

# Town of Brookline

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Town of Brookline Begins Phase 2 of Muddy River Flood Risk Management Project

BROOKLINE and BOSTON-- Brookline and Boston are pleased to announce that work on Phase 2 of the Muddy River Flood Risk Management project began this month.

The project work will take place on Boston, Brookline and Commonwealth of Massachusetts land and stretch from Olmsted Park to the Back Bay Fens. Phase 2 is anticipated to be completed over approximately 36 months and is intended to remove over 90,000 cubic yards of sediment from the Muddy River.

Phase 1 of the project was completed in 2016 and included the stretch of the Muddy River located between the Riverway and Avenue Louis Pasteur. In this area, the River was "daylighted," or removed from underground culverts and returned to its original state. Existing sections of the Muddy River were dredged of sediment, invasive plant species were removed, new riverbanks were constructed and landscape plantings were installed.

Erin Gallentine, Director of Parks and Open Spaces in Brookline, commented: "We are pleased to see this project that has been in the works for over 20 years proceed to its final phase. The completion of this project will improve the condition of the Muddy River to ensure its preservation for generations to come. We would like to thank everyone for their patience and cooperation as we navigate through this process and the temporary effects it will have on our use of the parks and public way."

Phase 2 will start along the Muddy River from Leverett Pond to Boylston Street, and along the Back Bay Fens. Approximately 1 to 8 feet of sediment from the bottom of the river will be dredged for flow conveyance. Additional work will include:

- Control of ground and surface waters
- Bank stabilization
- Restoration of wetland and riparian vegetation
- Habitat creation for fish, turtles and amphibians
- Pedestrian and vehicular traffic control
- Pedestrian management
- Protection of historic structures and landscape features
- Invasive species control and selective clearing of vegetation
- Restoration and maintenance of all areas with the limit of work

During Phase 2, extensive management of pedestrian and vehicular traffic will be required to minimize impacts to roadways and parkland systems, and to ensure public safety. **At least one pathway will remain open at all times for shared pedestrian/bicycle access.**

Preparations for the removal of accumulated sediments began this month with the installation of construction fencing to demarcate the areas of initial activity. Dredging is expected to commence in the fall.

Further information regarding USACE Project activities and descriptions of Phase 2 construction activities for the next 90 days can be found online at

<http://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/Projects-Topics/Muddy-River/>.

The Muddy River project is critical to reducing potential flood damage in the vicinity of the Muddy River that, in the past, has severely impacted major institutions, the Longwood medical area, multiple commercial districts, commuter corridors and thousands of residences.

Ryan Woods, Boston Parks and Recreation Commissioner, emphasizes the significance of the investment in green infrastructure and public parks, "The Muddy River project is the result of historic investments in our public spaces—including Boston's largest-ever capital budget for parks. Together, we're creating a greener, healthier, stronger city. Improving the Muddy River, part of our Resilient Boston and Climate Ready Boston planning initiatives, will help us address one of the biggest challenges of our time: climate change."

The restoration of certain sections of the Muddy River will reduce impacts from floodwaters, improve water quality, and enhance aquatic/riparian habitat, while also preserving, protecting and improving the historic landscape through which the Muddy River flows.

Charter Contracting Company was awarded the Phase 2 contract in February and has been working closely with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, City of Boston and Town of Brookline to organize and plan project work.

Representatives from the three non-federal project sponsors, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, City of Boston and Town of Brookline, were involved in extensive dialogue regarding development of the construction bid documents and technical specifications to ensure the historic landscape, and specifically the trees which are located throughout the project area, are protected and preserved to the greatest extent possible. The Maintenance and Management Oversight Committee (MMOC) of the Muddy River Restoration Project created by the Massachusetts Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs, including community groups such as the Emerald Necklace Conservancy, the Fenway Alliance and the Brookline GreenSpace Alliance were also deeply involved in the planning process of the project, and will continue to collaborate with the federal and non-federal sponsors as work commences. With input from these groups, the non-federal sponsors and the Army Corps developed a specific and detailed strategy to define, control and minimize impacts to trees during Phase 2 construction. The team identified each area of the river to be dredged, surveyed all of

the trees in the project area and developed a construction access plan that minimizes the impacts on healthy trees.

A total of 116 trees are expected to be removed during Phase 2. These trees are located between Olmsted Park, Riverway Park and the Back Bay Fens. Of these 116 trees:

- 24 trees are dead.
- Another 34 trees are Ash trees, which are susceptible to the national pest, now in Boston, called the Emerald Ash Borer, which can kill ash trees. Dead, affected Ash trees have been observed upstream of Leverett Pond and it is anticipated that all 34 listed Ash trees would ultimately be infested with Emerald Ash Borer and perish within the next several years.

Of the 58 remaining trees to be removed:

- 18 trees have been determined to be in fair or poor condition.
- 31 trees are considered to be invasive species.
- Nine trees are in good condition.

Following the completion of Phase 2, 130 new trees will be planted in accordance with an updated construction plan. Existing pathways, bank plantings, lawn areas and overall park conditions will be restored and/or significantly improved as part of the construction project.

The project team will participate in regular project oversight meetings as Phase 2 progresses to address any areas of concern and ensure that work adheres to the approved plans and specifications.

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**A message from the Town of Brookline**