



DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING WEBINAR

JULY 9, 2020

FOR THE PROPOSED

**I-495/I-90 INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT
PROJECT FILE NO. 607977
HIGHWAY DIVISION**

IN THE TOWNS OF HOPKINTON AND WESTBOROUGH, MASSACHUSETTS

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

**JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR**

**PATRICIA A. LEAVENWORTH, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER**

**THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION
NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING WEBINAR
Project File No. 607977**

A Design Public Hearing Webinar will be published on the MassDOT website to present the design for the proposed I-495/I-90 Interchange Improvements project in Hopkinton, and Westborough, MA.

WHEN: Thursday, July 9, 2020

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing webinar is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed I-495/I-90 Interchange Improvements project. All views and comments submitted in response to the webinar will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: The proposed project consists of reconstruction of the I-495/I-90 Interchange in Hopkinton and Westborough. Once the project has been completed, the I-495/I-90 interchange will feature new direct connection ramps, grade separated ramps, improved acceleration and deceleration lanes, an auxiliary lane from I-495 Northbound to Route 9, a new Fruit Street Bridge and new I-495 bridge over I-90 and the rail lines.

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 webinar. Right-of-way plans can be made available to affected property owners upon request.

Written views received by MassDOT subsequent to the date of this notice and up to five (5) days prior to the date of the webinar and a project handout will be made available on the MassDOT website listed below.

Written statements and other exhibits regarding the proposed undertaking are to be submitted to Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E., Chief Engineer, MassDOT, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Highway Division, Project File No.607977. Mailed statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing webinar transcript must be postmarked no later than ten (10) business days after the webinar is posted to the MassDOT website listed below. Project inquiries may be emailed to dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us

This location is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (including but not limited to interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, open or closed captioning for videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats, such as audio tapes, Braille and large print), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), fax (857-368-0602), TTD/TTY (857-368-0603) or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible prior to the meeting, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten (10) business days before the webinar.

Hearing webinar cancellation announcements will be posted on the internet at <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/Highway/>

JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

PATRICIA A. LEAVENWORTH, 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,

Patricia A Leavenworth, 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.

TO SAFEGUARD THE PROPERTY OWNER

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.

Figure 1: Project Map



Figure 1: Project Location

Project Location: The current I-495/I-90 Interchange is chiefly in Hopkinton and Westborough. The project limits about the town of Southborough. The current interchange abuts on all sides the Cedar Swamp Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) and is adjacent to an active rail line providing services for the MBTA and CSX. It is also bounded by a residential neighborhood, and major commercial properties. *See Figure 1*

Purpose: To improve safety and operational efficiency at the system interchange of these two nationally and regionally significant interstate highways.

Existing Conditions: The I-495/I-90 interchange serves as a major crossroads for commuter traffic and is used by nearly half of the freight traffic entering Eastern Massachusetts. The interchange is a high crash location seeing a crash every four days. 75,000 daily vehicles travel between I-495 and I-90 through the interchange. Approximately 100,000 vehicles are carried on the I-90 mainline with 110,000 carried on the I-495 mainline.

Proposed Project: The I-495/I-90 Interchange Improvements project will improve acceleration and deceleration lanes, add an auxiliary lane from I-495 Northbound to Route 9, provide direct connection ramps from I-90 Westbound to I-495 Northbound and I-495 Northbound to I-90 Eastbound to pull traffic out of the former toll plaza area and add grade separated ramps through the former toll plaza area for other movements. New I-495 bridges over I-90 and the rail lines as well as a new Fruit Street Bridge will be constructed. *See Figure 2*

Right of Way: The Proposed Design will likely require permanent right-of-way action on private property. Temporary easements and occupation of town streets and intersections for construction operations is anticipated. Permanent impacts to city streets or intersections are anticipated at this time.

Maintenance of Traffic During Construction: The proposed project will be a Design-Build project. Traffic through the interchange and thru traffic on the interstates will be maintained however detailed traffic management plans will be forthcoming when a Design-Build team is selected. Constructability of the Fruit Street Bridge over I-495 suggests staged alternating traffic controlled by temporary signals.

Project Schedule: The project is currently at the 25% Design Stage. This project has been programmed in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for Federal Fiscal Year 2022. The project is slated for the MassDOT Design-Build Program. Comments from this evening will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extents possible.

Project Cost: The estimated total contract cost for this project is approximately \$296 million. The project construction cost will be funded with a combination of monies from the Federal Highway Administration and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The map illustrates the proposed improvements for the I-495/I-90 interchange. Key features include:

- Ramps and Roadways:** Labeled ramps include RAMP WN (50 MPH), RAMP SE (40 MPH), RAMP EN (45 MPH), RAMP SW & NW (45 MPH), RAMP ES & EN (45 MPH), RAMP ES & WS (45 MPH), RAMP NW (45 MPH), and RAMP SE & SW (40 MPH). Roadways shown include ROUTE 9EB, FLANDERS ROAD, FRUIT STREET, SABLE HILL ROAD, and MITCHELL ROAD.
- Geographical Features:** The SUDBURY RIVER and WHITEHALL BROOK are shown flowing through the area. Other landmarks include CUMBERLAND FARMS, HOPKINTON COUNTRY CLUB, and BULLMOOSE RUN.
- Infrastructure:** The MBTA COMMUTER RAIL/CSX line is visible, along with the TRANSFLO facility and WESTBOROUGH HOPKINTON area.
- Legend:**
 - BRIDGE REMOVED: Yellow hatched area.
 - PROPOSED BRIDGE: Blue solid area.
 - PROPOSED ROADWAY: Yellow solid area.
 - WETLAND: Green wavy line.
 - ROW LINE: Red dashed line.
 - TOWN LINE: Red solid line.
 - PROPOSED WALL: Blue dashed line.
 - PROPOSED BARRIER: Blue solid line.
 - PROPOSED LIMITS: Purple dashed line.
- Scale and Orientation:** A graphic scale shows 0, 200, and 400 feet. A north arrow points towards the top of the map.
- Inset Map:** A detailed view of the "FORMER TOLL PLAZA AREA" at a scale of 1"=100' is provided, showing the proposed interchange layout in more detail.

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Please Fold and Tape



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Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E.
Chief Engineer
MassDOT – Highway Division
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116-3973

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Hopkinton and Westborough, MA
Project File No. 607977
Attn. Highway Division

