



VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

September 11th, 2020

FOR THE PROPOSED

**Intersection Improvements at Merrimack Street and South Broadway (Route 28)
Project No. 609509
Project Management**

IN THE CITY OF LAWRENCE, 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 VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
Project File No. 609509

A Virtual Design Public Hearing will be published on the MassDOT website below to present the design for the proposed Intersection Improvements at Merrimack Street and South Broadway (Route 28) project in Lawrence, MA.

WHEN: Friday, September 11, 2020

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed Intersection Improvements at Merrimack Street and South Broadway (Route 28) 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 improvements to enhance safety and operations at the intersection and provide improved pedestrian and bicycle accommodations. The existing traffic signal system will be replaced to meet current standards with vehicle detection, time-of-day timing, accessible pedestrian signals, and emergency vehicle preemption. Under the recommended alternative, an exclusive left-turn lane will be introduced on the southbound approach to facilitate protected-permissive left-turn phasing. Bicycle accommodations will consist of bike lanes on South Broadway and Merrimack Street. Pedestrian accommodations will consist of reconstructing sidewalks for ADA compliance, installation of accessible pedestrian signals, and installation of accessible curb ramps. Crosswalks and all other pavement markings will be re-striped and updated and a new crosswalk will be installed at the Merrimack Street/Carver Street intersection. Storm drainage will be updated to accommodate the proposed intersection geometry and opportunities to facilitate future separation of storm and sanitary sewer systems along S. Broadway will be evaluated and included if feasible. Access management measures will also be evaluated and implemented where feasible, for adjacent driveways. The existing pavement is proposed to be resurfaced.

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

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: Project Management, Project File No. 609509. Mailed statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be postmarked no later than ten (10) business days after the hearing is posted to the MassDOT website listed below. Project inquiries may be emailed to dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us

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 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 business days before the hearing.

This Virtual Design Public Hearing or a cancellation announcement will be posted on the internet at www.mass.gov/massdot-highway-design-public-hearings.

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.

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.

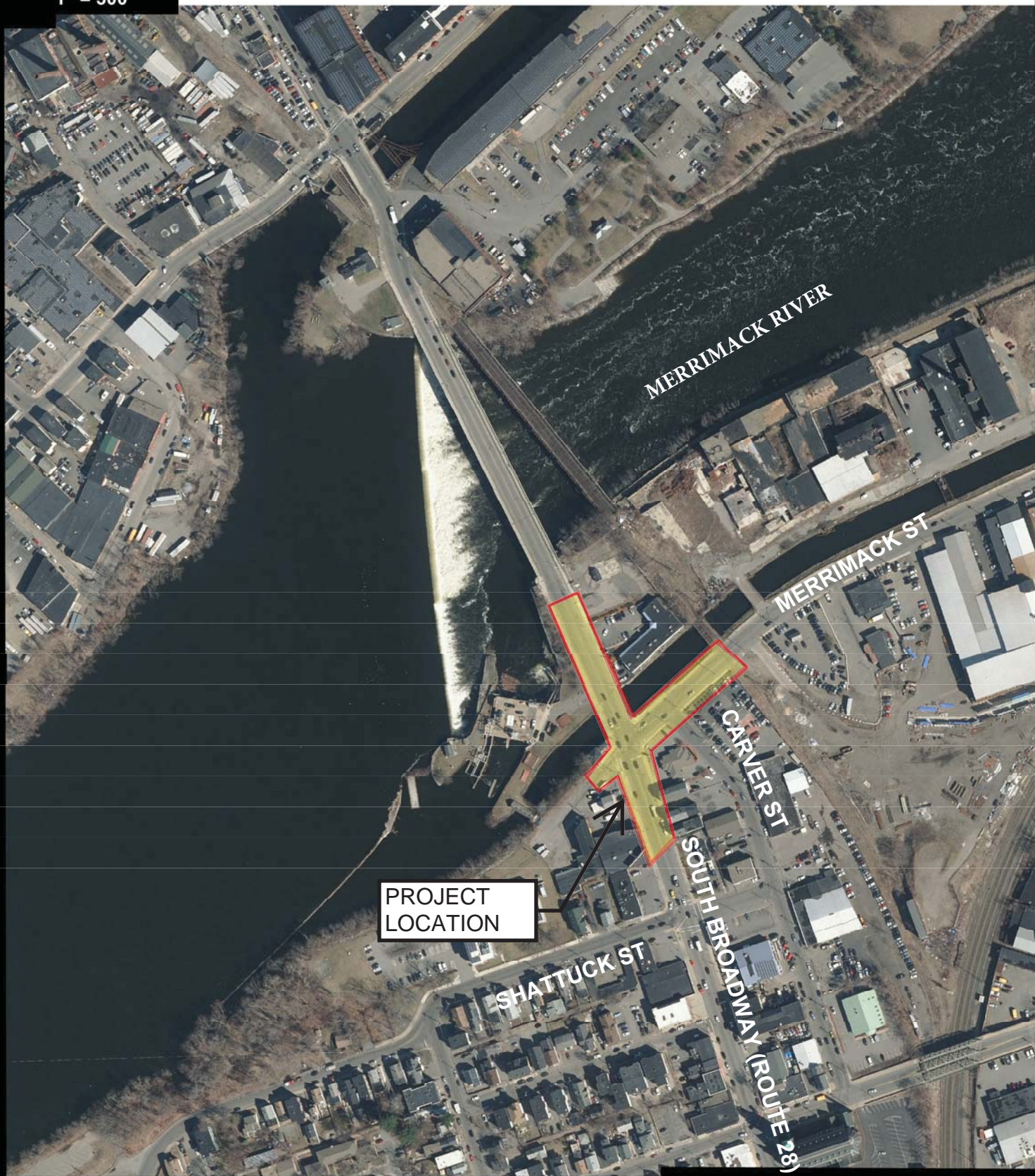
4. WHAT IS A FAIR PRICE FOR THE ACQUIRED PARCELS?

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.

1" = 300'



PROJECT
LOCATION

Location Map
Merrimack Street at Broadway Intesection



TEC, Inc.
146 Dascomb Road
Andover, MA 01810

Intersection Improvement Project Merrimack Street and South Broadway (Route 28) in Lawrence

PROJECT LOCATION

The project includes traffic and safety improvements to the intersection of Merrimack Street and South Broadway (Route 28). The attached Locus Map shows the intersection location.

PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of this project is to increase safety for all modes of transportation and improve intersection operation. The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) and the City of Lawrence are proposing pedestrian, bicyclist, and vehicular safety and mobility improvements along approximately 600 feet of South Broadway (Route 28) and 400 feet of Merrimack Street. This proposed project is primarily intended to improve traffic operations at the intersection of South Broadway and Merrimack Street and improve safety and accessibility for pedestrians and bicyclists from the surrounding neighborhoods.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

The project includes transportation improvements along South Broadway (Route 28) and Merrimack Street. The proposed improvements include:

- Resurfacing the roadway, resetting curb lines and modifying drainage infrastructure on South Broadway (Route 28), and Merrimack Street within the project limits.
- Reconstruction of sidewalks on both sides of South Broadway (Route 28) and Merrimack Street within the project limits to rectify non-compliant cross slopes, irregular/heaving surfaces, deterioration and dissimilar materials;
- Construction of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) / Architectural Access Board (AAB) compliant accessible curb ramps within the project limits;
- Installing bike lanes throughout the project limits.
- Formalizing the lane designation on all approaches to include an exclusive right turn lane and shared through/left lane on Merrimack Street westbound, an exclusive right turn lane and shared through/left lane on the South Broadway northbound, an exclusive left turn lane and shared through/right turn lane southbound on Broadway, and one general-purpose lane will be provided on Wolcott Avenue eastbound.
- Striping of new thermoplastic crosswalks, STOP lines, centerlines, lane lines, parking lanes, and shoulder lines within the project limits.
- Construction of a new traffic signal at South Broadway and Merrimack Street that include , accessible pedestrian signals.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

During typical construction operations, all roadways in the project area will remain open to residents and other traffic. Occasional short traffic disruptions and travel lane/shoulder/parking lane closures may occur, but every effort will be made to minimize inconvenience to the travelling public and abutting residents and businesses. Pedestrian and vehicular access to abutting properties will be maintained throughout construction.

RIGHT OF WAY IMPACTS

Temporary construction easements will be required for minor grading impacts to lawns, driveways, and walkways and to restore impacts to adjacent properties. Small permanent easements will also be required for traffic signal equipment and utility poles and associated overhead wires. The City of Lawrence will be responsible for securing all necessary easements. MassDOT's policy concerning land acquisition will be discussed at this hearing.

PROJECT COST

The current estimate of the total construction cost of this project is approximately \$1,472,000.

PROJECT SCHEDULE

The design plans presented this evening are at the 25% design stage. Design, permitting and right of way acquisition must be completed by February 2022. Construction is anticipated to begin in the Summer of 2022.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How long will construction last?

It is expected that construction will be substantially complete by July 2023.

What time of day will construction take place?

Work will take place Monday through Friday. No work that requires work in the roadway will take place during peak traffic times which is from 6:30 am to 9:30 am and from 3:30 pm to 7:00 pm.

How will construction impact my business?

Access to residences and businesses will be maintained during construction.

How will this work match into the work that was just done on Merrimack Street?

The work will tie in seamlessly to the work recently constructed on Merrimack Street. TEC has the construction plans prepared for that project and incorporated those plans to make sure they matched at the project limits.

Will the new traffic signal keep green time on the side-streets?

The new traffic signal will provide new detection on each vehicle movement that will allow the traffic signal to operate on a demand-based timing system. The detection will also allow for a real-time adjustment of timings as additional vehicles enter, up to a maximum specified time per movement.

The morning commute is a lot different than the afternoon commute. How will the traffic signal adjust for this?

The traffic signal programming is much more advanced now-a-days. At a minimum, the traffic signal timing scheme will be programmed based on recent traffic counts for each intersection movement at multiple points during the typical day. The traffic signal timings will typically fluctuate throughout the day to optimally accommodate the demand.

Does the video camera for detection record my movements?

The camera is generally pointed at the stop line and detects vehicles within the specified computer-generated zone at the stop line, or at another location on the approach/movement to sense the vehicle's presence. The City does not maintain videotape of the camera images and generally is zoomed out so that license plates are not typically seen if watching in real-time.

Will there be pedestrian accommodations at the traffic signal?

The new traffic signal will provide new pedestrian LED signal heads with countdowns for the flashing don't walk interval. Each crosswalk terminus will have an accessible push button with verbal and vibratory mechanics for persons with disabilities.

I heard the audible push buttons are loud.

The audible tones or messaging on the push button does increase in volume when surrounding ambient noise increases; such as when a truck passes to assist those with hearing disabilities. During normal periods, the decibel level is kept at the lowest setting allowed under state and federal guidance. The setting can be adjusted within residential areas for night-time setting.

In the past, I have not been able to cross the whole roadway during the pedestrian interval.

The pedestrian timing is set up to provide a 7 second WALK phase and then a FLASHING DON'T WALK / DON'T WALK clearance before the next green phase to account for the curb-to-curb distance at a typical walking speed of 3.5 ft/second. If a person starts to walk after the FLASHING DON'T WALK begins, it is likely that the timing will not be enough. This is why we have added the initial 7 seconds of WALK.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS MASSACHUSETTS
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION

FEDERAL AID PROJECT

Lawrence, MA
Intersection Improvements at Merrimack Street and South Broadway (Route
28) Project File No. 609509

This sheet is provided for your comments. Your input is solicited and appreciated. Please mail
this sheet with any additional comments to:

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

Attn: Project Management

The final date for receipt of written statements and exhibits for inclusion into the official hearing
transcript will be ten (10) days after the Hearing.

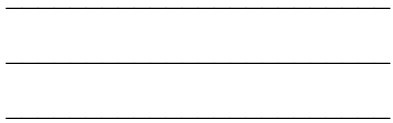
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Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E.
Chief Engineer
MassDOT – Highway Division
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116-3973

RE: Virtual Public Hearing
Intersection Improvements at Merrimack Street and South Broadway (Route 28)
LAWRENCE
Project File No. 609509
Insert section: Project Management

