



VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

MARCH 24, 2026

FOR THE PROPOSED

**INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS AT ROUTE 2A AND BROOKSIDE ROAD
Project No. 608415
Project Management**

IN THE ATHOL, MASSACHUSETTS

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION**

**JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR**

**CARRIE E. LAVALLEE, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER**

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION
NOTICE OF A VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

Project Description: Athol – Intersection Improvements at Route 2A and Brookside Road
Project File No.608415

A Virtual Design Public Hearing will be hosted on the MassDOT website below to present the design for the proposed project in Athol, MA.

WHEN: 6:30PM, Tuesday, March 24, 2026.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed project. All views and comments submitted in response to the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: The proposed project consists of a single lane roundabout at Route 2A and Brookside Road and shared-use paths along the outside of the roundabout, with curb ramps to allow connection to on-street bicycle lanes on South Main. The improvements include improved lane usage markings, drainage, and signage.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands. MassDOT's policy concerning land acquisitions will be presented in the hearing.

Project inquiries, written statements and other exhibits regarding the proposed undertaking may be submitted to Carrie E. Lavalley, P.E., Chief Engineer, via e-mail to MassDOTProjectManagement@dot.state.ma.us or via US Mail to Suite 7550, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Project Management, Project File No. 608415 Statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the hearing transcript must be emailed or postmarked no later than ten (10) business days (14 calendar days) after the hearing is hosted.

This hearing is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (e.g. interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, live captioning, videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), TTD/TTY at (857) 266-0603, fax (857) 368-0602 or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible and prior to the hearing, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten business days before the hearing.

This hearing will be hosted, or a cancellation announcement posted, on the internet at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events>.

JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

CARRIE E. LAVALLEE, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER



Dear Concerned Citizen:

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) is committed to building and maintaining a transportation infrastructure that is both safe and efficient for all who use our roadways, bridges, bicycle facilities and pedestrian paths, while maintaining the integrity of the environment.

As part of the design process for this project, we are conducting this public hearing to explain the proposed improvements, listen to your comments and answer any questions you may have. At the conclusion of the hearing, MassDOT will review all of your comments and, where feasible, incorporate them into the design of the project.

We recognize that road and bridge construction can create inconveniences for the public. MassDOT places a great deal of emphasis on minimizing the temporary disruptive effects of construction.

MassDOT encourages input from local communities and values your opinions. Please be assured that we will undertake no project without addressing the concerns of the community.

Sincerely,

Carrie E. Lavalley, P.E.
Chief Engineer

WHAT IS A PUBLIC HEARING?

WHY A PUBLIC HEARING?

To provide an assured method whereby the Commonwealth of Massachusetts can furnish to the public information concerning the State's highway construction proposals, and to afford every interested resident of the area an opportunity to be heard on any proposed project. At the same time, the hearings afford the Commonwealth an additional opportunity to receive information from local sources which would be of value to the State in making its final decisions to what design should be advanced for development.

WHY NOT A VOTE ON HIGHWAY PLANS?

The hearings are not intended to be a popular referendum for the purpose of determining the nature of a proposed improvement by a majority of those present. They do not relieve the duly constituted officials of a State highway department of the necessity for making decisions in State highway matters for which they are charged with full responsibility.

WHAT DOES A PUBLIC HEARING ACCOMPLISH?

It is designed to ensure the opportunity for, or the availability of, a forum to provide factual information which is pertinent to the determination of the final alternative considered by the state to best serve the public interest, and on which improvement projects are proposed to be undertaken.

It is important that the people of the area express their views in regard to the proposal being presented, so that views can be properly recorded in the minutes of the meeting. These minutes will be carefully studied and taken into consideration in the determination of the final design.

RIGHT OF WAY CONCERNS

The State is responsible for securing the Right of Way for this project. If your property, or a portion of it, must be acquired by the State for highway purposes in the interest of all people of the Commonwealth, your rights are fully protected under the law. Briefly, here are some of the answers to questions you might ask.

1. WHO CONTACTS ME?

Representatives of the Right of Way Bureau of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's Highway Division. They will explain the impacts and your rights as protected under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 79.

2. WHAT IS A FAIR PRICE FOR MY PROPERTY?

Every offer is made to ensure that an equitable value is awarded to you for the property, or to appraise the "damage" to the property as a result of the acquisition. MassDOT appraisers, independent appraisers, MassDOT "Review Appraisers" and a Real Estate Appraisal Review Board may all contribute in arriving at an award of damages. The State also pays a proportionate part of the real estate tax for the current year for fee takings, and interest from the date the property is acquired to the payment date, on all impacts.

3. MUST I ACCEPT THE DEPARTMENT'S OFFER?

No. If, after the figure established as market value has been offered to the owner, the owner feels he or she is not being offered a fair price, he or she has the right, within three years, to appeal to the courts. Pending a court decision, he or she can be paid on a "pro-tanto" basis (or "for the time being") that in no way prejudices the court appeal.

4. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MY HOUSE?

The owner will have the opportunity to buy back his or her house, provided he or she has a location to which it can be moved, and the proper permits for its removal. If the owner does not wish to repurchase, the house will be advertised for bids. The highest bidder, who must also have a location and permits for removal, will be awarded the house. Otherwise, the structure will be slated for demolition.

5. WHAT HAPPENS IF I MUST RELOCATE?

In addition to the market value of the property, the Department pays certain relocation benefits for both owners and tenants of acquired residences and businesses who meet eligibility requirements. Assistance in relocation is also provided. Department brochures are available for details on these benefits.



Locus Map

PROPOSED DESIGN

The proposed design for the intersection is a single lane roundabout to replace the existing signalized intersection. The design also proposes buffered bicycle lanes and sidewalks. The proposed roadway is proposed to be milled and overlaid, matching the existing vertical geometrics, with box widening.

Cross Sectional Design

The typical roadway cross section for the proposed roadway design of Route 2A and Brookside Road consists of two 11-foot travel lanes and two 8-foot shoulders, for a total roadway width of 38-feet. The striped shoulders will consist of a 3-foot painted buffer and a 5-foot bicycle lane. Sidewalks will be provided along both sides of the road, consisting of 5-foot minimum width, exclusive of curb and barriers. At the roundabout approaches, the roadway will be widened to accommodate splitter islands. The project is proposed mill and overlay, except for the roundabout where full depth will be required, and the existing cross slope will be matched.

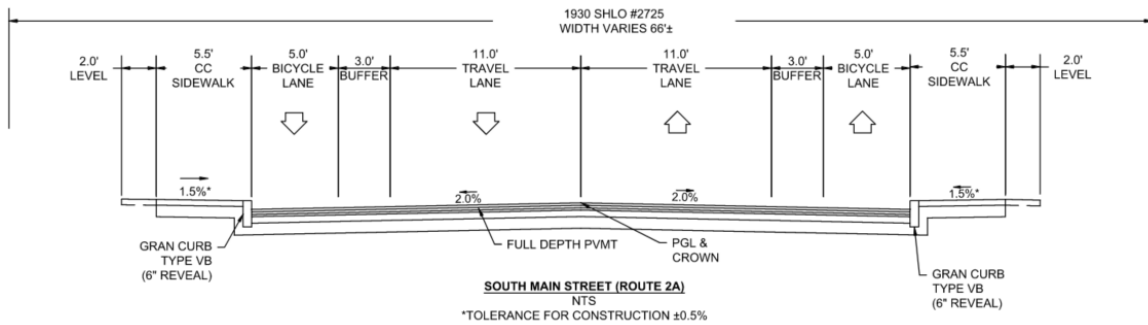


Figure 1: Typical Roadway Section

The proposed roundabout design consists of an inscribed circle radius of 130-feet and is designed to accommodate a WB-67 vehicle. The proposed cross section includes a 20-foot travel lane, a 15-foot truck apron, and 60-foot central island. Outside of the traveled way, a 3.5-foot buffer and a 10-foot shared use path follow around the roundabout for multi-modal accommodations. New crosswalks are proposed at the Route 2A/Brookside Road intersection across all three legs of the intersection. Bicyclists will be expected to utilize the proposed shared use path around the roundabout. Bicycle ramps will be provided at each approach to transition from the buffered bicycle lanes to the shared use path.

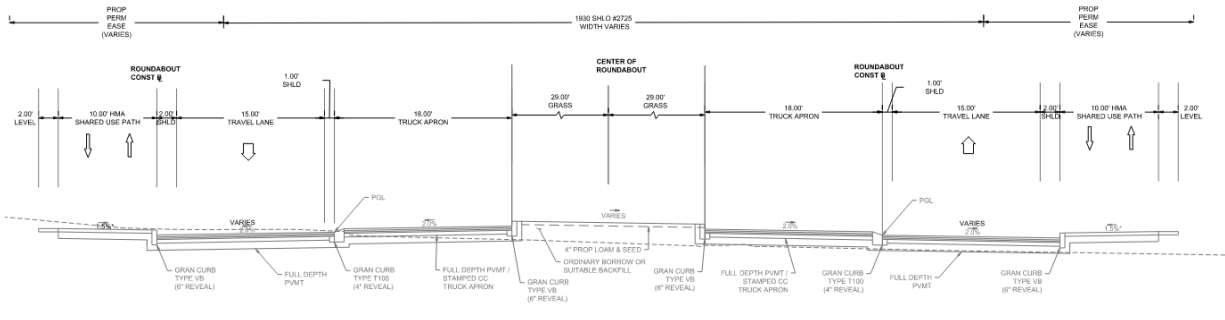


Figure 2: Typical Roundabout Section

How can I find out more information about the project?

For more information or questions about the project, contact the MassDOT Project Management, at MassDOTProjectManagement@dot.state.ma.us.

Why wasn't a traffic signal selected as the preferred alternative?

Signalized intersection alternatives were evaluated by MassDOT however, it was determined that a roundabout provided improved traffic operations and safety benefits compared to a new traffic signal.

How will the roundabout improve safety?

Roundabouts have fewer vehicle conflict points and reduces the crash severity for all users. The geometry allows safer merges into circulating traffic and provides more time for users to detect others due to the lower speeds within the roundabout. Roundabouts also eliminates left turn conflicts.

Is the preferred alternative a roundabout or a rotary, and what is the difference?

The preferred alternative is a single lane roundabout. Roundabouts are designed for lower speeds, typically 25 miles per hour, and prioritize safety. In contrast, rotaries are typically larger in diameter, operate at higher speeds, and are primarily designed to move vehicles quickly through an intersection.

When is construction anticipated to start?

Construction is anticipated to begin in the Summer of 2028

How long is construction anticipated to last?

Construction is expected to take 2 construction seasons, ending in 2029.

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Carrie E. Lavalley, P.E.
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MassDOT – Highway Division
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116-3973

RE: Virtual Public Hearing
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Attn: Project Management

