



VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

JUNE 10, 2026

FOR THE PROPOSED

**Mountain View School Improvements (Safe Routes to School)
Project No. 612772
Highway Design**

IN THE CITY OF EASTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS

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

**JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR**

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





Design Public Hearing

Mountain View School Improvements Safe Route to School on Park Street Easthampton, MA

What is happening?

MassDOT is holding a Design Public Hearing to present the design of a Safe Route To School (SRTS) shared-use path along the east side of Park Street in Easthampton, MA. All views and comments submitted in response to the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

How will this affect you?

The proposed project consists of a shared-use path that will create a safer, more comfortable route, for the students expected to access the new school by walking or biking. The project will provide pedestrian and bicyclists' safety and accessibility along the east side of Park Street. The improvements include upgrading existing pedestrian ramps at intersecting streets, addition of crosswalk on Park Street at Friel Circle and Garfield Avenue to safely access the west side of Park Street, installation of a rectangular rapid flashing beacon, and high visibility city standard continental style crosswalks at the locations with pedestrian crossings.

When

Wednesday, June 10, 2026
6:30 PM

Attend

www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events



Visit www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events for more information or to view a recording of the presentation if you are unable to attend the meeting.



To ensure its meetings are accessible, MassDOT reasonably provides: translation, interpretation, modifications, accommodations, alternative formats, and auxiliary aids and services. To request such services, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer at 857-368-8580 or MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us. For adequate time to process such request, please make them as early as possible, ideally 10 days prior to the event.

Project inquiries may also be emailed to MassDOTProjectManagement@dot.state.ma.us. Please submit any written statements regarding the proposed undertaking to: **Carrie A. Lavalley, P.E., Chief Engineer, MassDOT, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: PROJECT MANAGEMENT, PROJECT FILE NO. 612772.**



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. Lavallee, P.E.
Chief Engineer

WHAT IS 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

Your Municipality is responsible for securing the right of way for this project. If your property, or a portion of it, must be acquired by the Municipality 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. REASON FOR PROJECT

The completion of this project will serve local needs. The proposed enhancement will also be in the interest of others in the greater community, and provide for the public good.

2. WHO CONTACTS ME?

Representatives of the municipality have already contacted or will contact you. They will explain the procedures used in acquiring any necessary rights in land.

3. WHAT ABOUT DONATIONS? WHAT IS A RIGHT OF ENTRY?

Town officials will often seek donations, of parcels, where permanent rights are required. This procedure will minimize the acquisition cost for your community.

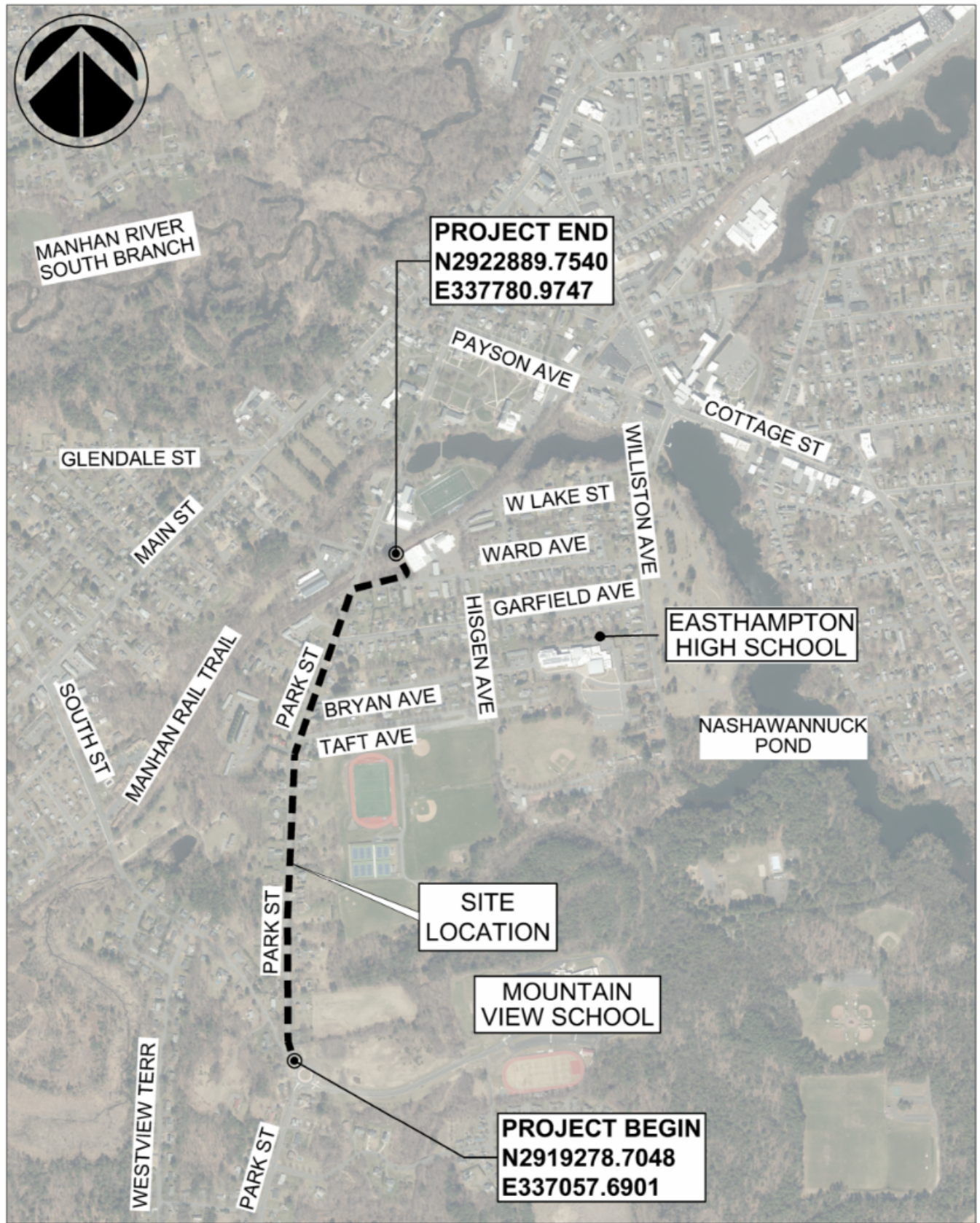
A Right of Entry is a document that is signed by the owner. It allows the Contractor to perform certain types of work on the owner's land. The work is usually minor in nature and frequently consists of loaming/seeding behind sidewalks, new driveway apron work, grading/sloping, and wetland protection, etc. The rights granted are temporary in nature.

4. WHAT IS A FAIR PRICE FOR THE ACQUIRED PARCELS?

In the event that donations are not considered, or completed, every effort will be made to ensure that an equitable value is awarded. Municipal and/or outside appraisers will complete an appraisal. Consideration is given to the type of rights needed, whether in fee, permanent or temporary easements. The appraisal will be the basis for arriving at a fair price (for damages that result).

5. MUST I ACCEPT THE MUNICIPALITY OFFER?

No, if the owner feels that the offer is not fair the owner may petition the courts. This action does not stop or delay the acquisition. The action must occur within 3 years. The owner(s) may be paid pro tanto (for the time being). The pro tanto payment will not prejudice the court's final decision.



MOUNTAIN VIEW SCHOOL IMPROVEMENTS (SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL) EASTHAMPTON, MA

PROJECT LOCATION

The project area generally includes Park Street from the intersection of South Street and the roundabout by Mountain View School northward to the intersection with Ward Avenue, with a connection to the Manhan Rail Trail. The project limits span approximately 0.70 miles along Park Street and 400 feet along Ward Avenue. Additionally, minor improvements will be added at the intersecting streets of Park Street.

PROJECT PURPOSE

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) identified Mountain View School in Easthampton, MA for inclusion in their Safe Routes to School Program. Mountain View School is located at 200 Park Street and serves pre-kindergarten through 8th-grade students. The proposed project addresses existing problems along Park Street, such as the lack of sidewalk on the west side of the roadway, bicycle accommodations, ADA/PROWAG-compliant sidewalks, pedestrian curb ramps, and crossings. The project will focus on providing safer and more comfortable pedestrian and bicycle access in the area between Mountain View School and the Manhan Rail Trail.

PROJECT IMPROVEMENTS

Several pedestrian and bicycle accommodation/ safety improvements are proposed to address some of the issues mentioned above. The proposed improvements are as follows:

Park Street includes the construction of an 8 to 10-foot-wide bituminous concrete shared-use path on the east side of the roadway from the intersection of South Street to the intersection of Ward Avenue. This path will be maintained at 10 feet wide unless Right-of-Way or tree locations limit the width of the path. A portion of Park Street will be narrowed to 24-foot-wide with mill/overlay resurfacing and pavement markings to accommodate this path with limited impacts.

Each intersecting street will have proposed cement concrete ADA/PROWAG-complaint pedestrian curb ramps, new pavement crosswalk markings, and signage. These streets include: Taft Avenue, Bryan Avenue, Garfield Avenue, and Ward Avenue. Minor curblane geometry improvements are also proposed.

Two new crossings of Park Street are proposed at observed desire lines. One is located between Friel Drive and Taft Avenue. This crossing will have a proposed Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) due to sight distance concerns from horizontal roadway curvature. The other crossing will be located near Garfield Avenue. At these crossings, the west side of Park Street consists of proposed 5-foot-wide cement concrete sidewalk and pedestrian curb ramps.

Various signage improvements are proposed within project limits, including new street signs, pedestrian crossing signs, stop signs, and more.

Ward Avenue includes the construction of a 10-foot-wide bituminous concrete shared-use path connecting the sidewalk on Park Street to the Manhan Rail Trail. This path will extend along Ward Avenue for a distance before bisecting the property at 17 Ward Avenue to make the connection to the rail trail. The path will closely follow existing grades and will include safety measures such as a wooden railing adjacent to the path and guardrail to prevent errant vehicles from Ward Avenue from entering the pathway or slopes . This path is designed to use appropriate grades for ADA/PROWAG and should allow bicyclists to maintain a constant speed without the need to stop at curves.

RIGHT-OF-WAY IMPACTS

Based on the 25% proposed design, there are several anticipated temporary easements for the grading and work zone, minimal fee takings for sidewalk/shared-use path construction, and permanent utility easements (PUEs) for utility pole and guy wire relocation. Additionally, some permanent easements will be required for the shared-use path, railing, and guardrail along Ward Avenue. In total, 28 properties are currently proposed to be affected within the project limits. All temporary and permanent right-of-way impacts will be managed by the City of Easthampton.

PROJECT COST

The estimated total construction cost for this project is approximately \$2,019,000, funded through a combination of Federal and State sources. The City of Easthampton is responsible for all expenses related to the acquisition of property easements and any necessary fee takings.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

The next stages of project design will be discussed in this hearing. Project advertisement is scheduled for Spring 2028, with construction expected to start in Summer 2028.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What is the Massachusetts Safe Route to School (SRTS) Program?

A: The Massachusetts SRTS Program targets elementary and middle schools with the aim of improving the health, safety, and physical activity of students while reducing air pollution and traffic congestion near schools. The program is nationally mandated by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and is managed by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT).

Q: What are the environmental impacts?

A: There will be no impacts to wetlands and other environmental impacts remain below the thresholds established by MEPA. A licensed arborist has determined that several trees are “risk” trees due to unsatisfactory condition. The arborist recommended these for removal prior to the project, and the City tree warden concurs with the recommendations. The “risk” trees will not be counted towards the MEPA threshold. A small number of healthy trees need to be removed to allow for construction of the project. In the area between Ward Avenue and the Manhan Rail Trail, some vegetation is proposed to be cleared to allow for construction of the path connection. Some tree trimming may also be needed for utility relocation.

Q: Will any of the roads be repaved?

A: Park Street is proposed to be repaved from South Street to about 1000 feet north of South Street. Select areas for crossing locations will also be repaved. The Safe Routes to School Program typically does not fund any repaving other than for utility work at select locations. Additional repaving may be performed through City funding during or following this project.

Q: How will abutters be impacted during construction?

A: In general, abutters can expect some relocations of overhead electric utilities as well as adjustments to underground utilities. Some regrading and reconstruction of driveways will be needed to accommodate the proposed path, and a small number of trees and vegetation will need to be trimmed or removed. Access to properties will be maintained during construction.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION

FEDERAL AID PROJECT

Easthampton, MA

Project Name **Mountain View School Improvements (Safe Route To School)**

Project File No. 612772

This sheet is provided for your comments. Your input is solicited and appreciated. You may e-mail comments directly to MassDOTProjectManagement@dot.state.ma.us or you may mail this sheet with any additional comments to:

Carrie E. Lavalley, P.E., Chief Engineer
MassDOT – Highway Division
10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116-3973
Attn: Project Management

Statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be emailed or postmarked no later than ten (10) business days after the hearing.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY.

Name: _____ Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

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

RE: Virtual Public Hearing

PROJECT NAME Mountain View School Improvements (Safe Route To School)

EASTHAMPTON

Project File No.612772

Attn: Project Management
