

Environmental Justice Screening Form

Project Name	Route 101 South Roadway Rehabilitation Project, Ashburnham, MA
Anticipated Date of MEPA Filing	August 2026
Proponent Name	Town of Ashburnham, Massachusetts Department of Transportation – Highway Division
Contact Information (e.g., consultant)	Weston & Sampson Engineers - Rhianna Sommers, sommers.rhianna@wseinc.com
Public website for project or other physical location where project materials can be obtained (if available)	https://www.mass.gov/event/ashburnham-reconstruction-of-route-101-south-from-the-ashburnhamgardner-town-line-east-to-the-intersection-of-corey-hill-roadwilliams-road-2023-09-14t183000-0400-2023-09-14t203000-0400#:~:text=The%20proposed%20project%20consists%20of,Corey%20Hill%20Road%2FWilliams%20Road.
Municipality and Zip Code for Project (if known)	Ashburnham, MA 01430
Project Type* (list all that apply)	Transportation – Roadways
Is the project site within a mapped 100-year FEMA flood plain? Y/N/unknown	Yes
Estimated GHG emissions of conditioned spaces (click here for GHG Estimation tool)	N/A – no conditioned spaces

Project Description

1. Provide a brief project description, including overall size of the project site and square footage of proposed buildings and structures if known. The proposed Route 101 South Roadway Rehabilitation Project involves roadway improvements along a 2.1-mile stretch of Route 101 in Ashburnham between the Ashburnham/Gardner town line and Corey Hill Road (see attached Figure 1 – USGS Locus Map). The project includes full-depth reclamation and variable widening of the existing roadway to accommodate two 11-foot travel lanes and two 5-foot bicycle lane/shoulders. A 10-foot-wide, 2,675-foot-long shared use path and an 885-foot-long sidewalk are proposed to enhance pedestrian accommodations through the former village area.
2. List anticipated MEPA review thresholds (301 CMR 11.03) (if known) • 301 CMR 11.03(6)(b)(1)b. widening of an existing roadway by four or more feet for one-half or more miles, excluding widening to add bicycle or pedestrian accommodations. • 301 CMR 11.03(6)(b)(2)b. cut five or more living public shade trees of 14 or more inches in diameter at breast height. • 301 CMR 11.03(3)(b)1e. New fill or structure or Expansion of existing fill or structure, except a pile- supported structure, in a velocity zone or regulatory floodway • 301 CMR 11.03(3)(b)1f. Alteration of ½ or more acres of any other wetlands.

3. List all anticipated state, local and federal permits needed for the project (if known)

- NEPA Categorical Exclusion
- MEPA EENF/EIR
- MHC Project Notification Form
- Notice of Intent (Ashburnham Conservation Commission)
- USACE Pre-Construction Notification (PCN)

4. Identify EJ populations and characteristics (Minority, Income, English Isolation) within 5 miles of project site (can attach map identifying 5-mile radius from [EJ Maps Viewer](#) in lieu of narrative)

Please see attached Figure 2, which depicts the EJ populations located within 1 and 5 miles of the project site.

There are 2 EJ communities located within 1 mile of the project site. These EJ communities include: Block Group 1, Census Tract 7075 (EJ Criteria: Income) and Block Group 2, Census Tract 7075 (EJ Criteria: Minority).

There are an additional 10 EJ communities located within 5 miles of the project site (total of 12 communities within 5 miles), which include:

- Block Group 1, Census Tract 7073, Worcester County, Massachusetts, Gardner, EJ Criteria: Income
- Block Group 2, Census Tract 7073, Worcester County, Massachusetts, Gardner, EJ Criteria: Income
- Block Group 1, Census Tract 7103, Worcester County, Massachusetts, Fitchburg, EJ Criteria: Minority
- Block Group 1, Census Tract 7071, Worcester County, Massachusetts, Gardner, EJ Criteria: Minority and Income
- Block Group 2, Census Tract 7071, Worcester County, Massachusetts, Gardner, EJ Criteria: Income
- Block Group 1, Census Tract 7072, Worcester County, Massachusetts, Gardner, EJ Criteria: Income
- Block Group 2, Census Tract 7072, Worcester County, Massachusetts, Gardner, EJ Criteria: Income
- Block Group 3, Census Tract 7073, Worcester County, Massachusetts, Gardner, EJ Criteria: Income
- Block Group 2, Census Tract 7074, Worcester County, Massachusetts, Gardner, EJ Criteria: Income
- Block Group 1, Census Tract 7075, Worcester County, Massachusetts, Gardner, EJ Criteria: Income
- Block Group 2, Census Tract 7075, Worcester County, Massachusetts, Gardner, EJ Criteria: Minority
- Block Group 2, Census Tract 7103, Worcester County, Massachusetts, Fitchburg, EJ Criteria: Minority

Within 5 miles of the project site, there are no additional languages spoken by greater than 5% of the population other than English, according to the Languages Spoken in Massachusetts tab of the Environmental Justice Populations in Massachusetts tool (please see attached Figure 3).

5. Identify any municipality or census tract meeting the definition of “vulnerable health EJ criteria” in the [DPH EJ Tool](#) located in whole or in part within a 1 mile radius of the project site.

Several municipalities and census tracts within 1 mile of the project site meet one or more “vulnerable health EJ criteria” as defined by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) EJ Tool. At the municipal level, the City of Gardner exceeds the statewide thresholds for heart attack hospitalization, childhood asthma emergency department visits, elevated childhood blood lead prevalence, and low birth weight. The Town of Ashburnham also exceeds the statewide thresholds for elevated childhood blood lead prevalence and low birth weight.

At the census tract level, Census Tract 25027707500 (Gardner) exceeds thresholds for both elevated childhood blood lead prevalence and low birth weight. Census Tract 25027700100 (Gardner) also exceeds thresholds for these same two criteria.

6. Identify potential short-term and long-term environmental and public health impacts that may affect EJ Populations and any anticipated mitigation.

The project is not expected to result in any long-term environmental or public health impacts to Environmental Justice (EJ) populations. It will not generate new traffic volumes or increase vehicular emissions compared to existing conditions. Additionally, existing environmental and health burdens identified by the DPH EJ Tool—such as elevated rates of childhood asthma, blood lead levels, and low birth weight—will not be worsened as a result of project activities.

Short-term construction-related impacts may include localized increases in noise and construction vehicle traffic. These impacts will be temporary and limited to the active construction period. Standard construction best management practices (BMPs), including erosion and sedimentation controls, noise mitigation, and dust suppression, will be implemented to minimize these effects.

With these planned mitigation measures in place, no disproportionate adverse effects to EJ populations are anticipated. On the contrary, the project is expected to improve public health and safety outcomes over time by enhancing pedestrian and bicycle access, addressing existing drainage issues that contribute to localized flooding, and reducing erosion-related sedimentation.

7. Identify project benefits, including “Environmental Benefits” as defined in 301 CMR 11.02, that may improve environmental conditions or public health of the EJ population.

The project will provide several benefits that support improved public health, safety, and environmental conditions for all residents, including those in nearby EJ communities. These benefits include improving roadway safety through the provision of a consistent cross-section and minimum shoulder widths, expanding and upgrading pedestrian facilities, and adding bicycle accommodations throughout the corridor. The project also includes construction of a new 10-foot-wide shared use path, enhancing non-motorized transportation and recreational opportunities for local residents.

By improving multi-modal access and reducing the risks associated with poor drainage and roadway flooding, the project is expected to provide direct environmental and public health benefits.

8. Describe how the community can request a meeting to discuss the project, and how the community can request oral language interpretation services at the meeting. Specify how to request other accommodations, including meetings after business hours and at locations near public transportation.

Please reach out to Rhianna Sommers from Weston & Sampson at sommers.rhianna@wseinc.com if you would like to request a meeting to discuss the project or request oral language interpretation services.

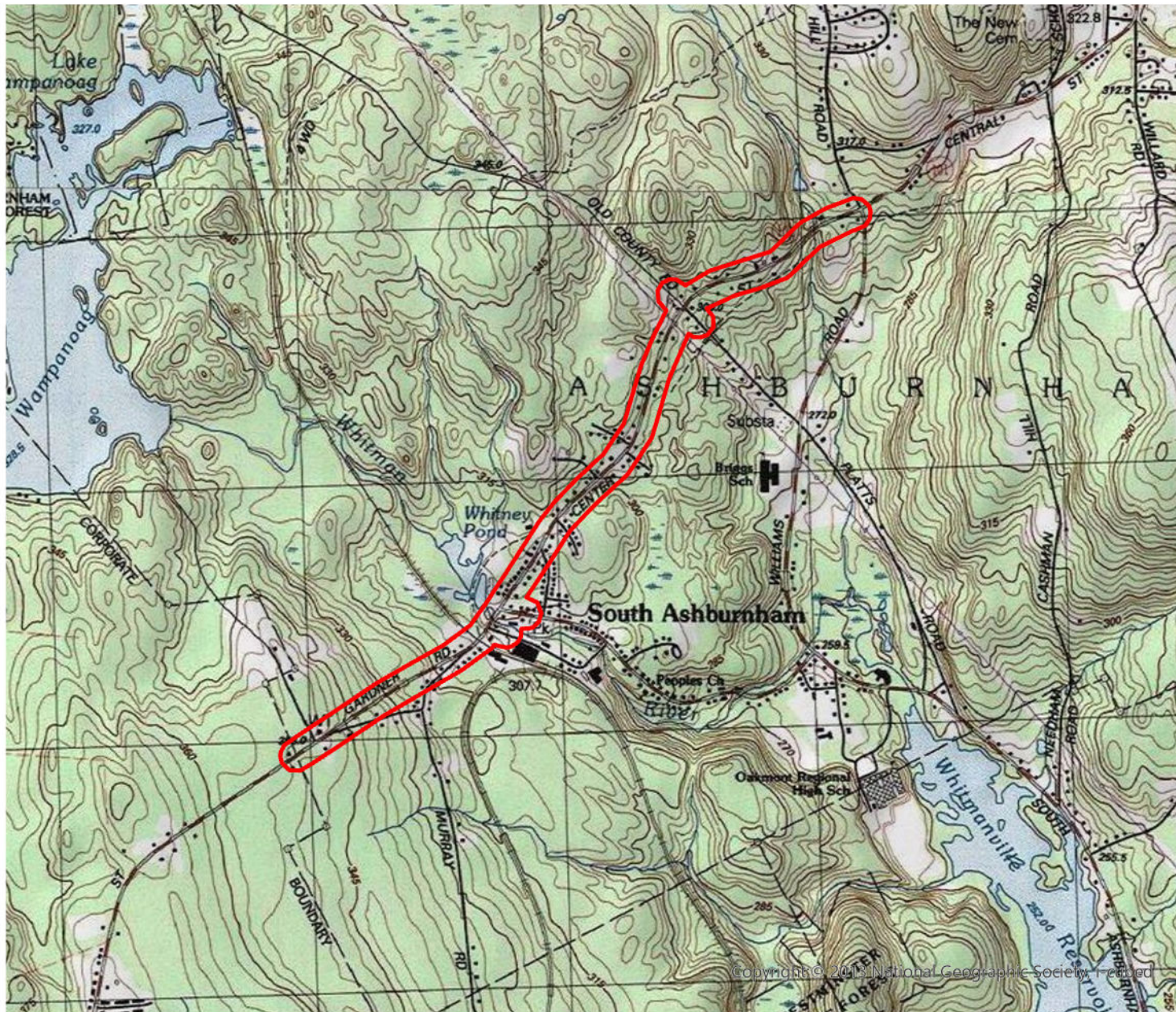


FIGURE 2

