

# **Bridgton 26236.00**

## **Bridge Replacement Project**

*De Minimis Summary*

### **PUBLIC COMMENT DRAFT**

#### **Section 4(f) De Minimis Impact Determination**

*Section 4(f) of the Department for Transportation Act of 1966 and its revisions protects four types of properties: publicly owned park and recreation areas that are open to the general public, publicly owned wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and public or privately owned historic sites. De minimis impacts are defined as those that, after taking into account any measures to minimize harm, do not adversely affect the activities, features or attributes that qualify a significant public park, recreation area, wildlife and/or waterfowl refuge, or historic sites for protection under Section 4(f) of the DOT of 1966, as amended.*

#### **Purpose and Need**

The purpose of this project is to provide a safe, low-maintenance, cost-effective, two-way crossing at the Stevens Brook crossing on Depot Street in Bridgton. The need for this project is due to the overall poor structural integrity of the existing Cornshop Bridge (#0318). The bridge is also scour-critical and must be monitored during high water events.

Built in 1947, the roughly 40'-0" single-span steel bridge with a reinforced concrete deck and a bituminous wearing surface carries Depot Street over Stevens Brook in downtown Bridgton. The bridge has no skew and carries two 11' lanes of traffic with a striped sidewalk in the west shoulder. The bridge is currently posted for 11 tons. The substructure consists of stacked granite on timber cribbing and is scour critical. The proposed action would replace the existing structure with a single-span steel girder bridge with two 11' lanes and a 5.5' sidewalk on the existing alignment with standard steel rail and guardrail. Traffic would be maintained via an off-site detour. Depot Street has a low traffic volume, so permanent bridge closure was discussed at length during the scoping phase of the project. However, permanent closure was not a desirable option for the Town, as they would like to use this route for school bussing, and the bridge provides pedestrian connectivity to the school and the skate park.

The entire project area is shown in Appendix A.

#### **Description of Section 4(f) Properties & Impacts**

##### Historic Sites

The following historic sites would be subject to a Section 4(f) use:

Bridgton Memorial U.S. Army Reserve Center (15 Depot Street; Town of Bridgton)

The Bridgton Community Center/Bridgton Memorial U.S. Army Reserve Center is eligible for listing in the National Register under Criterion B due to its association with Max O. Urbahn. Urbahn designed many government and military structures including the Vehicle Assembly Building and Launch Control

Center for NASA at Cape Canaveral. Urbahn designed the Bridgton Memorial U.S. Army Reserve Center in 1959. He was a fellow of the American Institute of Architects and served as the organization's president in 1972. He died in 1995, one year after receiving the Gold Medal from the Society of American Military Engineers. The center retains all aspects of integrity except association. Its period of significance is its date of construction, 1959.

In order to complete the bridge replacement, MaineDOT would require approximately 1,000 SF for highway purposes, 1,726 SF for a slope easement, and 410 SF for a construction and maintenance easement at the Bridgton Memorial U.S. Army Reserve Center property.

Additionally, the MaineDOT would require approximately 0.05 acres for temporary construction rights for construction access and activities.



*Bridgton Memorial U.S. Army Reserve Center © Google*

The property limits and impacts are shown in Appendix B

#### Public Parks

There are no public parks within the project area.

#### Recreation Areas

##### Stevens Brook Trail (Town of Bridgton)

As described on MaineLakes.org, "The Stevens Brook Trail is a two-mile path between Highland Lake and Long Lake in Bridgton, Maine. The trail follows the Stevens Brook as it meanders through downtown Bridgton past scenic and historic natural areas." The trail is located on town-owned land and is managed in partnership with the non-profit Lakes Environmental Association.

At the project location the trail consists of a gravel path that crosses the bridge as a painted pathway, allowing users to travel to or from Depot Street and to

the trail that travels parallel to Stevens Brook and behind the Bridgton Community Center.

The proposed design plans include a sidewalk that will provide a safer crossing for the trail. The trail, which currently intersects the roadway at the southwest corner of the existing bridge, will have to be slightly relocated since the proposed bridge and guardrail are longer than existing. The relocation will direct the trail around the proposed guardrail and onto the sidewalk at the southwest corner. The radial guardrail end in this location helps to limit the length of the relocation.

In order to complete the bridge replacement, MaineDOT would require approximately 1,000 SF for highway purposes, 1,726 SF for a slope easement, and 410 SF for a construction and maintenance easement at the town-owned property that holds the Stevens Brook Trail.

Additionally, the MaineDOT would require approximately 0.05 acres and 457 SF for temporary construction rights for construction access and activities at the northwest corner of the bridge and the southeast corner of the bridge, respectively.



*Stevens Brook Trail © Google*

The property limits and impacts are shown in Appendix B.

#### Wildlife and Waterfowl Refuges

There are no wildlife and waterfowl refuges within the project area.

#### **Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Efforts**

The MaineDOT sought ways to avoid adverse impacts to the natural area surrounding the bridge. An on-alignment bridge replacement option was selected over the off-

alignment replacement option due to the increased environmental impacts that would result. Slope easements and construction and maintenance easements were minimized to the greatest extent possible.

Additionally, the MaineDOT considered various strategies for the maintenance of traffic during construction. It was determined that the off-site detour would be the least expensive, provide the minimum construction duration, and would have minimal impact on the traveling public and area surrounding the bridge. This option was presented and approved by the Town.

The MaineDOT will return the impacted land surrounding the replacement bridge – including the land that holds the Stevens Brook Trail – to a condition that is as good as or better than the existing. The MaineDOT and contractor will continue to coordinate with the Town on any anticipated closures of the portion of the trail at the project location that may occur as a result of the construction schedule.

#### **Official with Jurisdiction Concurrence**

The Town of Bridgton is the Official with Jurisdiction under Section 4(f), as the Town owns the impacted parcel that hold the Stevens Brook Trail. Additionally, the Maine State Historic Preservation Officer (Maine SHPO) is considered an Official with Jurisdiction over the same parcel, as it also holds the Bridgton Memorial U.S. Army Reserve Center, which is considered a historic site under Section 4(f). The MaineDOT is currently coordinating with the Maine SHPO.

The MaineDOT will be seeking approval from the Town of Bridgton once the public process is complete.

#### **Public Involvement**

The public process is ongoing.

#### **Summary**

Based on the scope of the proposed project and the above information, the following assessment has been made with respect to the proposed project:


The proposed bridge replacement project in Bridgton, Maine, would require permanent easements on the Bridgton Memorial U.S. Army Reserve Center parcel, which is considered both a historic site and a recreation area due to the presence of the town-owned Stevens Brook Trail. The project would not adversely affect the activities, features, and attributes that qualify the property for protection under Section 4(f). Therefore, the use of the Section 4(f) property will result in a de minimis impact.



## Appendix A

This aerial map of Bridgton, Maine, illustrates the town's geographical features and key locations. The map includes the following elements:

- Stevens Brook:** A prominent blue waterway flowing through the town, labeled "Stevens Brook" in two locations.
- Streets:** "DEPOT ST" runs diagonally from the top left towards the center, and "SKILLINS CIR" is located in the bottom right corner.
- Landmarks and Parks:** "PONDICHERRY PARK" is situated in the bottom left corner. The "Cornshop Bridge" is marked with a white dot where Depot St crosses the brook.
- Town-owned Parcels:** Two specific areas are highlighted with white dots and labeled "Town-owned parcels that hold the Stevens Brook Trail": one in the upper left near the community center and another on the right side of the brook.
- Community Center:** A callout points to a building in the upper left, identified as the "Bridgton Community Center/Bridgton Memorial U.S. Army Reserve Center (historic site)".
- Address:** A purple pin marks the address "0318" on Depot St, near the bridge.
- Town Name:** The word "BRIDGTON" is displayed in white capital letters in two locations on the map.

**0.015**  
 **Miles**  
 1 inch = 0.02 miles

Date: 3/3/2025  
Time: 10:50:38 AM

## Appendix B

