



VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

6:30PM on March, 6th, 2025

FOR THE PROPOSED

**Resurfacing and Related work on Route 20
Project No.608489
Major Projects**

IN THE CITY WILBRAHAM, 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: Wilbraham – Resurfacing and Related Work on Route 20

Project File No. 608489

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

WHEN: 6:30 PM, Thursday, March 6th, 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 seeks to improve the safety and function of Route 20 within the project area. This will be accomplished by improving the roadway pavement condition, improving intersection capacity and safety, and complying with our Healthy Transportation directives, which aim to increase bicycling, transit and walking options through the inclusion of wide shoulders, bike lanes and sidewalks.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. 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.

Project inquiries, written statements and other exhibits regarding the proposed undertaking may be submitted to Carrie E. Lavalley, P.E., Chief Engineer, via e-mail to massdotmajorprojects@dot.state.ma.us or via US Mail to Suite 7210, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Major Projects, Project File No. 608489. Statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the hearing transcript must be emailed or postmarked no later than ten (10) business 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 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

The State is responsible for securing the Right of Way for this project. If your property, or a portion of it, must be acquired by the State 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. 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.

4. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MY HOUSE?

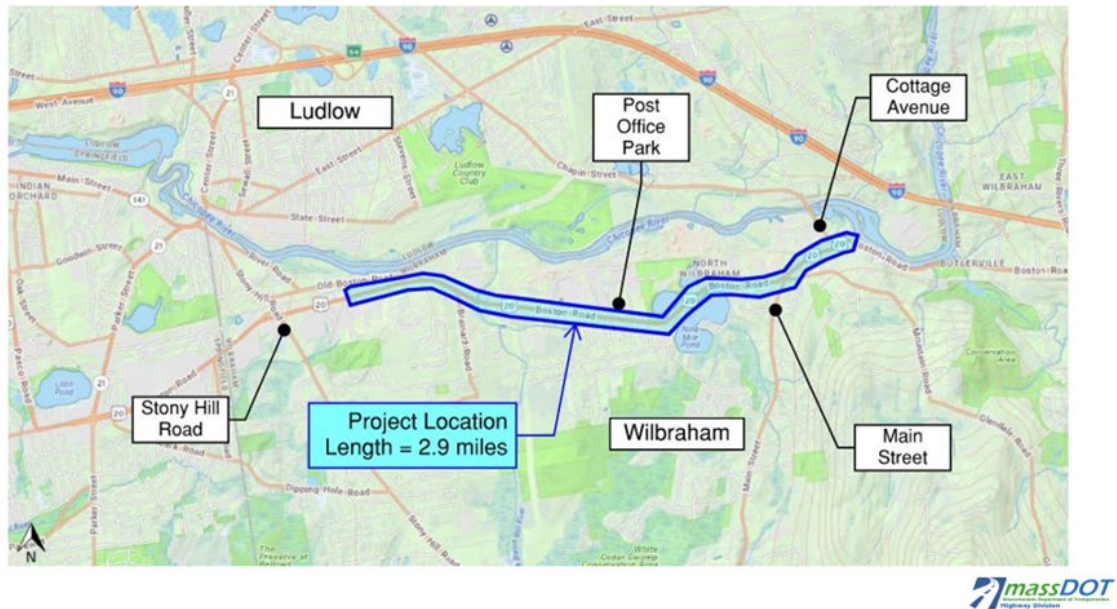
The owner will have the opportunity to buy back his or her house, provided he or she has a location to which it can be moved, and the proper permits for its removal. If the owner does not wish to repurchase, the house will be advertised for bids. The highest bidder, who must also have a location and permits for removal, will be awarded the house. Otherwise, the structure will be slated for demolition.

5. WHAT HAPPENS IF I MUST RELOCATE?

In addition to the market value of the property, the Department pays certain relocation benefits for both owners and tenants of acquired residences and businesses who meet eligibility requirements. Assistance in relocation is also provided. Department brochures are available for details on these benefits.

PROJECT LOCUS MAP

Project Location



Introduction

Route 20 (Boston Road) is an urban principal arterial and an NHS roadway. The western project limit is at the intersection with the eastern right-in/right-out Big Y driveway and runs easterly for approximately 2.89 miles along Route 20 just east of the intersection with Cottage Avenue.

Project Purpose

The purpose of this project is to improve the safety and function of Route 20 within the project area. It is proposed to accomplish this by improving the roadway pavement condition by milling and repaving, improving intersection capacity and safety and complying with the Healthy Transportation Policy (P-13-0001) which aims to increase bicycling, transit and walking options through the inclusion of wide shoulders, bike lanes and sidewalks.

This project is considered a 3R project, and the intent is to retain the existing horizontal and vertical roadway geometry as practical. The project scope includes drainage, landscaping, installation of sidewalks, wide shoulders for use as bicycle lanes, granite curbing, and associated roadway work including various pavement rehabilitation treatments such as standard overlay and full depth reconstruction.

Project Need

The roadway pavement surface within the project limits is in poor to fair condition over much of its entire length and needs rehabilitation. Limited areas along the corridor have existing sidewalks. These are ad-hoc in their locations and are typically associated with more recent developments and improvements. This results in gaps in the existing sidewalk network and poor connectivity for pedestrians seeking to walk to the many shopping and service destinations along the corridor. There are no bicycle facilities within the project area and there are several intersections that experience poor operations with significant delays.

The Route 20 intersection with Main and Maple Streets was ranked as the 10th highest congested intersection in the Pioneer Valley. A non-standard design currently exists with Main Street and Maple Street both intersecting with Route 20 before meeting at a crossroad intersection immediately adjacent to Route 20. This crossroad is a 3-way stop sign controlled intersection with the eastbound Maple Street leg having priority. The Route 20 link between Main Street and Cottage Avenue is commonly used for easy access to Ludlow, Amherst and Belchertown and is identified as moderately congested in the Pioneer Valley Transportation Plan. The scope of this project includes the consideration of intersection improvements at Cottage Avenue and Main Street / Maple Street.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: Why does this project need to happen?

A: Route 20 in Wilbraham has been identified by MassDOT as an area in need of pavement improvements and resurfacing. That is why the primary goal of this project is to provide a pavement surface that will last many years.

Q: Why are we not providing a signal at each intersection?

A: Traffic signals are not proposed at other driveways and intersections along the project corridor. First an intersection must meet certain signal warrants, or requirements set forth in the Manual for Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). Visit [Chapter 4C - MUTCD 2009 Edition - FHWA](#) for more information regarding traffic signal warrants.

Q: Why can't you change the speed limit?

A: Generally, changing speed limit signs is not as effective as the physical changes to the road are at reducing vehicle speeds. Additionally, speed limit reductions must comply with state law. Visit mass.gov/massdot-speed-zoning for more information regarding the speed management process.

Q: How long will construction take?

A: It is anticipated that the project will be built in three construction seasons, with the first construction season primarily being utility and drainage work.

Q: Are detours anticipated?

A: The construction staging is still being refined and developed in more detail. At this time, we do not anticipate significant detours will be required.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION

FEDERAL AID PROJECT

Wilbraham, MA
Resurfacing and Related work on Route 20
Project File No. 608489

This sheet is provided for your comments. Your input is solicited and appreciated. You may e-mail comments directly to massdotmajorprojects@dot.state.ma.us or you may mail this sheet with any additional comments to:

Carrie E. Lavalley, P.E., Chief Engineer
MassDOT – Highway Division
10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116-3973
Attn: Major Projects

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
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