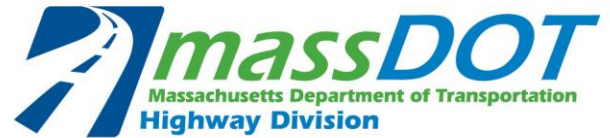




Maura Healey, Governor
Kimberley Driscoll, Lieutenant Governor
Monica Tibbitts-Nutt, Secretary & CEO
Jonathan L. Gulliver, Highway Administrator



TO: Rebecca Tepper, Secretary
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

THROUGH: Kurt Gaertner, Asst. Secretary for Environmental Policy

FROM: John DeLeire, Director of the Right of Way Bureau
Massachusetts Department of Transportation
10 Park Plaza, Suite 7160
Boston, MA

DATE: June 9, 2026

RE: M.G.L. c.3, §5A - Alternative Analysis and Mitigation Description
Route 3A, Summer Street, Rotary and Rockland Street Corridor Project

SECTION 1

An Act Preserving Open Space in the Commonwealth (M.G.L. c.3, §5A) – Alternatives Analysis

In accordance with the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) and the Guidance on Implementation of An Act Preserving Open Space in the Commonwealth (M.G.L. c.3, §5A) issued in February 2023, the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) issues the following alternatives analysis as required by M.G.L. c.3, §5A for the change of use of land related to the proposed corridor improvement project along Route 3A, Summer Street, Rotary and Rockland Street in Hingham (the "Project"). The purpose of the alternatives analysis is to demonstrate that no feasible or substantially equivalent alternative exists that avoids or further minimizes impacts to public land adjacent to the Project site that is protected by Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution.

(i) Explain the Proposed Article 97 Action and Identify the Public Purpose that it will Serve

MassDOT proposes the Project to address a long-standing need to improve safety for pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers, and to reduce vehicular travel speeds and crashes. The Project will incorporate complete street design including designated

bicycle accommodation, improved walkability, ADA compliance and enhanced transit awareness and access. The Project will also improve access to the waterfront by providing alternative travel modes and connecting existing landmarks along the route.

- A. PROJECT LOCATION: The Project corridor is approximately 1.6 miles in length and runs from the Broad Cove/Otis Hill Road intersection along Otis Street through the North Street Intersection and the rotary and onto Summer Street and Rockland Street ending at the Rockland Street/Washington Boulevard Intersection.
- B. SAFETY CONCERNS: Studies have revealed that existing travel speeds along portions of the corridor exceed posted speed limits and multiple crashes have occurred along the Project corridor. A 2013 Road Safety Audit and a 2016 Boston Region MPO Corridor Study revealed multiple crashes, many involving injury and 1 which involved fatality. Currently, there is no bicycle accommodation within the Project limits, and the sidewalks are not ADA compliant.
- C. PROPOSED PROJECT IMPROVEMENTS: The Project will improve accommodation for vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians, and include roadway widening and pavement improvements; intersection and access improvements; pedestrian and bicycle accommodation and accessibility improvements; retaining wall construction; drainage system improvements; curbing, berm, guardrail, signage and pavement marking installations; and traffic signal system reconstruction at 4 locations.

(ii) Identify the Alternatives Considered and Describe Why Those Alternatives Not Selected Are Not Feasible or Substantially Equivalent to the Proposed Article 97 Action

As it was determined that the Project corridor needed to be improved, there were lane configuration alternatives, intersections alternatives, and bicycle accommodation alternatives evaluated. A portion of the Project corridor runs along land subject to Article 97. Efforts were made to minimize impacts to protected land along the corridor; however, it should be noted that one alternative NOT considered was eliminating this corridor improvement project. The safety risk to vehicles, bicycles, and pedestrians necessitates corridor improvements at this time despite impacts to protected land.

- A. LAND CONFIGURATION ALTERNATIVES: Three alternatives were considered including a raised median between travel lanes, a road diet with a center turn lane, and matching the existing roadway. Matching the existing roadway was eliminated as an option as there would be no speed or crash reduction and would not qualify for funding. The road diet was piloted and the results were positive. Little to no travel time increase, no measurable traffic on parallel routes, reduced travel speeds and anecdotal evidence of increased bicycle use were found. The road diet was determined to be the best alternative.
- B. INTERSECTION ALTERNATIVES: Signalized intersections and roundabouts were evaluated, and it was determined that the roundabout would result in lower travel speeds and a reduction in crash number and severity.
- C. BICYCLE ACCOMMODATION ALTERNATIVES: Three alternatives were considered including on-road accommodation, separated accommodation and no accommodation. No accommodation was eliminated as an option as it does not meet the goals of this project or MassDOT's design standards. On-road accommodation allows for an increased number of potential conflict points between a bicyclist and vehicle and a lower level of rider comfort than separate accommodation. Separate accommodation was determined to provide the highest level of rider comfort and safety.

(iii) Equal Justice ("EJ") Population Analysis

The Project was reviewed considering its proximity to these EJ Populations, and it was determined that there are no EJ populations within a one-mile radius of the Project corridor. After review of the EJ populations within a 5-mile radius of the project, it was determined that the proposed changes in use and disposition of the lands protected by Article 97 will have no adverse impact on the Environmental Justice Populations.

SECTION 2

An Act Preserving Open Space in the Commonwealth (M.G.L. c.3, §5A) – Description of Mitigation

M.G.L. c.3, §5A requires that a public entity seeking to use protected land for another purpose or otherwise dispose of said land, identify replacement land or an interest in land, which is not already subject to said Article 97, in a comparable location and that is of equal or greater natural resource value, as determined by the Secretary of EEA, and acreage and monetary value, as determined by an appraisal

of the fair market value or value in use, whichever is greater; and take, acquire or dedicate said land or interest in said land in perpetuity for Article 97 purposes.

REPLACEMENT LAND - MassDOT respectfully requests that the Secretary accept the following as replacement land pursuant M.G.L. c.3, §5A: The town of Hingham shall transfer to its conservation commission subject to the provisions of Article 97 of the Articles of Amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth and M.G.L. c. 3, § 5A, the care, custody and control of an approximately 8 acre portion of the approximately 10.78 acre parcel of land shown as Assessor's Map 106, Lot 3 and known as 0 Hobart Street, located in the town of Hingham, as shown on a plan on file with town of Hingham town clerk, which land is currently under the care, custody and control of the town of Hingham select board for general municipal purposes. At town meeting in April 2026, the town of Hingham unanimously voted to authorize the above-described transfer of land.

ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION – MassDOT respectfully requests that the Secretary accept the following as additional consideration for impacts to protected land: MassDOT shall compensate the town of Hingham in an amount not less than 110 percent of the fair market value or value in use of the transferred lands, whichever is greater, as determined by a professional appraisal. Any funds transferred under this section shall be deposited in a fund dedicated to conservation of land in the town of Hingham.

For these reasons, MassDOT respectfully requests that the Secretary of EEA accept the proposed replacement land and compensation as satisfying the replacement land provisions of M.G.L. c. 3, § 5A.

SECTION 3

An Act Preserving Open Space in the Commonwealth (M.G.L. c.3, §5A) – Public Notice Requirement

The town of Hingham will post this notice publicly as required by An Act Preserving Open Space in the Commonwealth (M.G.L. c.3, §5A).

Thank you for considering this request. We look forward to hearing from you.