



Article 10: 2010 Bridge Reconstruction Bond – Frequently Asked Questions

Article 10 warrant article text

The proposed bridge bond involves the replacement of existing bridges at North Main Street over Widow Harris Brook and at Emerson Way over Widow Harris Brook. The proposed article text is as follows:

“To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Million Two Hundred Ninety Seven Thousand Dollars (\$1,297,000.00) for the replacement of bridges at North Main Street over Widow Harris Brook and Emerson Way over Widow Harris Brook and to cover the costs associated with obtaining a bond issue, and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$1,297,000.00 of bonds or notes for such purposes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33); and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to accept any and all State Aid or other revenue source that may become available and take any and all action necessary to carry out any vote hereunder or take any other action relative thereto. Requires 2/3 ballot vote. The bridge construction is eligible for 80% reimbursement through the NHDOT Municipally Managed Bridge Aid Program.”

I noticed in the warrant article that the project is eligible for 80% reimbursement through NHDOT, what does that mean?

Both of the structures proposed for work under the article are categorized as Municipally Managed Bridges, which qualifies them for the NHDOT Municipal Bridge Aid Program. As a result of the Town Engineering Department due diligence, ***both structures will be eligible for reimbursement of eighty percent (80%) of the Town’s costs associated with the bridge replacement.*** The NHDOT current reimbursement schedule for these funds is 2013 for the Emerson Way Bridge and 2015 for the North Main Street Bridge. The existence of the 80% program is a key reason for our expediting the work on these projects. To the best extent possible we want to be first in line.

I understand the need to move forward because of the 80% funding, but why do these bridges need to be replaced at this time? What’s wrong with them?

Both of these bridges have exceeded their function lifespan and do not conform to current engineering standards. Both bridges are structurally deficient and hydraulically inadequate. The ***Emerson Way Bridge was built in 1935*** and is currently classified by NHDOT as a ***municipal red-list bridge.*** Residents may recall the flooding of May 2006, during which this location was subjected to road over-topping by flood waters and required temporary road closure. After the flood event, this section of Emerson Way was modified to function as a one-lane road, which it remains to this date.



Emerson Way Bridge



**North Main Street
at Widow Harris Brook**

The ***North Main Street Bridge was built in 1900*** and last rebuilt in 1930. The existing concrete parapet walls are significantly deteriorated. Residents may recall that this location was temporarily ***closed during the flooding of May 2006 as a result of a partial collapse and sinkholes*** within the roadway. Subsequent interim repairs facilitated the prompt re-opening of this segment of North Main St; however, the interim repairs are now approaching their functional lifespan.

Replacement of these bridges will improve Salem’s infrastructure, by providing safe bridge structures which are designed and constructed to current industry standards.



Article 10: 2010 Bridge Reconstruction Bond – Frequently Asked Questions

What happens if we do nothing?

Both of these structures have served the Town well for the better part of a century! However, they have far exceeded their functional lifespan, and the time for replacement has come. Lack of action at this time will have several negative impacts. First, the bridges are in a state of structural disrepair. These problems will not fix themselves without action. Over time, the bridge structures will continue to deteriorate, resulting in **potential weight restrictions** that would limit the use of these bridges by certain DPW and fire apparatus and many commercial trucks. Second, a lack of action maintains current



**Emerson Way Flooding
May 2006**

drainage/flooding conditions. Unless and until the bridges are replaced, it should be anticipated that **overtopping and temporary closure of Emerson Way will persist** during severe rainfall and flooding events, similar to what has occurred in the past. Third, the road collapse/sink holes that caused the closure of North Main Street in 2006 may continue to persist as the interim measures that were put in place at that time approach their functional lifespan. From our perspective the funding available via NHDOT reimbursement is a key to minimizing local costs.



**North Main Street Closure
May 2006**

What is the schedule?

Subject to final approvals and permits, it is anticipated that both bridges will be ready to go out to bid in April/May of 2010, with construction taking place during the late spring, summer, and fall months.

Will detour routes be set up?

The replacement of both bridges will require road closures along sections of North Main Street and Emerson Way in the vicinity of the bridge locations. Detour plans are currently being evaluated by the Engineering Department in cooperation with the Salem Fire Department, Salem Police Department, Department of Public Works and School Department. Prior to any construction or road closure, advance notice will be provided to the citizens of Salem regarding the start of construction and the detour routes to be utilized.

Who should I contact for additional information?

Contact the Engineering Department, Robert E. Puff, Jr., PE, Director at 603-890-2033 or via email at rpuff@ci.salem.nh.us