

The Brookside Road Bridge has been closed for one year already. **Currently, MASS DOT plans to begin working on replacing it in 2030.** Actual work on the bridge will not start for years after that. **Without the bridge, neighbors are stranded, emergency vehicles are blocked, businesses can't be reached. Enough is enough!**

PLEASE VOTE YES TO APPROVE FUNDING FOR A TEMPORARY BRIDGE!

Where and when: town meeting on **Saturday, May 3 at 2pm at Monument Mountain Regional High School**

- The meeting begins at 2:00 but the vote on this issue is not scheduled for a particular time.
- Be determined! **Do not let them game the system** by stalling until you give up and leave. Insist on your right to vote!
- We need a 2/3 majority but only a few hundred residents will vote. **Every vote matters!**
- Only registered Great Barrington voters will be allowed to attend and vote at this meeting.

IT'S A FACT:

I don't live near this bridge. Why should I vote yes?

- **This will happen to you, too!** "Berkshire residents, on average, live 1.6 miles from the nearest structurally deficient bridge..." (Massachusetts Budget & Policy Center) Most of our bridges are old, poorly maintained and failing, not just this one!

Why is this a health & safety issue?

- The residents of Brush Hill Road once lived minutes from town. Now it can take emergency vehicles — ambulances, fire trucks, police — 30 minutes to reach the area.
- The number of people affected swells during the summer when Camp Eisner is home to more than 700 children and 100 staff.
- The raging Butternut fire underscored the need for access across the river.

Why do we need a temporary bridge? Why not just wait?

- The Kellogg Street Bridge is also scheduled to be replaced in two years, which will increase the detour by an additional ten miles, effectively **cutting off this neighborhood from the town completely.**

Isn't the state paying to replace the bridge?

- Yes, the state will eventually pay to replace the bridge at a cost of more than \$50 million. But the bridge will not be rebuilt for 8-10 years. Most likely we will not be able to cross the river until at least 2033.

Will the temporary bridge affect the timeline or funding for the bridge replacement?

- No. The timeline and state funding will not be affected if we construct a temporary bridge.

I realize losing this bridge is inconvenient, but it isn't costing the town any money, is it?

- **It is!** Town businesses are losing revenue every day as residents of Great Barrington, Sheffield and New Marlborough take their business elsewhere.
- The half-hour detour **works like a tax** because government service providers all must be paid for additional time every time they are called — mail delivery, snowplows, school buses, police, fire, ambulance, etc. (And for local residents, gardeners, repairmen, etc.)

Where will the funds come from to pay for the temporary bridge?

If the Town borrows the full \$3 million, the average citizen would see their property taxes increase by 7/10 of 1%. This figure assumes a 15-year loan for \$3 million at 4-5% municipal bond rate resulting in a maximum \$285,000 a year in interest + principal payments, or around 0.73% of the town budget. For a homeowner who pays \$6,000 per year in property taxes, that equates to \$10.95/quarter in additional property taxes. Furthermore, there is currently a bill in the State Senate that would allocate \$500,000 to the Town for the Brookside Bridge. Therefore, if the Town borrows just \$2.5 million, that would reduce the quarterly tax in the above example to just \$9.14/quarter. If the Town also sells the Division Street ACROW bridge for \$700,000 in the Fall of 2026, and borrows just \$1.8M, that would reduce the quarterly tax in the above example to just \$6.60/quarter.

For more Information contact: brooksideneighborsgroup@gmail.com