



## **VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING**

**Thursday, MAY 12, 2022  
at 7:00 PM**

**FOR THE PROPOSED**

**Route 138 (Washington Street) Corridor Improvements  
including Intersection Improvements at Elm Street  
Project No. 608195**

**EASTON, MASSACHUSETTS**

**Project Management Section**

**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 PUBLIC HEARING**  
**Project File No. 608195**

A Live Virtual Design Public Hearing will be hosted on the MassDOT website to present the design for the proposed corridor improvements on Washington Street (Route 138) including intersection improvements at Washington Street and Elm Street in **Easton, MA**.

**WHEN: 7:00-8:00 PM, Thursday, May 12, 2022**

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed Route 138 corridor and Elm Street intersection improvement project. All views and comments submitted in response to the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

**PROPOSAL:** The proposed corridor project consists of the installation of traffic and pedestrian signals at the intersection of Washington Street (Route 138) and Elm Street, including the realignment of the west leg of Elm Street with full depth roadway construction. In addition, the project will construct new accessible sidewalks and 5-foot buffered bicycle lanes along both sides of Washington Street, between Elm Street and Union Street, approximately 3,500 feet. The work also includes closed drainage system improvements, pavement rehabilitation mainly through milling and overlay with full depth box widening where necessary at the newly signalized intersection, signing, and necessary landscaping.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. **MassDOT 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. Lavallee, P.E., Chief Engineer, via e-mail to [MassDOTProjectManagement@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:MassDOTProjectManagement@dot.state.ma.us) or via US Mail to Suite 6340, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: **Project Management, Project File No. 608195**. Statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be emailed or postmarked no later than ten (10) business days (14 calendar days) after the hearing is hosted on the MassDOT website listed below.

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](mailto: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 Live Virtual Design Public Hearing or a cancellation announcement will be hosted on the internet at [www.mass.gov/massdot-highway-design-public-hearings](http://www.mass.gov/massdot-highway-design-public-hearings).

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.  
Acting 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.

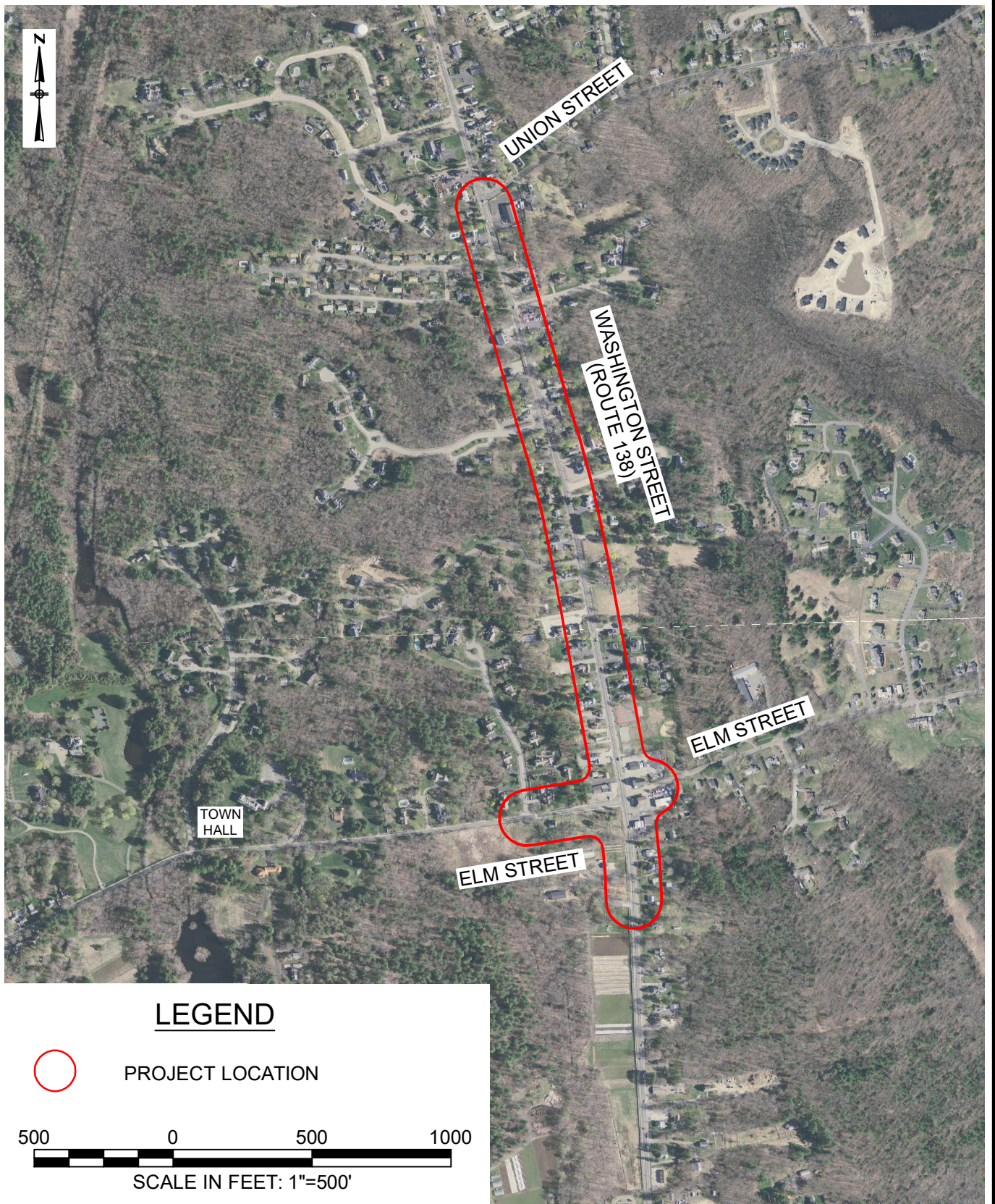
### **4. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MY HOUSE?**

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.







# **Route 138 (Washington Street) Corridor Improvements including Intersection Improvements at Elm Street Easton, MA**

## **PROJECT LOCATION**

The project extends approximately 3,600 feet (0.7 miles) along Washington Street (Route 138), from a point approximately 350 feet south of Union Street south to a point approximately 350 feet south of Elm Street. The northern project limit meets the southern project limits of the recently completed Washington Street and Union Street Traffic and Safety Improvement Project (By MassDOT). Project limits along Elm Street extend approximately 750 feet, from Frothingham Drive to a point 100 feet east of Washington Street. The project includes safety and operational improvements at the intersection of Washington Street and Elm Street.

## **PROJECT PURPOSE**

The purpose of this project is to improve traffic and safety for all users along Washington Street (Route 138) from Union Street to Elm Street including the intersection of Washington Street and Elm Street. Specific improvements will be made to pedestrian and bicycle accommodations and safety along the corridor, while also rehabilitating the roadway pavement. Proposed improvements include roadway widening and pavement milling and overlay, sidewalk reconstruction and new signs and pavement markings.

Improvements to the intersection of Washington Street and Elm Street include the realignment of the Elm Street west leg to eliminate the existing offset geometry, while also constructing a traffic signal at the intersection. In addition, the project will construct new accessible sidewalks and 5-foot buffered bicycle lanes along both sides of Washington Street, between Elm Street and Union Street, approximately 3,500 feet. The work also includes drainage improvements, pavement milling and overlay, and necessary landscaping.

## **PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS**

The Washington Street (Route 138) corridor and the intersection of Washington Street and Elm Street have safety and operational deficiencies which require improvements for safe and efficient operation for all users, including motor vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians. The following proposed improvements were developed to address the existing deficiencies and are based on an examination of existing conditions, known deficiencies, future traffic volumes, and discussions with MassDOT and Town of Easton officials.

- Install a fully actuated traffic signal at the intersection, including video detection for vehicle and bicycle detection.
- Realign the west leg of Elm Street to eliminate existing offset geometry of intersection.
- Provide marked crosswalks across each leg of the Elm Street intersection with pedestrian signal indications and an exclusive pedestrian phase.
- Provide exclusive left turn lanes for left turning vehicles from Washington Street to Elm Street in both directions.
- Provide protected/permissive operation for the newly created left turn phases.
- Rehabilitate pavement by means of a mix of milling and overlay and full-depth reconstruction for Washington Street.

- Construct asphalt sidewalks along both sides of Washington Street and the west leg of Elm Street within the project limits.
- Install new cement concrete pedestrian curb ramps with detectable warning panels, meeting MassDOT and ADA requirements.
- Provide 5-foot bicycle lanes with a 2.5-foot buffer as the typical bicycle accommodation treatment along Washington Street.
- Make improvements to the existing drainage system as necessary to address drainage concerns and improve stormwater quality to maximum extent practicable.
- Provide new pavement markings and signs throughout the project. All signs will be MUTCD compliant.
- Relocate utility poles in areas of widening and new sidewalk construction to maintain sufficient roadway offsets.

### **MAINTENANCE OF TRAFFIC DURING CONSTRUCTION**

All roadways within the project will remain open to traffic throughout construction. Widening operations at the intersections will allow one lane to be maintained on all approaches during peak hours. Occasional short traffic disruptions may occur but every effort will be made to minimize inconvenience to the public. Pedestrian and vehicular access to abutting properties will be maintained at all times, except for brief periods of time during which abutters will be notified in advance.

### **RIGHT OF WAY IMPACTS**

The proposed improvements will require permanent easements affecting 19 abutting properties. At the northern limit of the project, drainage easements will be required affecting four parcels for stormwater improvements including outfall replacement. Takings will be required for three corners of the Washington Street at Elm Street intersection to accommodate widening and realignment. Permanent utility easements are required for utility pole relocation and aerial rights affecting nine parcels, including the three parcels with takings described above. In addition, the project will require temporary construction easements affecting most but not all properties within the project limits.

### **PROJECT COST**

The preliminary construction cost of this project at this design stage is approximately \$6,500,000.

### **PROJECT SCHEDULE**

The design plans presented this evening represent a 25% design plans. The project has been programmed in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan for Federal Fiscal Year 2025. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2025.



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
HIGHWAY DIVISION

FEDERAL AID PROJECT

**Easton, MA**  
**Route 138 (Washington St) Corridor & Intersection Improvements at Elm Street**  
**Project File No. 608195**

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](mailto: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.**

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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  
Route 138 (Washington St) Corridor & Intersection Improvements at Elm Street  
**EASTON**  
Project File No. 608195  
Attn: Project Management

