



VIRTUAL DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

January 26, 2022

FOR THE PROPOSED

CONSTRUCTION OF I-495 / ROUTE 1A RAMPS

Project No. 603739

MassDOT Project Management Section

IN THE TOWN OF WRENTHAM, MASSACHUSETTS

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

**JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR**

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

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION
NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING
Project File No. 603739

A Live Virtual Design Public Hearing will be hosted on the MassDOT website below to present the design for the proposed of Route I-495/Route-1A Ramps Reconstruction project in **Wrentham, MA**.

WHEN: 6:30 PM, Wednesday, January 26, 2022

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed Route I-495/Route-1A Ramps Reconstruction project. All views and comments submitted in response to the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: The purpose of this project is to improve traffic safety and operation of Route 1A (in the area of Route I-495), including I-495 Southbound (SB) off/on ramps. The project consists of construction of a new slip ramp (from Route-1A NB to Route-I-495 SB) and milling and repaving of the existing pavement. Pedestrian and bicycle accommodations consisting of 10-foot-wide paved, shared-use-paths are provided along both sides of Route 1A 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 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. Lavallee, 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. 603739**. 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 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. LAVALLEE, 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.

TO SAFEGUARD THE PROPERTY OWNER

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?

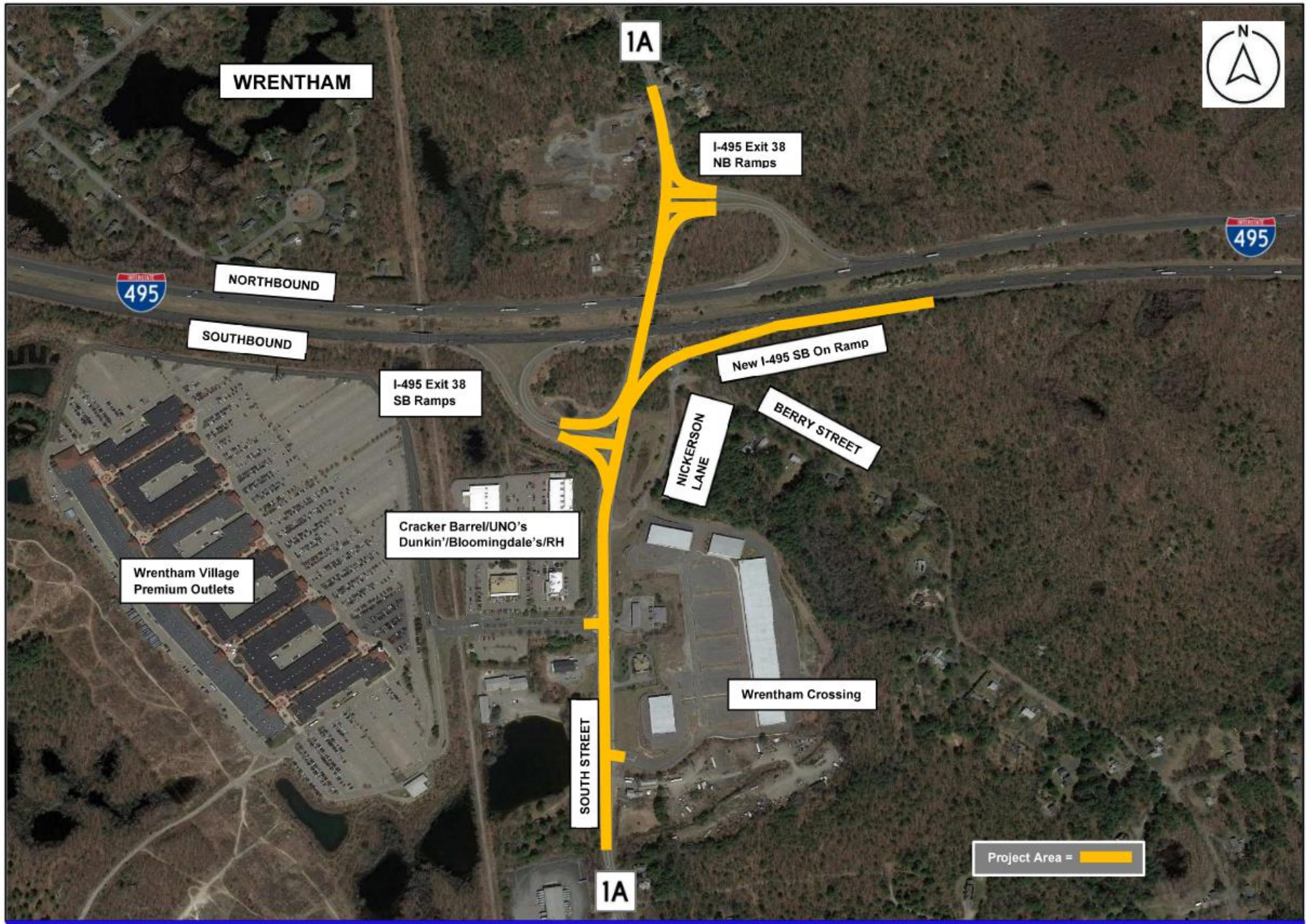
No. If, after the figure established as market value has been offered to the owner, the owner feels he or she is not being offered a fair price, he or she has the right, within three years, to appeal to the courts. Pending a court decision, he or she can be paid on a "pro-tanto" basis (or "for the time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



CONSTRUCTION OF I-495 / ROUTE 1A RAMPS (603739)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Project Location and Existing Conditions:

Route 1A is the main north-south route connecting Wrentham and Plainville to I-495 at Exit 38 (Old Exit 15). The project alignment is about 3/4 mile long, from just south of the Route 1A / Wrentham Crossing signalized intersection to just north of the Route 1A / I-495 Northbound Ramps signalized intersection. Throughout the project area, the speed limit along Route 1A is 40 miles per hour. In the vicinity of Exit 38, I-495, the posted speed limit along I-495 NB and SB is 65 mph.

Route 1A has two travel lanes in each direction, with additional turn lane(s) at the intersections. The travel lanes are typically 11 feet in width. Paved shoulders vary in width from 2 feet to 8 feet. There are currently traffic signals at the intersections of Route 1A/Wrentham Crossing, Route 1A/Premium Outlets Boulevard, and Route 1A/I-495 Southbound and Northbound Ramps.

Traffic visiting the Wrentham Village Premium Outlets causes extensive congestion on peak shopping days and weekends. The congestion can cause vehicle queues to extend back onto the shoulders of I-495, causing a significant safety risk. The intersection of Premium Outlets Boulevard and Route 1A requires traffic monitoring and manual control by the local police to reduce congestion. The congestion also makes it difficult for emergency response vehicles to get through the area, and it is an inconvenience for local traffic.

The signalized intersections at Premium Outlets Boulevard, I-495 SB Ramps, and I-495 NB Ramps have higher crash rates compared to the average crash rates for either the entire State or MassDOT District 5.

There are no existing sidewalks, bike lanes, or other type of facility to support bicycles and pedestrians along Route 1A. None of the traffic signals have crosswalks or pedestrian signals.

Project Purpose:

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) – Highway Department proposes to construct improvements along Route 1A in the vicinity of the I-495 Exit 38 interchange. The purpose of the project is to:

1. Improve safety on I-495 by eliminating vehicle back-ups onto the highway.
2. Improve safety along Route 1A at the signalized intersections by reducing the number of conflicting turning movements.
3. Reduce congestion along Route 1A in the Exit 38 interchange area.
4. Provide safe and continuous accommodations for pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the project area.

Proposed Project:

Route 1A will be milled and overlaid with hot mix asphalt. The travel lanes will be 11 feet wide, and shoulders will be 5 feet wide. The right turns from Route 1A South onto Premium Outlets Boulevard and from I-495 SB Exit Ramp onto Route 1A South shall be widened to two lanes. Route 1A South shall be widened to include a new lane between those two intersections. Widening for Route 1A South is also proposed at the I-495 NB Ramp intersection to provide an exclusive left turn lane onto the I-495 NB Entrance Ramp. New stormwater drainage systems are part of the work. The four existing traffic signals will be replaced with new signals.

A new entrance ramp to I-495 Southbound from Route 1A North shall be constructed. A right turn lane will be added to Route 1A north of Nickerson Lane and through the signal for the new ramp. The existing left turn from Route 1A North onto the existing ramp will be discontinued.

A 10-foot-wide side path shall be constructed on each side of Route 1A for pedestrians and bicyclists. Crosswalks and pedestrian signals are included at each traffic signal. New retaining walls are proposed at (and below) the I-495 overpasses to support the side paths at/along the bridge abutments.

Maintenance of Traffic During Construction:

The Contractor will be required to coordinate with MassDOT and Town Officials regarding work hours and changes to traffic patterns. Access to all business and driveways will be maintained at all times. Detour routes are not currently anticipated for this project.

Although there will be some impacts to the Route 1A NB and I-495 SB traffic during construction of the new I-495 SB entrance ramp, most of this work will be done off road. Daily lane closures during off peak hours may be needed for work along the existing roadway/highway.

Construction activities within the existing Route 1A pavement footprint can be constructed with daily lane closures while maintaining at least one lane of traffic in each direction. Work beyond the existing pavement can be constructed using shoulder closures. Improvements at intersections will require lane and/or corner closures.

Project Schedule:

The design reviewed at this meeting is at the 25% stage (~preliminary design) of completion. Comments made at this design hearing will be considered to the extent feasible in the 75% design currently scheduled for mid-2022. Final design is scheduled to be completed in 2023. The public bidding advertisement is currently planned for Spring/Summer 2024.

Project Cost:

The (current) estimated total construction costs is approximately \$15 million from which 80% will be funded by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the remaining 20% will be funded by Commonwealth of Massachusetts (MassDOT).

Address: _____

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

RE: Virtual Public Hearing
CONSTRUCTION OF I-495 / ROUTE 1A RAMPS
WRENTHAM
Project File No. 603739
Attn: Project Management

