



VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

November 4, 2021

FOR THE PROPOSED

REHABILITATION OF MOUNT AUBURN STREET (ROUTE 16)

Project No. 607777

IN THE TOWN OF WATERTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS

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

**JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR**

**CARRIE E. LAVALLEE, PE
ACTING CHIEF ENGINEER**

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION
NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING MEETING
Project File No. 607777

A Live Virtual Design Public Hearing will be hosted on the MassDOT website below to present the design for the proposed Rehabilitation of Mt. Auburn Street (Route 16) project in **Watertown, MA**.

WHEN: 6:30 pm, Thursday, November 4, 2021

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed Rehabilitation of Mt. Auburn Street (Route 16) 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 includes the reconstruction of Mt. Auburn Street from the Cambridge City Line to the intersection with Summer Street, just east of Watertown Square, approximately 9,300 feet. The project involves the alteration of roadway geometry including the implementation of a road diet. Safety improvements, bicycle accommodations including on-street buffered and non-buffered bicycle lanes, bus/bicycle lanes, and shared lanes (sharrows), as space permits have been provided in accordance with applicable design guides. Improvements also include the reconstruction of existing traffic signals, ADA compliant pedestrian facilities (sidewalks, pedestrian curb ramps), and modernization of bus stops in accordance with MBTA guidelines.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The **Town of Watertown** 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. Lavalley, P.E., Acting 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. **607777**. 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 is posted to 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 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 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. LAVALLEY, P.E.
ACTING 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.
Acting 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.



PREPARED FOR:



TITLE:

REHABILITATION OF MOUNT AUBURN STREET (ROUTE 16)

PROJECT LOCUS MAP

DATE:

11-04-2021

SCALE:

1" = 1000'

SHEET

PREPARED BY:

WORLDTECH
ENGINEERING

300 TRADE CENTER, SUITE 5580
WOBURN, MASSACHUSETTS 01801
PHONE: 781.933.4800

1 of 1

PROJECT PURPOSE

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) – Highway Division proposes roadway rehabilitation and traffic signal improvements on Mount Auburn Street, in the Town of Watertown. The purpose of the project is to improve roadway infrastructure, traffic operations, and safety for passenger vehicles, bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users.

PROJECT LOCATION AND EXISTING CONDITIONS

Mount Auburn Street traverses Watertown in a general east-west direction providing access to Route 2 and Route 3 to the east; and Interstate 90, Route 20, and Arsenal Street to the west. It has seven signalized intersections and dozens of minor side streets with stop sign control and is a four-lane, urban principal arterial roadway providing two travel lanes per direction separated by a double-yellow centerline. Additional turning lanes are provided at the intersection with Arlington Street. Sidewalks are provided along both sides of Mount Auburn Street and parking is permitted along the south side of Mount Auburn Street, except at bus stop locations. Land use along Mount Auburn Street consists of residential and commercial uses. The Hosmer Elementary School is located along eastbound side the corridor, between Boylston Street and School Street.

SCOPE OF WORK

The project involves the rehabilitation of pavement and sidewalk along Mount Auburn Street, incorporating bike lanes throughout the corridor with the inclusion of a painted buffer(s) as space permits. In the eastbound direction of Mount Auburn Street, the cross section would consist of an 11-foot travel lane, a 9-foot double buffered bicycle lane and an 8-foot parking lane. In the Westbound direction, a 7-foot buffered bicycle lane and 11-foot travel lane would be proposed. The bicycle lane for the most part would be constructed to be 5-feet wide with 2-foot striped buffer(s). Along the corridor, cement concrete sidewalks will be constructed to include ADA-complaint wheelchair ramps with curb extensions, where applicable, to shorten crosswalks adjacent to parking lanes. Existing vertical granite curb will be removed and reset along the corridor and new granite curb will be used at intersections based on the changes in curb radii. Drainage improvements, including new catch basins, manholes, and reinforced concrete pipe will be added throughout the project corridor.

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 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 shoulder 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.

There may be a limited time in which portions of the roadway(s) may require a full closure. Under this circumstance, a temporary detour would be established with advanced warning signs. Closures would be carefully coordinated to take place during off-peak hours. Detour routes would be approved at the Town level and advanced notice would be provided to the impacted areas.

RIGHT-OF-WAY

The majority of the roadway improvements can be accommodated within the existing Town Layout, as the work will occur within the footprint of the existing streets involved as part of this project.

Temporary easements may be required along the existing back of sidewalk to re-grade abutting driveways and walkways, construction of the proposed sidewalk, installation of tree protection measures, and placement of loam and seed in areas of landscape disturbance. A limited number of permanent easements are required for sidewalk / pedestrian curb ramp encroachments and utility pole relocations.

The Town of Watertown is responsible for all necessary Right-of-Way acquisitions and / or easements.

PROJECT STATUS

The plans available are 25% complete (Preliminary Design Stage). The next step will be to review the comments that we receive and make appropriate revisions. Following the revisions, the next step will be to develop Final Plans, Specifications, and Estimate (PS&E), after which the project will be advertised for construction. The construction for this project is tentatively set to begin in the fall of 2023.

PROJECT COSTS

The total construction cost at the 25% Design stage is currently estimated to be approximately \$24,000,000.00.

Address: _____

Please Fold and Tape



Please Place
Appropriate
Postage Here

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

RE: Virtual Public Hearing
REHABILITATION OF MOUNT AUBURN STREET (ROUTE 16)
WATERTOWN, MA
Project File No. 607777
Attn: Roadway Project Management Section

