present, the discussion for this segment focuses on alternatives for providing bicycle facilities.

Short-Term Recommendation

While the Route 9 bridge presents a physical constraint, it is feasible to install bike lanes in both directions by narrowing the existing travel lanes. Moving south towards Heath Street, the roadway becomes increasingly constrained. Bike lanes could be extended south to Heath Street by removing a travel lane in one direction. The feasibility of removing a travel lane requires further evaluation.

Long-Term Recommendation

The Route 9 bridge presents a constraint for continuing a path southward along the west side. It may be feasible to provide a shared use path under the bridge by moving the curb on the right side of the southbound roadway, narrowing the travel lanes. The path would likely be of

minimum width and lack a buffer with the roadway. Curb ramps at the Route 9 onramp and offramp on the west side would need to be widened to accommodate path users.

South of the Route 9 eastbound offramp, DCR's right-of-way is wide enough to extend the shared use path to Heath Street along the west side of the parkway. The path would follow the alignment of the existing sidewalk. Some modifications to landscaping and plantings may be needed.

Hammond Pond Parkway Segment 3 – Heath Street to Horace James Circle

Continuing southward from Heath Street, the parkway consists of a four-lane undivided roadway with a typical width of 42 ft. (see Figure 5-70). Unlike Segment 1, there is no curbing on either side. Soft shoulders are present on both sides that are clear of vegetation. Goat paths along the shoulders indicate walking demand. Conservation areas and wetlands abut the parkway on both sides, with residential development present at the far ends. There are several topographical constraints along this segment. First, the road bed on which the roadway was built through the wetlands extends roughly 12 – 15 ft. away from the road edge on either side, though at some points it narrows on the east side. Second, approximately 1,800 ft. north of Horace James Circle, the parkway cuts through a small natural mound, resulting in a vertical rise starting 6 ft. from the roadway edge on either side. The ADT of this segment is approximately 29,000 vehicles.

Existing



Figure 5-70: Hammond Pond Parkway Segment 3 Existing Typical Cross Section

Short- and long-term alternatives were developed for providing pedestrian and bicycle facilities along this portion of Hammond Pond Parkway.

Short-Term Recommendation

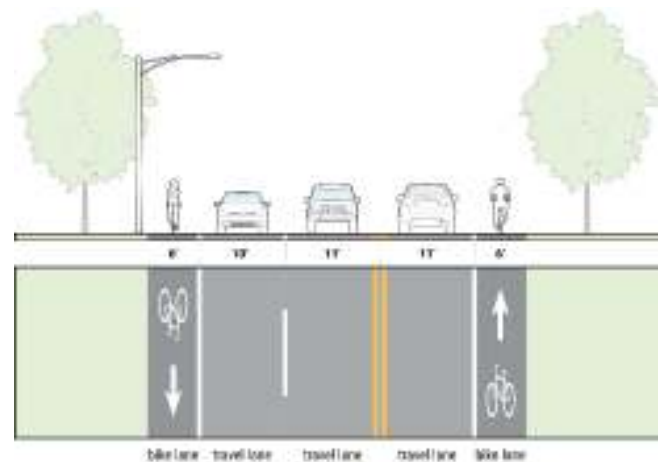


Figure 5-71: Hammond Pond Parkway Segment 3 Short-Term Typical Cross Section

Short-term, standard bike lanes are recommended in both directions, with the number of travel lanes reduced to three. It is recommended that the feasibility of a two lane (one lane in either direction) and a three lane (two lanes in one direction and one lane in the other direction) cross section be evaluated.

Pedestrian accommodations should also be considered on this segment. The desirability of constructing a new

sidewalk on one or both sides of the parkway should be weighed against the long-term recommendation, which would provide a shared use path for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Long-Term Recommendation

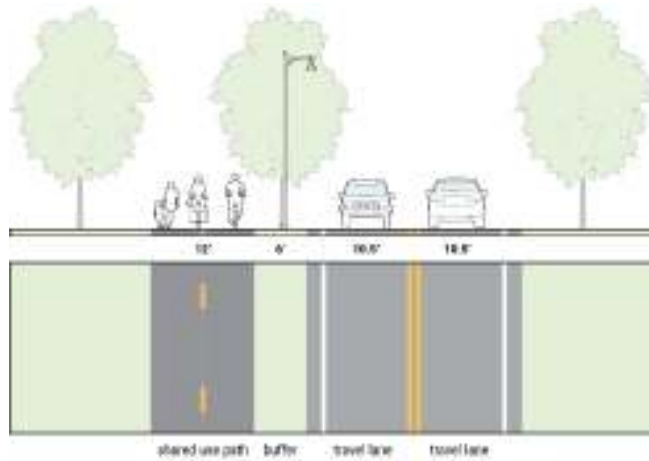


Figure 5-72: Hammond Pond Parkway Segment 3 Long-term with Two Lane Cross Section

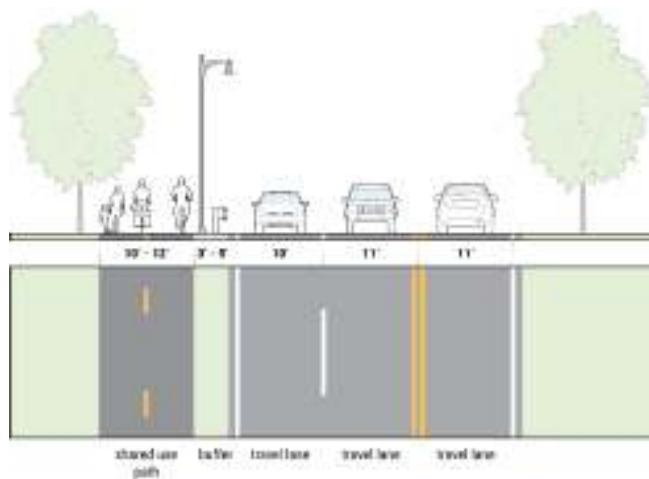


Figure 5-73: Hammond Pond Parkway Segment 3 Long-term with Three Lane Cross Section

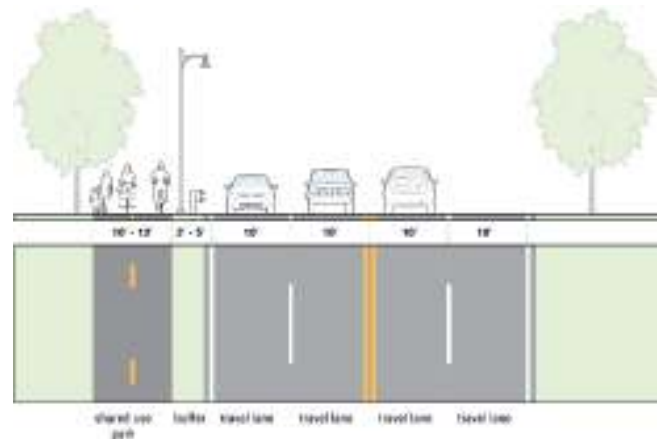


Figure 5-74: Hammond Pond Parkway Segment 3 Long-term with Four Lane Cross Section

Continuing south from Heath Street, a 10 ft. – 12 ft. shared use path would be constructed along the west side of the parkway. The feasibility of a road diet should be evaluated. A two-lane cross section would be preferred to provide a wider buffer with new plantings and to reduce impervious surface (see Figure 5-72). With three lanes, a narrower buffer would be used (see Figure 5-73). A four-lane cross section could be retained if necessary; growth along the edge would be cleared to provide width for the path (see Figure 5-74). Where the parkway cuts through a small natural mound 1,800 ft. north of Horace James Circle, there an existing earthwork embankment on the west side of the mound which that path could follow (see Figure 5-75). The presence of concrete marking posts at both ends of the embankment, as well as drainage structures, suggest that it was built to carry a path.



Figure 5-75: Approximate Location of Pathway Embankment on Hammond Pond Parkway

Figure 5-76

