



**DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING
August 15, 2019**

AT

**NORTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
68 East Main Street
Norton, Massachusetts 02766**

7:00 PM

FOR THE PROPOSED

**Rail Trail Extension (World War II Veterans Trail)
Project No. 607822
Roadway Project Management Section**

IN THE TOWNs OF NORTON and MANSFIELD, 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
Project File No. 607822

A Design Public Hearing will be held by MassDOT to discuss the proposed Norton/Mansfield Rail Trail Extension project in Norton/Mansfield, MA.

WHERE: Norton Public Library
68 East Main Street
Norton, MA 02766

WHEN: August 15, 2019 @ 7:00 PM

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed Norton/Mansfield Rail Trail Extension project. All views and comments made at the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: The proposed project is an extension of the existing 2-mile Mansfield World War II Veterans Memorial Trail which ends just north of Fruit Street in Mansfield. The project is a 10 to 12 foot shared-use recreational path which will extend from the end of the existing trail in Mansfield to the intersection of Crane Street in Norton and improve multi-modal connectivity from the Mansfield Commuter Rail Station to the Myles Standish Industrial Park in Taunton. The trail will provide improved access to Conservation Commission owned land including Johnson Acres and Henrich Woods, as well as the Winthrop Dahl Nature Preserve owned by the Town of Norton Land Preservation Society. Parking areas are proposed at several locations along the corridor. The project will provide year-round recreation for cyclists, wheelchair users and strollers, horseback riders, runners, walkers, birdwatchers, in-line skaters, and cross-country skiers.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements will be required. The Towns of Mansfield and Norton are responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands. MassDOT's policy concerning land acquisitions will be discussed at this hearing.

Written views received by MassDOT subsequent to the date of this notice and up to five (5) days prior to the date of the hearing shall be displayed for public inspection and copying at the time and date listed above. Plans will be on display one-half hour before the hearing begins, with an engineer in attendance to answer questions regarding this project. A project handout will be made available on the MassDOT website listed below.

Written statements and other exhibits in place of, or in addition to, oral statements made at the Public Hearing regarding the proposed undertaking are to be submitted to Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E., Chief Engineer, MassDOT, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Roadway Project Management, Project File No. 607822. Such submissions will also be accepted at the hearing. Mailed statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be postmarked within ten (10) business days of this Public Hearing. 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 meeting.

In case of inclement weather, hearing 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.

RIGHT OF WAY ISSUES

A secure right of way is necessary for this project. Temporary construction easements may be required. Your municipality is responsible for acquiring all necessary rights in private or public lands. If your property is affected, your rights are fully protected under law.

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).

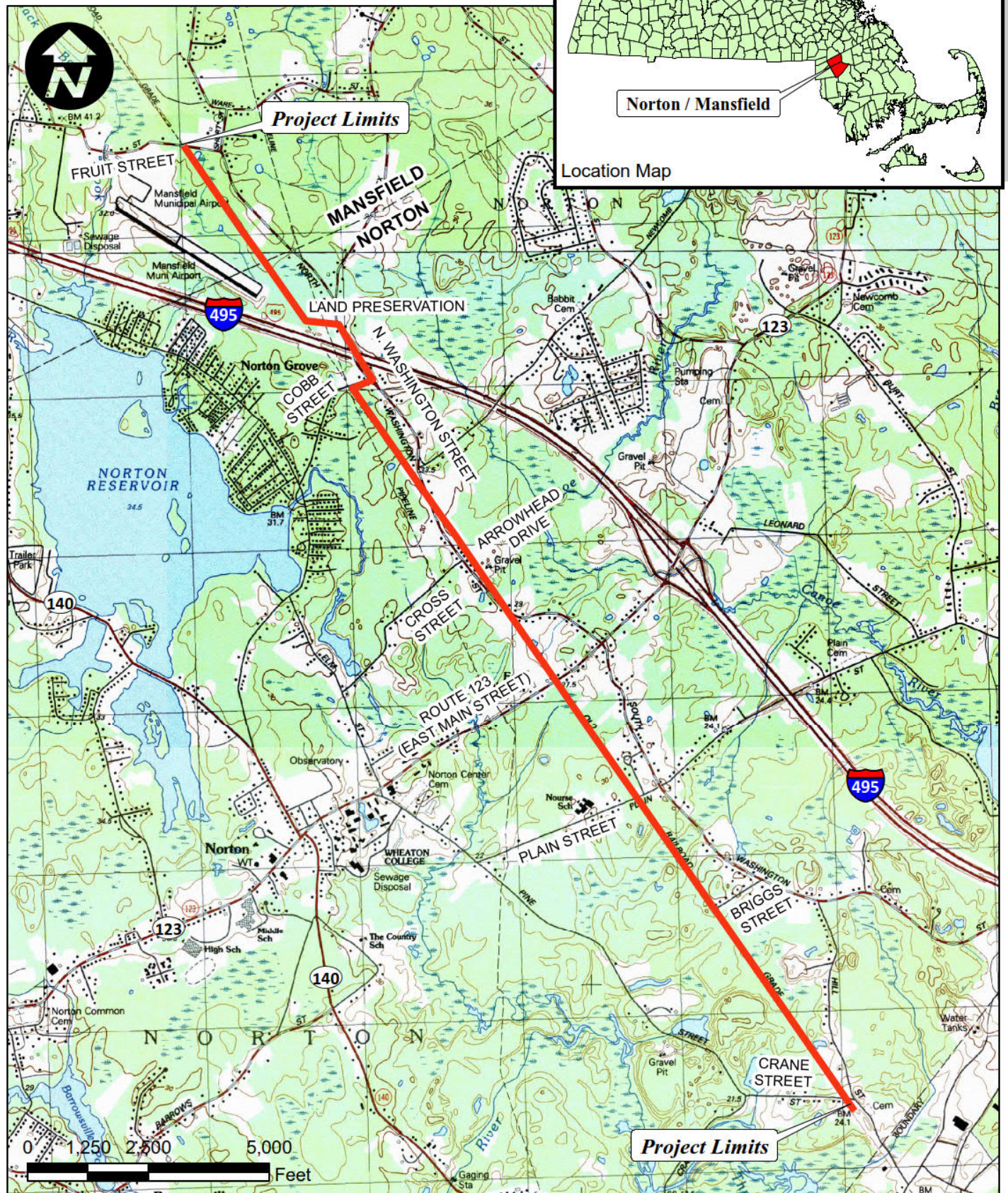
5. MUST I ACCEPT THE MUNICIPALITY OFFER?

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.

Norton / Mansfield Rail Trail Extension Project

Norton / Mansfield, Massachusetts

Figure No. 1 - Project Location Map



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is an extension of the existing two (2) mile Mansfield World War II Veterans Memorial Trail which ends just north of Fruit Street in Mansfield. The project is a 10 to 12 foot shared-use recreational path which will extend from the end of the existing trail in Mansfield to the intersection of Crane Street in Norton and improve multi-modal connectivity from the Mansfield Commuter Rail Station to the Myles Standish Industrial Park in Taunton. The project will provide year round recreation for cyclists, wheelchair users and strollers, horseback riders, runners, walkers, birdwatchers, in-line skaters, and cross-country skiers.

The Mansfield section of the trail begins at Fruit Street and continues to the Mansfield/Norton town line. The Norton section of the trail will extend from the Mansfield/Norton town line south to a point approximately two thousand (2,000) feet north of Crane Street, Norton, approximately four (4) miles in length. The remaining 2,000 foot segment was recently paved to Crane Street by the Mansfield Foxboro Norton Wastewater District (MFN Wastewater District) as an access driveway to proposed wastewater infrastructure constructed on a Town parcel adjacent to the proposed trail corridor. A parking area was also recently paved at the end of the segment at the Crane Street intersection. The project limits are shown in **Figure No. 1**.

The trail corridor is a former railroad corridor that now consists of parcels owned by the Town of Mansfield, the Town of Norton Land Preservation Society, the MFN Wastewater District, Arrowhead Village Homeowners Association and the Town of Norton. There is also an on-road component to the corridor which utilizes the public street layouts of North Washington Street and Cobb Street to provide a connection over Interstate Route 495. The former railroad corridor will hereafter be referred to as “corridor.” The MFN Wastewater District maintains a sewer line through the off-road sections of the corridor.

There are eleven (11) at grade crossings within the project limits. The trail will provide improved access to Conservation Commission owned land including Johnson Acres and Henrich Woods, as well as the Winthrop Dahl Nature Preserve owned by the Town of Norton Land Preservation Society. Parking areas are proposed at several locations along the corridor.

Proposed Improvements:

- 10 to 12 foot shared-use recreational path
- Eleven intersection crossing improvements including new ramps with detectable warning panels. Proposed ramps and sidewalks will meet MassDOT and ADA requirements.
- Installation of new pavement markings and signs. All signs will be MUTCD compliant.
- Provide on-road bicycle accommodation for segments of Cobb Street and North Washington Street.
- Construct parking facilities for shared-use path access

Address: _____

Please Fold and Tape

Please Place
Appropriate
Postage Here

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

RE: Public Hearing
Rail Trail Extension (WW II Veterans Trail)
Norton/Mansfield
Project File No. 607822
Roadway Management Section