



VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

March 19th, 2026

FOR THE PROPOSED

**Resurfacing and related work on Route 31
Project No. 612110
Project Management**

IN THE CITY OF FITCHBURG, MA AND THE TOWN OF ASBHY, MA

**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: Fitchburg / Ashby – Resurfacing and related work on Route 31
Project File No. 612110

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

WHEN: 6:30PM, Thursday, March 19th, 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 resurfacing approximately 5.3 miles of State Route 31 from John Fitch Highway in Fitchburg to Turnpike Road in Ashby to prevent further deterioration and more extensive/expensive repairs long term. Resurfacing should take place within the existing edges of road and will include cleaning drainage structures, piping, inlets, and outlets. Sidewalks and dedicated bicycle accommodations do not exist on either side of the road for the majority project limits. Limited sections at the beginning of the project will be improved to provide for ADA compliance.

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. 612110. 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?

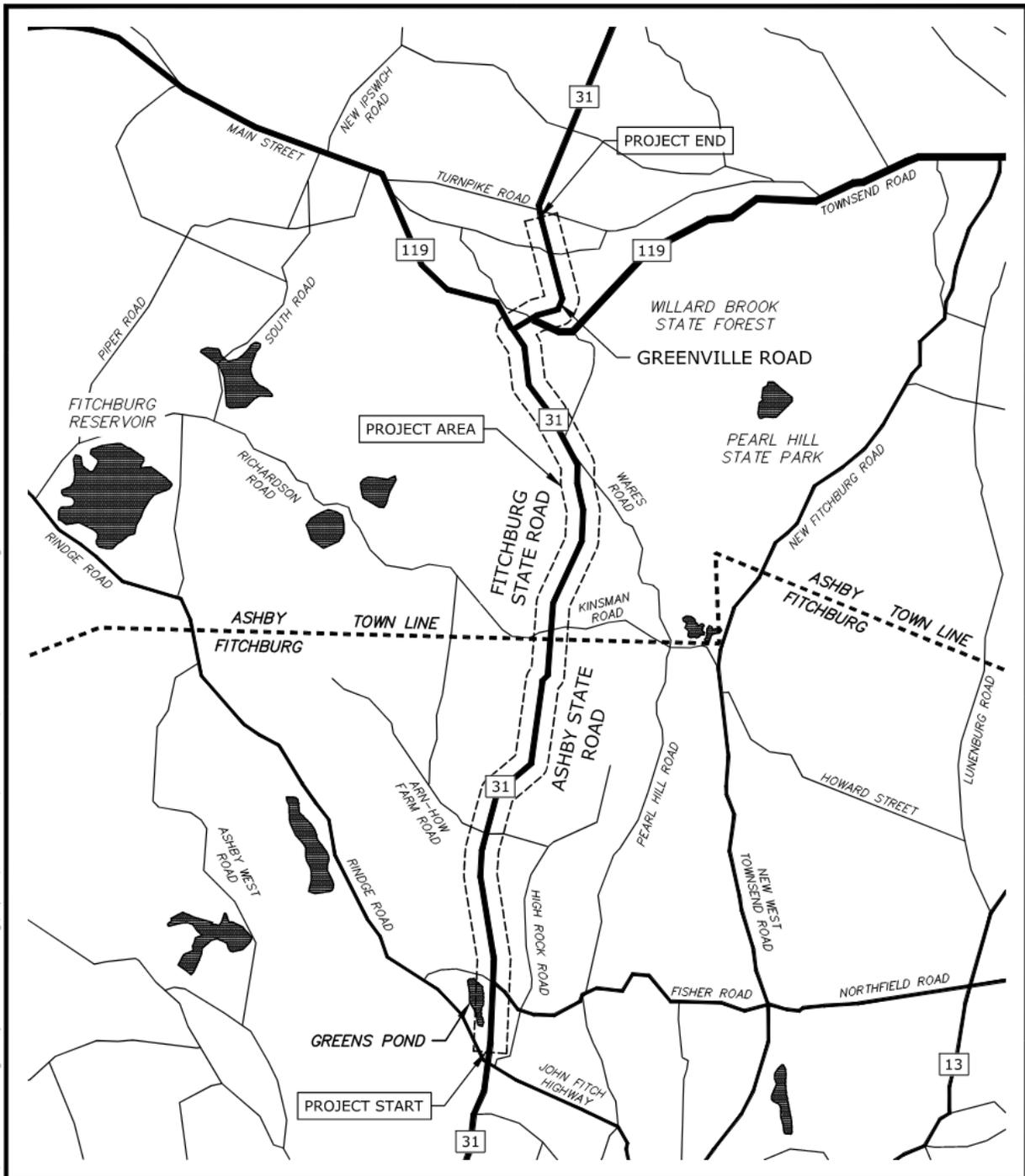
In addition to the market value of the property, the Department pays certain relocation benefits for both owners and tenants of acquired residences and businesses who meet eligibility requirements. Assistance in relocation is also provided. Department brochures are available for details on these benefits.

MassDOT Design Justification Workbook

Project: 612110

Description: Fitchburg/Ashby - Resurfacing and Related Work on Route 31

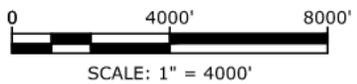
LOCUS MAP



Feb 19, 2025-9:17am Plotted By: MNattalese Tighe & Bond, Inc. J:\W\W5049 MADOT\019 HWY Fitchburg Ashby RI 31 Resurfacing (Reports)\2025-02 DJW\2024-10 DJW\612110 DJW LOCUS MAP.dwg

FITCHBURG/ASHBY ROUTE 31 RESURFACING
FITCHBURG, MASSACHUSETTS

SITE LOCUS MAP



NORTH 
1" = 4000'
FIGURE 1



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Resurfacing and Related Work on Route 31 Project spans 5.2 miles of roadway across the municipalities of Fitchburg and Ashby. It includes Ashby State Road north of the Rindge Road and John Fitch Highway intersection, continues into Ashby where the road name becomes Fitchburg State Road, and turns at the intersection with Route 119, becoming Greenville Road. The road has one 12 foot travel lane going northbound and southbound, and a variable width shoulder.

The existing pavement is estimated to be over 20 years old and shows extensive cracking with isolated areas of potholes and more severe pavement deficiencies.

The scope of this project is to resurface Route 31 within the project area, replace any existing non-ADA compliant pedestrian ramps and sidewalk segments, and limited driveway repairs as needed due to the road resurfacing. Existing HMA curb and berm will be further evaluated for replacement based on condition and project budget constraints. The current scope assumes all of the existing HMA curbing will be replaced. New granite curbing is also proposed where the proposed cement concrete sidewalk abuts the curb. Roadway lanes will be narrowed to 11' with the remaining pavement width to be used as shoulders varying in width from 5' to 9'. The existing guardrail will be retained with future improvements in a subsequent maintenance project.

Please Fold and Tape



Please Place
Appropriate
Postage Here

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

RE: Virtual Public Hearing
RESURFACING AND RELATED WORK ON ROUTE 31
FITCHBURG and ASHBY
Project File No. 612110
Attn: Project Management

