



VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

DECEMBER 17, 2025

FOR THE PROPOSED

Oakland Road at Reading Memorial High School and Coolidge Middle School (SRTS)

Project No. 613564

Highway Design

IN THE TOWN OF READING, MASSACHUSETTS

**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: Reading- Oakland Road at Reading Memorial High School and Coolidge Middle School (SRTS)

Project File No. 613564

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

WHEN: 6:00 PM, Wednesday, December 17, 2025

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 enhancing the safety and accessibility for multimodal users accessing the Reading Memorial High School and Arthur W. Coolidge Middle School via Oakland Road and the adjacent intersections. The project aims to encourage walking and biking to school and provide accessible connections to surrounding neighborhoods. The project plans 11-foot travel lanes and parking spaces on both sides of Oakland Road. A 10-foot shared use path with a 5-foot minimum buffer is proposed along the westerly side of Oakland to provide bicycle and pedestrian accommodations for the school area and residents. For the east side, a 5.5' sidewalk will be provided with mid-block crossings along the corridor of Oakland Road to encourage low speeds and shorter crossing distances.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The town of Reading 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 or via US Mail to Suite 7550, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Project Management, Project File No. 613564. 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. Lavallee, P.E.
Chief Engineer

WHAT IS 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'

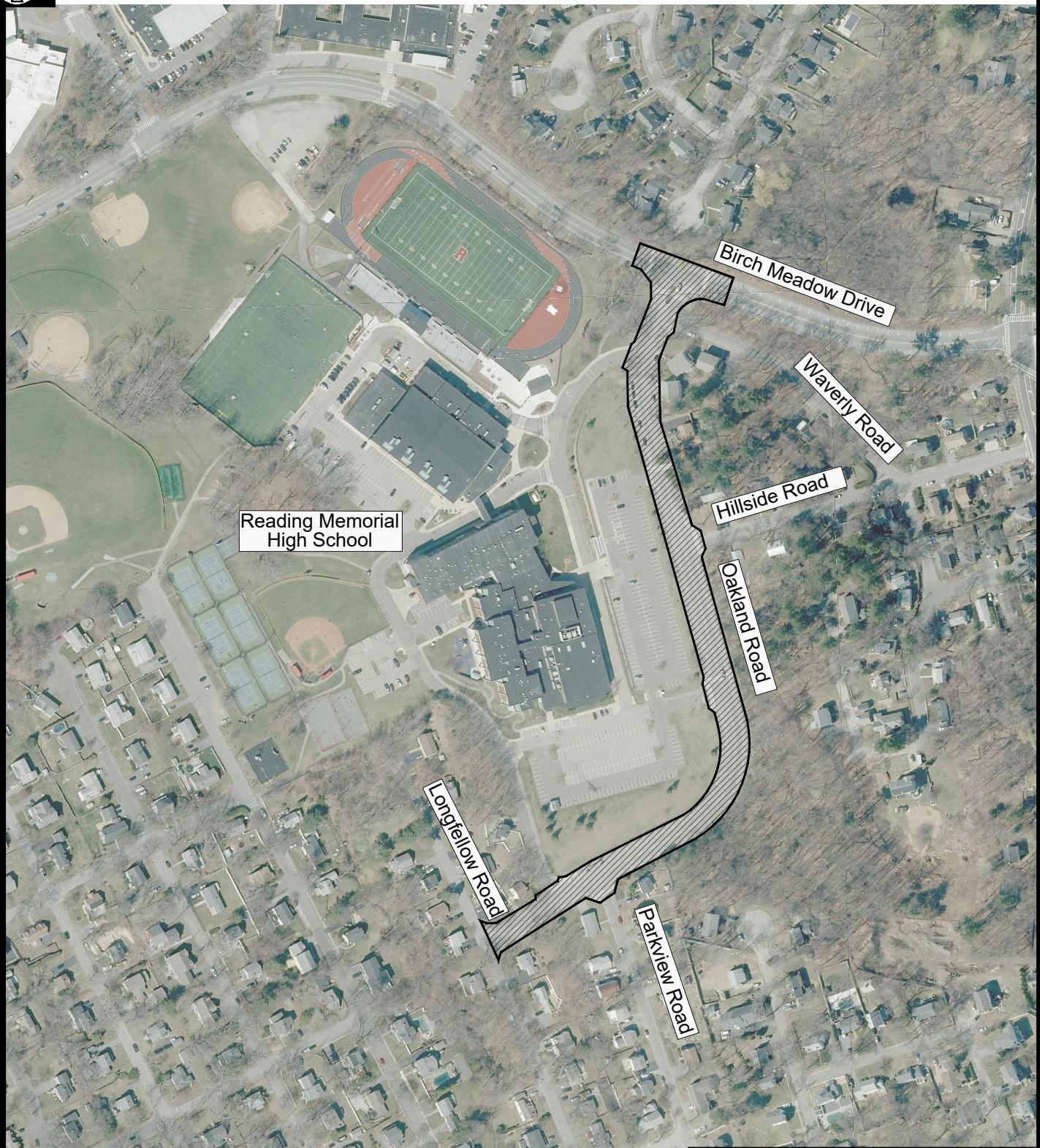


Figure 1

Project Location Map



TEC, Inc.
282 Merrimack Street, 2nd Floor
Lawrence, MA 01843

TOWN OF READING
IMPROVEMENTS AT READING MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL
(SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL)

PROJECT FILE NO. - 613865

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Location and Existing Conditions:

The project begins at Longfellow Road in the south and extends approximately 1700 feet along Oakland Road to Birch Meadow Drive in the north. The primary focus of the project is the area of Oakland Road adjacent to Reading Memorial High School. Oakland Road today is a two-lane roadway with parking and sidewalks on both sides. The existing cross section of the roadway lacks sufficient infrastructure for pedestrians and bicyclists. There are excessively wide travel lanes which promote high speeds and due to the on-street parking poor sightlines to pedestrians looking to cross the roadway. The excessive pavement area also means that there are excessively long crosswalks along Oakland Road. In addition, the intersections of Birch Meadow Drive and Longfellow Road lack logical terminations of pedestrian facilities at the project limits. At Birch Meadow Drive, there are also conflict points between the existing crosswalks and vehicle staging area that create additional safety concerns for students walking and biking to school.

Project Purpose:

The purpose of this Safe Routes to School project is to improve the access, safety and mobility of school aged children accessing the Reading Memorial High School and surrounding facilities while encouraging healthy and alternative modes of transportation to school.

Proposed Project:

The proposed improvements include performing a road diet along Oakland Road and utilizing the additional space to install a ten-foot shared-use path with a five-foot buffer along the western side of the roadway. The road diet will narrow the existing 16-foot travel lanes to 11- feet to promote slower speeds throughout the project limits. The existing on-street parking lines will be maintained and will be striped to be 8-feet wide. The sidewalk on the eastern side of the roadway will be reconstructed to be ADA-compliant and provide ADA-compliant pedestrian crossings. The roadway will be resurfaced and new pavement markings and signage will be installed. Finally, the intersections at Birch Meadow Drive and Longfellow Road will be reconstructed to prioritize pedestrian and bicyclist crossings.

Maintenance of Traffic During Construction:

The Contractor will coordinate with MassDOT and Town Officials regarding work hours and traffic circulation. All temporary traffic control measures will be approved by the Town prior to implementation.

A majority of the proposed improvements can be constructed using alternating lane closures, allowing one direction of travel at a time. Under this configuration, all approaches will be under police control during daytime hours for the duration of the work. Work outside of the travel way can be constructed using parking closures. This work zone configuration would allow for bi-directional travel guided by temporary traffic control measures. Geometric improvements at the intersections will require a combination of an alternating lane closure and a corner closure with the assistance of police control.

Project Schedule:

The design reviewed at this meeting is at the 25% stage of completion. Comments made at this design hearing will be incorporated to the maximum extent feasible in the 75% design currently anticipated for Spring 2026. The final designs would then be completed in through 2026, and the project is expected commence construction in the spring of 2027.

Project Cost:

The estimated total construction cost for this project is approximately \$3.5 million. Funding for the construction will be through the Federal Highway Administration (80%) (FHWA) and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) (20%).

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION

FEDERAL AID PROJECT

Reading, MA
Oakland Road at Reading Memorial High School and Coolidge Middle School (SRTS)
Project File No. 613564

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 or you may mail this sheet with any additional comments to:

Carrie E. Lavallee, 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.

Name: _____ Title: _____

Organization:

Address:

Please Fold and Tape

Please Place
Appropriate
Postage Here

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

RE: Virtual Public Hearing
Oakland Road at Reading Memorial High School and Coolidge Middle School (SRTS)
Reading
Project File No. 613564
Attn: Project Management
