



VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

April 5, 2022

FOR THE PROPOSED

**Improvements on Saint James Avenue at Tapley Street
Project No. 608560
Project Management**

IN THE CITY OF SPRINGFIELD, 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 PUBLIC HEARING
Project File No. 608560

A Live Virtual Design Public Hearing will be hosted on the MassDOT website below to present the design for the proposed Improvements on St. James Avenue at Tapley Street project in **Springfield, MA**.

WHEN: 6:30pm-8:00pm, April 5, 2022

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed Improvements on St. James Avenue at Tapley Street 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 constructing a roundabout in place of the existing signal at the project location. Pedestrian and bicycle accommodations will be provided in the form of raised shared-use paths, generally 10 feet wide except on the Tapley Street bridge, where an at-grade area for bicycle and pedestrian travel will be provided along the south side. High-visibility crosswalks, ADA-compliant curb ramps, and rectangular rapid flashing beacons are proposed to be provided across each leg of the roundabout to facilitate safe crossings. The left turn onto the on-ramp from St. James Avenue northbound to I-291 westbound is proposed to be signalized.

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.

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 6340, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: **Project Management, Project File No. 608560**. Statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be emailed or postmarked no later than ten (10) business days (14 calendar days) after the hearing is hosted on the MassDOT website listed below.

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

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,

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.

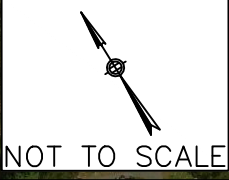
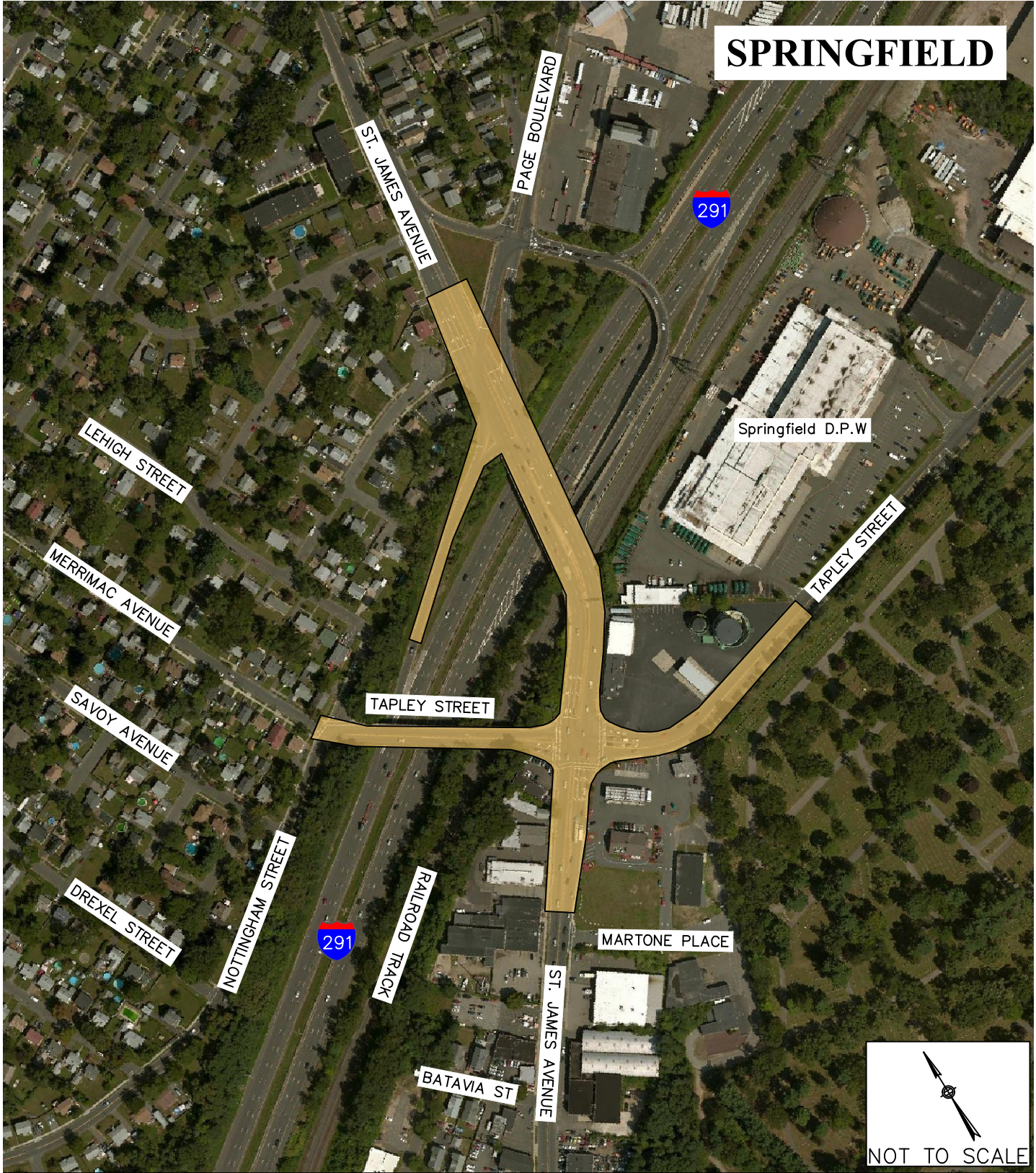
4. WHAT IS A FAIR PRICE FOR THE ACQUIRED PARCELS?

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.

SPRINGFIELD



IMPROVEMENTS ON ST. JAMES AVENUE AT TAPLEY STREET

PROJECT NO. 608560

PROJECT LOCATION

The project is located along St. James Avenue from Batavia Street to Page Boulevard and along Tapley Street from Nottingham Street to approximately 1,400 feet west of Bay Street for an approximate project length of 0.8 miles.

PURPOSE

The primary purpose of the project is to improve safety. The intersection of St. James Avenue at Tapley Street is a high crash location that has been eligible for HSIP (Highway Safety Improvement Program) funding. The St. James Avenue / Tapley Street intersection is ranked 2nd of the top 200 crash locations in Massachusetts for the period 2017-2019. There is also a lack of pedestrian signals and the crossings do not meet ADA requirements. A crossing guard is posted at the intersection during the school year to guide students walking to school through the intersection. There are sidewalks on one side of Tapley Street and St. James Avenue and the area lacks bicycle accommodations. In addition to safety concerns, the St. James Avenue project area experiences queueing and congestion in the peak commuting hours.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

St. James Avenue is classified as an urban minor arterial under local jurisdiction that is aligned in an overall north-south direction from State Street in the City of Springfield to Broadway Street in the City of Chicopee. The posted speed limit along St. James Avenue within the project area is regulated at 30 miles per hour (MPH) in the northbound and southbound directions.

Tapley Street is classified as an urban minor arterial under local jurisdiction that is aligned in an overall east-west direction from Bay Street to Nottingham Street. The posted speed limit along Tapley Street within the project area is regulated at 30 MPH in the eastbound and westbound directions.

Based on traffic counts along St. James Avenue conducted in 2018, the Average Daily Traffic (ADT) was 16,600 vehicles per day and 19,000 vehicles per day along Tapley Street.

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

The proposed project consists of full-depth construction to provide a multi-lane modern roundabout with a landscaped central island, cement concrete truck apron, raised cement concrete splitter islands and hot mix asphalt shared-use paths at the St. James Avenue/Tapley Street intersection. High visibility 'ladder' style crosswalks will be provided across every leg of the intersection accompanied by push-button activated rectangular rapid-flashing beacons (RRFBs).

To the south of the intersection, a consistent two-lane roadway with buffered bicycle lanes in both directions and cement concrete sidewalks on both sides of the street will be provided along St. James Avenue. The proposed work north of the intersection along St. James Avenue consists of restriping and configuring the lanes on the St. James Avenue bridge over the CSX railroad and I-291/Route 20 highway to include two travel lanes and a buffered bicycle lane in each direction.

A new traffic signal is proposed at the St. James Avenue/I-291 WB On-Ramp in order to accommodate a northbound dual left turn movement to the ramp. At the St. James Avenue/Page Boulevard intersection there will be a new crosswalk across the northerly leg of the intersection as well as the associated new signal equipment. Otherwise, the existing signal equipment at Page Boulevard will be retained, however, the signal timings/phasing will be modified to optimize intersection operations with the new, adjacent signalized intersection at Page Boulevard/I-291 WB On-Ramp. Bicycle lanes will be carried along St. James Avenue through the Page Boulevard intersection to the northerly project limit.

Tapley Street east of the St. James Avenue intersection will consist of a two-lane roadway with buffered bicycle lanes, hot mix asphalt shared-use paths and cement concrete sidewalks. West of its intersection with St. James Avenue, Tapley Street will be restriped and the lanes reconfigured on the bridge to include two travel lanes, a 5-foot bicycle lane in the westbound direction and a roadway grade shared-use path delineated by flex-posts along the eastbound side.

MAINTENANCE OF TRAFFIC DURING CONSTRUCTION

Anticipated temporary traffic control will require a complex and multi-phased construction sequence. A combination of a temporary short-term detour, temporary traffic signals and temporary roundabout configurations will be utilized to maintain traffic operations. Temporary traffic control will also include, but not be limited to, lane shifting setups where sufficient roadway width is available and bi-directional traffic setups with police directing traffic where there is insufficient roadway width to accommodate all travel lanes. Minimum travel lane widths of 11 feet will be proposed at all times.

Proposed traffic mitigation to limit impacts to traffic include restricting work during peak hours; limiting work area/length during a typical workday to ensure that the Contractor is able to begin and complete a segment of roadway work such that normal traffic operation can be restored at the end of each workday; and use police control at signalized intersections, as needed. Access to all residences, businesses, pedestrian routes and DPW will be maintained during construction. Although, abutters will be notified in advance should access to their property need to be restricted temporarily.

RIGHT OF WAY

The City of Springfield is responsible for all Right-of-Way (ROW) acquisition. Temporary construction easements will be required from abutting properties. The temporary construction easements are required for matching the proposed work to existing conditions and to allow the Contractor onto abutting properties to facilitate construction. There are three ROW acquisitions to accommodate the proposed design.

PROJECT COST

The total preliminary construction cost estimate for the project is approximately \$4.1 million.

PROJECT STATUS

The design plans presented here represent the 25% design level. Comments made at this public hearing will be incorporated to the maximum extent feasible in the final design documents. The project is scheduled to be advertised in 2023 and the construction duration is anticipated to last two construction seasons.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION

FEDERAL AID PROJECT

Springfield, MA
Improvements on Saint James Avenue at Tapley Street
Project File No. 608560

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

RE: Virtual Public Hearing
Improvements on Saint James Avenue at Tapley Street
CITY OF SPRINGFIELD
Project File No. 608560
Attn: Project Management

