



VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

JANUARY 4, 2021

FOR THE PROPOSED

**Rehabilitation of Boston Road
Project No. 609035
Project Management**

IN THE TOWN OF WESTFORD, 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. 609035

A Virtual Design Public Hearing will be published on the MassDOT website below to present the design for the proposed Rehabilitation of Boston Road project in **Westford, MA**.

WHEN: Monday, January 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 Boston Road 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 improvements along a 1.05-mile section of Boston Road from Main Street (Westford Town Center) to the Interstate 495 Southbound Off-Ramp within the Town of Westford. The improvements include redefining the cross-section to include a 5-foot bicycle lane and 11-foot travel lane in each direction through the project limits. The improvements also include the construction of sidewalks with vertical granite curbing along the easterly side of Boston Road from Main Street to the I-495 SB ramps and along the westerly side of Boston Road from Blakes Hill Road to the I-495 SB ramps; construction of ADA/AAB-compliant wheelchair ramps at corridor intersections; modifying traffic signal timings/phasing/infrastructure at the Boston Road intersection with the I-495 SB ramps; reconstruction of the existing storm drain infrastructure; water line replacement; full depth pavement reclaim throughout the corridor; new pavement markings and signs; and accessible pedestrian signals. Bicycle accommodations consisting of a 5' bicycle lane have been provided in accordance with applicable design guides.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The Town and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands. MassDOT'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. 609035**. 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 ISSUES

A secure Right of Way is required for this project. If your property, or a portion of it, must be acquired by the State or Municipality for highway purposes in the interest of all people of the Commonwealth, your rights are fully protected under the law. Procedures are different depending on whether the State or Municipality is making the acquisitions. Briefly, here are some of the answers to questions you might ask.

State Acquisitions

1. WHO CONTACTS ME?

Representatives of the Right of Way Bureau of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's Highway Division. They will explain the impacts and your rights as protected under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 79.

2. WHAT IS A FAIR PRICE FOR MY PROPERTY?

Every offer is made to ensure that an equitable value is awarded to you for the property, or to appraise the "damage" to the property as a result of the acquisition. MassDOT appraisers, independent appraisers, MassDOT "Review Appraisers" and a Real Estate Appraisal Review Board may all contribute in arriving at an award of damages. The State also pays a proportionate part of the real estate tax for the current year for fee takings, and interest from the date the property is acquired to the payment date, on all impacts.

3. MUST I ACCEPT THE DEPARTMENT'S OFFER?

No. If, after the figure established as market value has been offered to the owner, the owner feels he or she is not being offered a fair price, he or she has the right, within three years, to appeal to the courts. Pending a court decision, he or she can be paid on a "pro-tanto" basis (or "for the time being") that in no way prejudices the court appeal.

MassDOT also provides for dispute resolution through the administrative settlement process. You can initiate this by providing documentation and information relative to the value of your property, including but not limited to, an appraisal for our review. If resolution cannot be reached through the administrative settlement process, you can still bring a claim in court for additional monies at any time during the three-year period.

Municipal Acquisitions

1. REASON FOR PROJECT?

The construction of this project will serve the needs of local users as well as those of the greater surrounding communities. The proposed enhancement has been designed to service 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 process and procedures used in acquiring any necessary rights required for the proposed project.

3. APPRAISALS, DONATIONS, RIGHTS OF ENTRY?

Impacted Property owners are entitled to an appraisal and Just Compensation, however, municipalities will often seek donations of parcels as 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 temporary 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, etc.

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

When donations or Rights of Entry 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 and review 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 (Just compensation), for the rights to be acquired.

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 from the date of the recording of the acquired parcel(s). 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" = 1000'

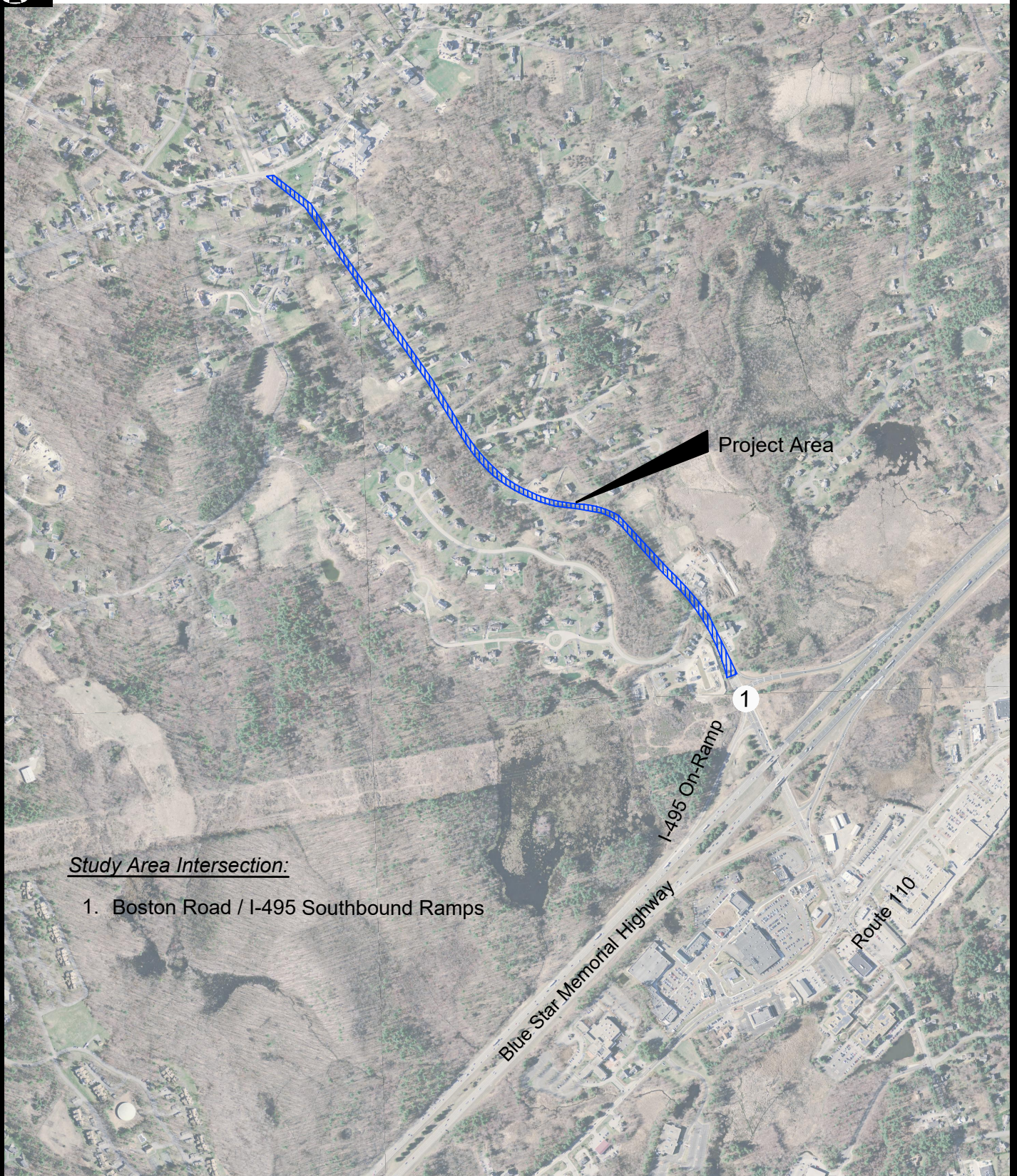


Figure 1

Project Location Map &
Study Area Intersection

Rehabilitation of Boston Road **Westford, Massachusetts**

Project Location

The proposed improvements extend approximately 1 mile along Boston Road from the intersection with Main Street to the intersection with the I-495 Southbound off-ramp.

Project Purpose

The purpose of the project is to upgrade the aging infrastructure and introduce pedestrian and bicycle accommodations throughout the corridor.

Proposed Improvements

The following improvements are proposed:

- Full depth reconstruction of the roadway
- Upgrade signs and pavement markings
- Stripe 5-foot-wide shoulders for bicycle use on the roadway
- Construct an asphalt sidewalk along the east side of Boston Road
- Construct ADA compliant pedestrian curb ramps
- Install granite curbing along both sides of the roadway
- Install a new drainage system for stormwater
- Install a new water main
- Upgrade the pedestrian signal equipment at the I-495 Southbound off ramp intersection with Boston Road
- Improve Crown Road slope at the intersection with Boston Road and improve sight lines at this intersection.
- Install guardrails as necessary
- Relocate utility poles as necessary

Traffic Management

During construction operations, roadways within the project area will remain open to vehicular traffic. Lane shifts will be implemented where possible to keep two lanes open around the construction operations. Travel lanes will be reduced to one lane at off-peak traffic periods for alternating traffic. Every effort will be made to minimize inconvenience to the travelling public and abutting residents and businesses during construction. Pedestrian and vehicular access to abutting properties will be maintained throughout construction.

Right of Way Impacts

Temporary construction easements will be required for grading impacts to lawns, driveways, and walkways and to restore impacts to adjacent properties. Permanent easements will be required to

accommodate the new sidewalk in some locations and for utility pole relocations and overhead utility wires. The Town and the MassDOT Right of Way Bureau share the responsibility for acquiring all necessary rights in private and public lands for the design, construction, and implementation of this project. MassDOT's policy concerning land acquisition will be discussed at this hearing. The responsible party for acquiring property depends on the location of the property along the corridor, as half of Boston Road is Town-owned and half is State-owned.

Project Cost

The current estimate of the total construction cost of this project is approximately \$9 Million.

Project Schedule

The project being presented is at the 25% design stage. Design, permitting and right of way acquisition is anticipated to complete by the Winter of 2022-2023. The earliest that Construction is anticipated to begin is in the Fall of 2024, but the start date is dependent on availability of funding through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) programmed by the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments regional planning agency.

Address: _____

Please Fold and Tape



Please Place
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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
Rehabilitation of Boston Road
WESTFORD
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