



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Town of Needham has been working with MassDOT and the City of Newton to address traffic congestion that has occurred in the Kendrick Street/Needham Crossing areas related to the commencement of the widening of I95/Route 128 (the “Add-a-Lane Project”).

The narrowing of the Kendrick Street Bridge over the Highway has created significant back-ups at peak traffic hours, and has led to a high level of frustration on the part of commuters, employees, business owners, and others who travel in the area. A change in the timing of the traffic signal made immediate improvements. Based on observations and suggestion by officials of the Needham Police and Public Works Departments, and consultation with property and business owners, the following mitigation measures will occur:

1. The signal at Kendrick Street and Hunting Road/Greendale Avenue will be converted to allow a lead rather than lag left. This will ensure that a greater number of motorists turning left onto Greendale Avenue will be able to clear the intersection during a light cycle. This work is under the direction of MassDOT.
2. MassDOT is evaluating whether the traffic controller at the Kendrick Street and Hunting Road/Greendale Avenue intersection may be reconfigured to allow manual operation by the Needham Police Department.
3. MassDOT is evaluating whether changes to the signal at Third Avenue and Kendrick are warranted.
4. The Kendrick Street Bridge over I95/Route 128 will be striped to allow two lanes heading out of Needham Crossing (westbound). This will also allow a greater number of vehicles to clear the intersection during a light cycle and will improve traffic congestion on Kendrick Street. This work is under the direction of MassDOT and is weather dependent (e.g. dry pavement and temperatures above freezing).
5. Signage will be placed on the mast-arms to assure drivers know which lane they need to be in order to make desired movements. This work is under the direction of MassDOT.
6. The Town of Needham and City of Newton have agreed to re-stripe the Kendrick Street Bridge over the Charles River to allow traffic to form two lanes heading westbound into Needham. The City of Newton will perform this work as soon as weather conditions permit.
7. The historic amounts of snowfall have added to the problems evening commuters are facing. The Town has been removing snow from the area and will continue to do so. The Town and the City have partnered with property owners in the area who arranged for an extraordinary snow removal effort that occurred this past weekend.
8. The Town of Needham will post new signage and enforce the truck exclusion on the Kendrick Street Bridge over Route 128. This will help to ease traffic congestion on the bridge.
9. The Town has requested that MassDOT provide a higher level of communication about the project, so that commuters, employees, business owners and local officials can plan and act accordingly. The Town will continue to ensure that all communication and information received about the project is posted to the Needham Crossing page on the Town’s website
10. Needham Police will continue to monitor the area to assess and/or recommend traffic modifications.

Information about the project may be found at MassDOT:

<http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/highway/HighlightedProjects/NeedhamWellesleyI95AddALane.aspx> and
Town of Needham: <http://www.needhamma.gov/needhamcrossing>

For more information contact Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager at 781-455-7500 extension 0.