



**Washington Bridge Closure
“Blackstone to the Bay” temporary bikeway detour**

Prepared: 09/04/12

Revised: 01/04/13

Completed: 05/10/13

**James Toomey
Coordinator, Sustainable Tourism Lab
Pawtucket, RI**



A program of:



Table of Contents

Project Summary.....	Page 2
RIDOT Press Release.....	Page 4
Updated Detour Map.....	Page 7
Temporary Detour Route.....	Page 8
Bikeway Detour Sign Design.....	Page 9
Letters of Authorization.....	Page 10
Detour Sign Photos.....	Page 14

Project Summary

On July 5th, 2012 it was announced by the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) that a new community park will be built along the eastbound side of the Washington Bridge, which spans the Seekonk River. This future park, known as the George Redman Linear Park, will offer separate bikeway and walking paths, park benches, flag poles, decorative lighting, landscaped planters, and scenic overlooks that offer views of India Point Park and the Port of Providence.



The Washington Bridge not only supports the heavy automobile traffic traveling along Interstate 195, but also serves as a major bicycle and pedestrian route between Providence and East Providence. The Linear Park construction will cause the cycling/pedestrian section of the Washington Bridge to be closed for an estimated two year time period, thus essentially detaching the connection between the Blackstone River Bikeway and East Bay Bike Path.

At the onset, plans were not developed to provide a signed alternative bike detour route. This caused a lot of concern as there are many riders that use this section of the route to travel between home and work, or for leisure and exercise on a daily basis. The Sustainable Tourism Lab (STL) recognized that a signed alternative route is necessary to



keep this connection active, and allow riders to more easily travel between East Providence and Providence, and the East Bay to the Blackstone Valley. What began was a dialogue between STL and RIDOT on how to provide a safe alternative route across the Seekonk River.

The Sustainable Tourism Lab began by cataloging possible routing and detour

sign placement through the affected cities in early September 2012. It was recognized that approximately one mile upriver from the affected Washington Bridge is the Henderson Bridge and that this could serve as the simplest (routing wise for cyclists) and most obvious connector. After a meeting with Steven Church and Ted Coleman of RIDOT, and Eric Weiss of the East Coast Greenway, it was determined that this bridge has the ability to serve as the temporary crossing point for pedestrians and cyclists if there are signs making them aware of the option to walk cycles across the bridge. The completion of the newly constructed Waterfront Drive in East Providence further removed barriers associated with this project and the route was established.

A project proposal was created now that the routing was complete and in February 2013 requests to the Cities of Providence, East Providence and Pawtucket were made to secure authorization for installation of these temporary signs. The same was done for the Rhode Island Department of Transportation for authorization and traffic permitting. Simultaneously, STL submitted for a small grant from the Narragansett Bay Wheelmen (NBW) in the amount of \$1,000 to support the cost of sign production and installation.



The grant from NBW was awarded on March 8, 2013 and authorizations were approved making it possible for sign installation to begin on April 16, 2013 by Dion Sign. The final remaining signs were installed along the Henderson Bridge by RIDOT on May 10, 2013. Updated bikeway detour maps and a formal press release were sent out through various media channels on May 16, 2013 in celebration of the annual Bike to Work Day the following day, therefore concluding this project.

The Sustainable Tourism Lab would like to thank the Rhode Island Department of Transportation, Narragansett Bay Wheelmen, the Cities of Providence, East Providence and Pawtucket, East Coast Greenway, Rhode Island Bike Coalition, and Dion Signs for their assistance with this project.

RIDOT Press Release



RIDOT News

RIDOT Release XX:13

May 16, 2013

Contact: Rose Amoros 401-222-1362 x4450

RIDOT AND PARTNERS ESTABLISH DETOUR FOR CYCLISTS DURING WASHINGTON BRIDGE CLOSURE

Just in time for Bike to Work Day tomorrow, Friday, May 17, 2013, a signed bicycle detour route has been established between East Providence and Providence, aiding commuting cyclists during the closure of the Washington Bridge bikeway.

The Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT), the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council, and the Narragansett Bay Wheelmen have partnered to establish this route using the Henderson Bridge and a new extension of Waterfront Drive in East Providence. The Henderson Bridge has bicycle lanes and signage, but no formal route could be identified to connect the bridge to the East Bay Bike Path when the

Washington Bridge closed in July 2012. The new section of Waterfront Drive opened late last fall.

“We understand the inconvenience the closure of the Washington Bridge bikeway has created for commuting cyclists, and welcomed the efforts of the Tourism Council and the Wheelmen in establishing this detour,” RIDOT Director Michael P. Lewis said. “The Department will work diligently to complete work on the Washington Bridge with the goal of reopening it next summer.”

RIDOT and the Tourism Council – a state-designated tourism organization representing nine municipalities in Rhode Island's Blackstone River Valley region – each have completed projects in the past two years to guide cyclists. The Blackstone to the Bay bike route uses bike lanes and share-the-road markers called sharrows to connect one bike path to another, forming a continuous route from Woonsocket to Bristol.

RIDOT/Bicycle Detour

May 16, 2013

Page Two

The Tourism Council, with funding assistance from the Wheelman – Rhode Island’s largest and oldest cycling club – designed and produced the detour signs. The attractive brown and white “Bikeway Detour” signs connect the East Bay Bike Path at Warren Avenue to the Henderson Bridge and onto Angell Street on the East Side of Providence. Final installation of these signs was completed last week by RIDOT’s Highway and Bridge Maintenance Division.

“There are a lot of people that use the bikeway on the Washington Bridge to travel between home and work, or for leisure and exercise on a daily basis,” Blackstone Valley Tourism Council President Robert Billington said. “Having a signed alternative route now

keeps this connection active, and allows riders to more easily travel between East Providence and Providence, and the East Bay to the Blackstone Valley.”

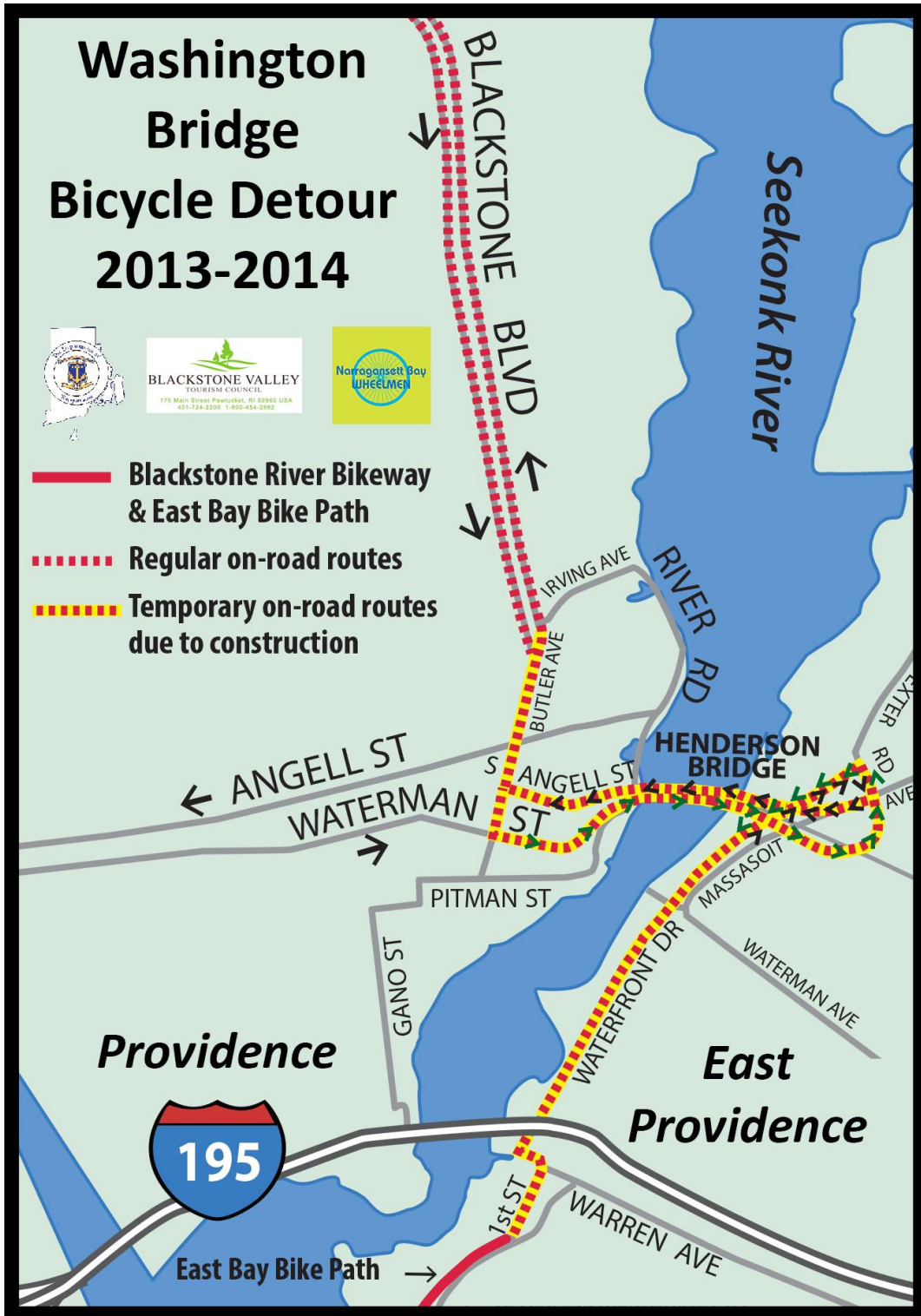
A key link in Blackstone to the Bay route and the East Bay Bike Path is the Washington Bridge. During reconstruction of the eastbound structure in the late 2000s, RIDOT retained a segment of the original highway bridge and bikeway for reconstruction into a much wider bike path and linear park. When it opens next year, it will feature a separate bikeway and walking path, scenic overlooks, park benches, flag poles, decorative lighting and landscaped planters. The project also calls for restoration of the historic, multi-arch granite façade of the Washington Bridge and two operator’s houses from which an original drawbridge was controlled.

The new linear park is known as the George Redman Linear Park, after the East Providence resident who was instrumental in making the East Bay Bike Path a reality 25 years ago. Redman passed away in August 2012.

Additional information, including links to maps showing this detour and other cycling routes in the Providence area, can be found on RIDOT’s website at www.dot.ri.gov/bikeri. The web page also has information links regarding Bike to Work Day events in Providence and Newport.

Those with questions can contact RIDOT’s Customer Service office at 401-222-2450 weekdays from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Additional information will be available on RIDOT’s social media sites on Twitter and Facebook.

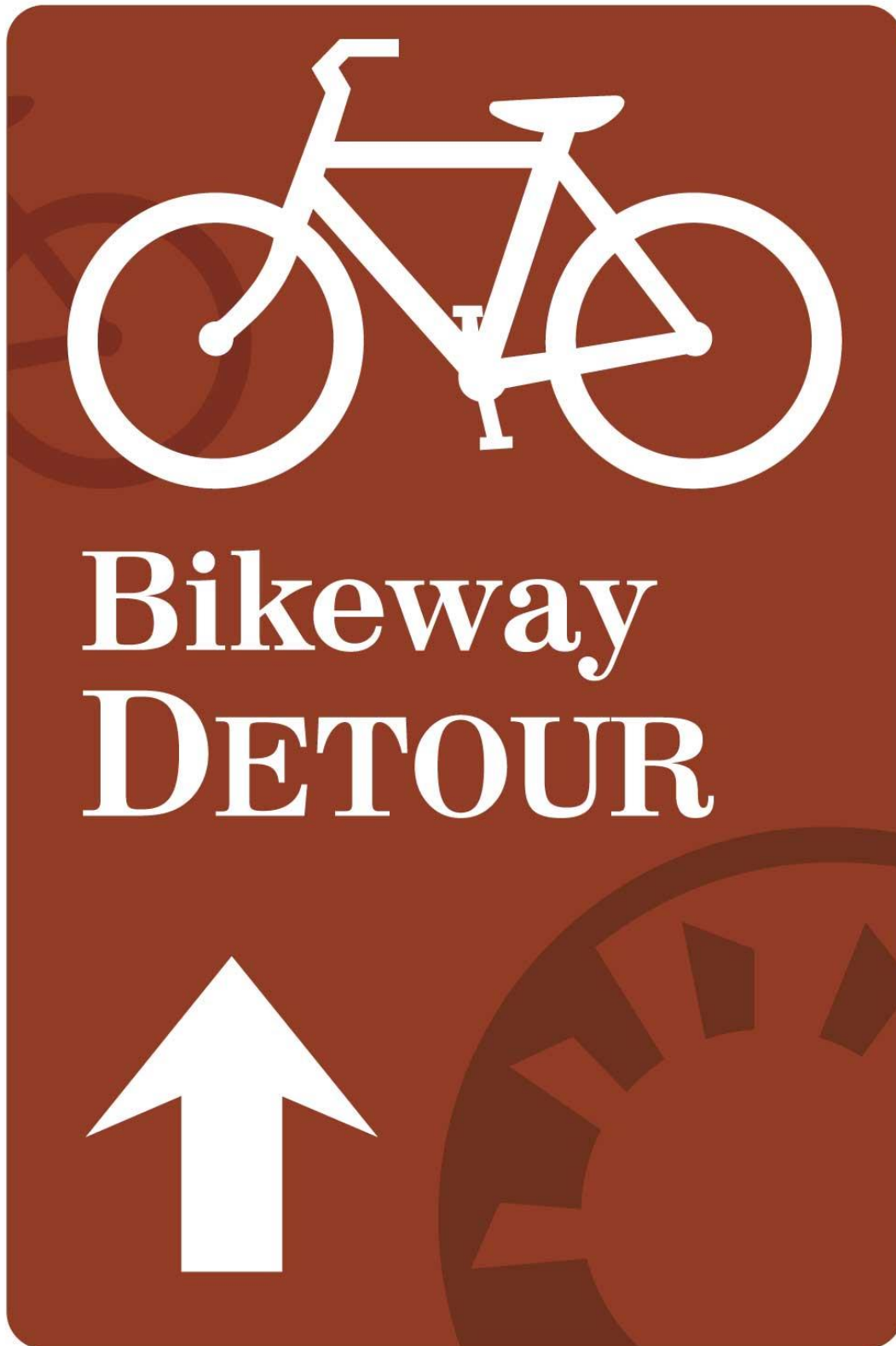
Updated Detour Map



Temporary Bike Detour Route [Prov. & E. Prov.]



Bikeway Detour Sign Design



Letters of Authorization



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

Rhode Island Department of Transportation
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ENGINEER
Two Capitol Hill, Rm 224
Providence, RI 02903-1124
PHONE 401-222-2492
FAX 401-222-3435 TDD 401-222-4971

James Toomey
Coordinator
Sustainable Tourism Laboratory
Blackstone Valley Tourism Council
175 Main Street
Pawtucket, RI 02860

December 20, 2012

Subject: Blackstone to Bay Bike Route

Dear Mr. Toomey

We have reviewed the proposal submitted November 8, 2012 by the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council to temporarily re-route their Blackstone to the Bay Bike Route across the Henderson Bridge due to the closure of the normal route by the construction of the Washington Pedestrian Bridge. The plan is acceptable to the Department. The Council will be responsible for all costs associated with installation and maintenance of the signs.

The cycling environment on the Henderson Bridge differs significantly from that on the Washington Bridge where bike traffic is separated from adjacent vehicle traffic by a barrier. The proposed signs alerting cyclists to the presence of the sidewalk on the Henderson Bridge provide an alternative travel path for cyclists that may not be comfortable traveling on the bridge shoulder.

In addition, the recent completion of the Dexter Avenue Connector portion of the Waterfront Drive Project presents a practical alternative route for northbound bicycle traffic from the East Bay Bike Path which avoids the need to cross Waterman Avenue at North Brow Street.

With the exception of Waterman Avenue and the Henderson Bridge all the roads involved in the route are local highways. The Council should request approval from the affected communities prior to installing sign on local highways. Some additional detail of the installation operation would be required for the Department to issue a Temporary Traffic Control Permit for installation on RIDOT maintained facilities. A request for the Permit with a description of the work and the required traffic control should be sent to this office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Kazem Farhoumand'.

Kazem Farhoumand, P.E.
Chief Engineer

KF/TEC

Cc.: Badorek, Corrao, Farhoumand, Rocchio, Smith



CITY OF PROVIDENCE

Angel Taveras, Mayor

February 19, 2013

James Toomey | Coordinator
Sustainable Tourism Laboratory
Blackstone Valley Tourism Council
175 Main Street
Pawtucket, Rhode Island USA 02860

Re: Bicycle Detour Signs - Encroachment

Dear Sir:

You are hereby authorized to encroach onto the public right-of-way for the purpose of installing bike detour signs as depicted in your 2/7/2013 e-mail to Nate Urso of this office. The bike detour signs will be along streets on the East side of Providence during the closure of the bike path over the Washington Bridge during construction.

You are authorized to install these signs as long as you agree to remove them after the bike path over the Washington Bridge is reopened after construction.

This authorization is based on an evaluation that the encroachment will not impair the public health, safety or welfare, nor will it have adverse impact on pedestrians or wheelchair access. This authorization is allowed under the Rules and Regulations Governing Encroachments Over, Onto or Under Public Rights-of-Ways, amended on February 29, 2012.

If you have any further questions or comments on this matter, feel free to contact this office.

Very truly yours,

William C. Bombard, PE
Acting Director

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

700 Allens Avenue Providence, Rhode Island 02905

401 467 7950 ph | 401 941 2567 fax

www.providenceri.com



City of East Providence

Office of the City Manager

Mr. Kazem Farhoumand, P.E.
Chief Engineer
Two Capitol Hill, Room 224
Providence, RI 02903-1124

RE: Blackstone to Bay Bike Route

Dear Mr. Farhoumand:

The City of East Providence has reviewed the proposal by the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council to temporarily re-route bicycle traffic across the Henderson Bridge while construction is underway on the Linear Park on the Washington Bridge. The City has no objection to the installation of detour signs on local East Providence streets to direct bicyclists to the Henderson Bridge via the "Blackstone to the Bay Route". It is our understanding that the production and the installation of the materials will be the responsibility of the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council. The City requests that the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council coordinate as necessary with the City's Public Works and Police Departments.

Sincerely,

Peter Graczykowski

City Manager

cc. James Toomey, Blackstone Valley Tourism Council
Stephen Coutu, Director of Public Works
Joseph Tavares, Police Chief
Jeanne Boyle, Planning Director



**CITY OF PAWTUCKET
RHODE ISLAND**

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND REDEVELOPMENT

DONALD R. GREBIEN
MAYOR

BARNEY S. HEATH
DIRECTOR

February 1, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

After review of the Washington Bridge Closure "Blackstone to the Bay" temporary bikeway detour proposal submitted by Blackstone Valley Tourism Council, the City of Pawtucket, Rhode Island has authorized the ability to secure two orange bikeway detour signs along Pleasant Street in accordance with Rhode Island Department of Transportation for the duration of the Linear Park construction.

The production and installation of materials will be the responsibility of Blackstone Valley Tourism Council.

Sincerely,

Barney S. Heath
Director

Cc: James Toomey, Blackstone Valley Tourism Council

175 MAIN STREET, PAWTUCKET, RI 02860-4127
(401) 724-5200 • FAX (401) 726-6237 • TDD (401) 722-8239
www.pawtucketri.com

Bike path detour Pawtucket to East Providence

Before

After



**Straight arrow bike symbol detour sign
Pole #19 on Pleasant Street, Pawtucket**



**Left arrow bike symbol detour sign
Pole #28 on Pleasant Street, Pawtucket onto Tower.**



**Straight arrow bike symbol detour sign
Stanchion pole between University & Irving
on Blackstone Blvd.**



**Straight arrow bike symbol detour sign
Pole #15 on Butler Street, Providence**



**Left arrow bike symbol detour sign
Stanchion pole at corner of Butler and Waterman, Prov.**



**Left arrow bike symbol detour sign
Galvanized pole #45 on Waterman Street, Providence
at entrance to Henderson Bridge**



“Walk Bicycles On Sidewalk” sign at Eastbound entrance to Henderson Bridge



**Straight arrow bike symbol detour sign
Stanchion pole at 1st exit off Henderson Bridge, East
Providence**



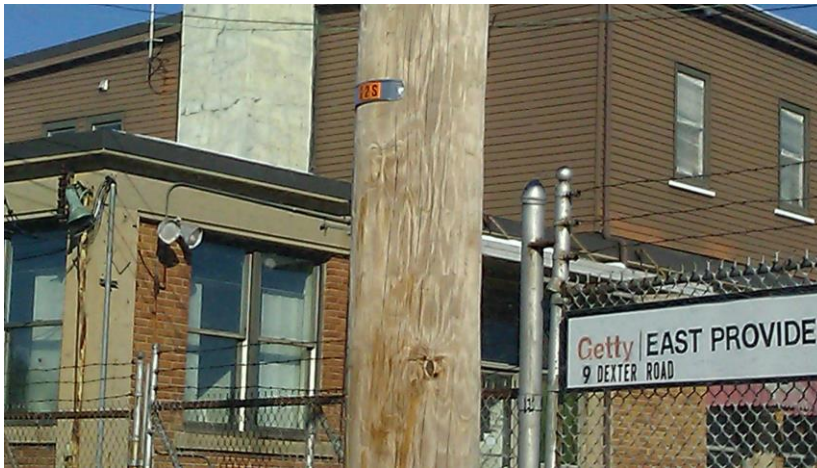
**Right arrow bike symbol detour sign
Directional sign at 2nd exit off Henderson Bridge, E.
Providence**



**Left arrow bike detour sign
Directional sign at bottom of Henderson Bridge exit,
Providence**



**Straight arrow bike detour sign
Pedestrian crossing sign at Massosoit onto Dexter
Road, East Providence**



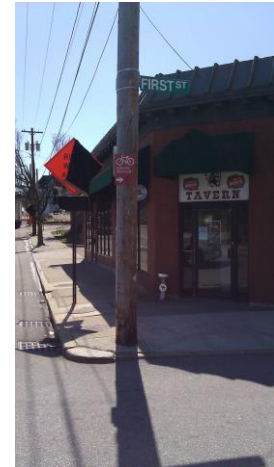
**Left arrow bike detour sign
Pole #G2S on Dexter Road, East Providence**



**Straight arrow bike detour sign
Waterfront Drive, East Providence**



**Left arrow bike detour sign
Onto Warren Avenue, East Providence**



**Right arrow bike symbol detour sign
Warren Ave. detour pole onto First St., E. Providence**



Bicycle detour end sign on reverse side of stanchion pole

Bike path detour East Providence to Pawtucket



**Left arrow bike symbol detour sign
Bike Route pole onto Warren Avenue, East Providence**



**Right arrow bike symbol detour sign
Onto Waterfront Drive, East Providence**



**Straight arrow bike detour sign
Waterfront Drive, East Providence**



**Right arrow bike detour sign
Waterfront Drive onto Dexter Road, East Providence**



**Right arrow bike detour sign
Dexter Road onto Massasoit Avenue, East Providence**



**Right arrow bike detour sign
Massasoit Ave. onto Henderson Bridge**



“Walk Bicycles On Sidewalk” sign at Westbound entrance to Henderson Bridge



**Right arrow bike symbol detour sign
Galvanized pole #17 onto Butler Street, Providence**



**Left arrow bike symbol detour sign
Bike Route pole onto Blackstone Blvd., Providence**