

MEMORANDUM

TO: Jonathan Freeman, E.I.T.
Project Manager
MassDOT

DATE: 7/14/2023

FROM: Tom Quinlan, P.E.

PROJECT NO.: T0713

RE: Westford, MA – Reconstruction of Boston Road – MassDOT Project No. 609035
Article 97 – Public Lands Preservation Act (PLPA) – Environmental Justice Analysis

The Town of Westford, in conjunction with Massachusetts Department of Transportation – Highway Division (MassDOT), is proposing vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian safety improvements along Boston Road from Main Street to the on-ramps to Interstate 495 Southbound. In addition to improving safety for all users within the project area, there are proposed utility upgrades to the existing water and drainage systems. Additional improvements include pavement resurfacing, full-depth roadway reconstruction and widening, flush traffic calming medians, sidewalk construction, granite curb, new pavement markings and signing.

Two properties within the project limits are subject to Article 97 action:

1. An Agricultural Preservation Restriction (APR) has been placed on the deed for 66-68 Boston Road (Deed Book 29812, Page 168). Unavoidable impacts along the frontage to 66-68 Boston Road in conjunction with the project result in a proposed layout alteration and taking to accommodate the sidewalk, a permanent easement to accommodate guardrail and overhead utilities, and a permanent easement to accommodate a utility pole, guy wire and overhead utilities. A number of temporary easements are also required to facilitate construction. These parcels will be acquired by MassDOT.
2. A Conservation Restriction (CR) has been placed on the deed for a property on the southwest side of Boston Road, which has an unspecified address on Blake's Hill Road (Deed Book 7473, Page 318). Unavoidable impacts along the Boston Road frontage of this property in conjunction with the project result in four permanent easements to accommodate guy wires and overhead utilities. A number of temporary easements are also required to facilitate construction. These parcels will be acquired by the Town of Westford.

Under the Public Lands Preservation Act (PLPA) implementation guidelines, proponents seeking findings allowing them to provide funding in lieu of replacement land, or a combination of land and funding must demonstrate that proposed Article 97 Action will not have an adverse impact on an environmental justice population.

According to the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs' Environmental Justice Mapping Tool, there are Environmental Justice populations within 2 miles and 5 miles of the project site. However, there are no Environmental Justice populations within 1 mile of the project

site. The project is a roadway improvement project, with no added capacity, and will not adversely affect any of the population aside from the minor inconveniences during the construction phase; therefore, this project is not anticipated to violate FHWA environmental justice policies.

The following 2020 EJ populations are found within a 5-mile radius of the project site:

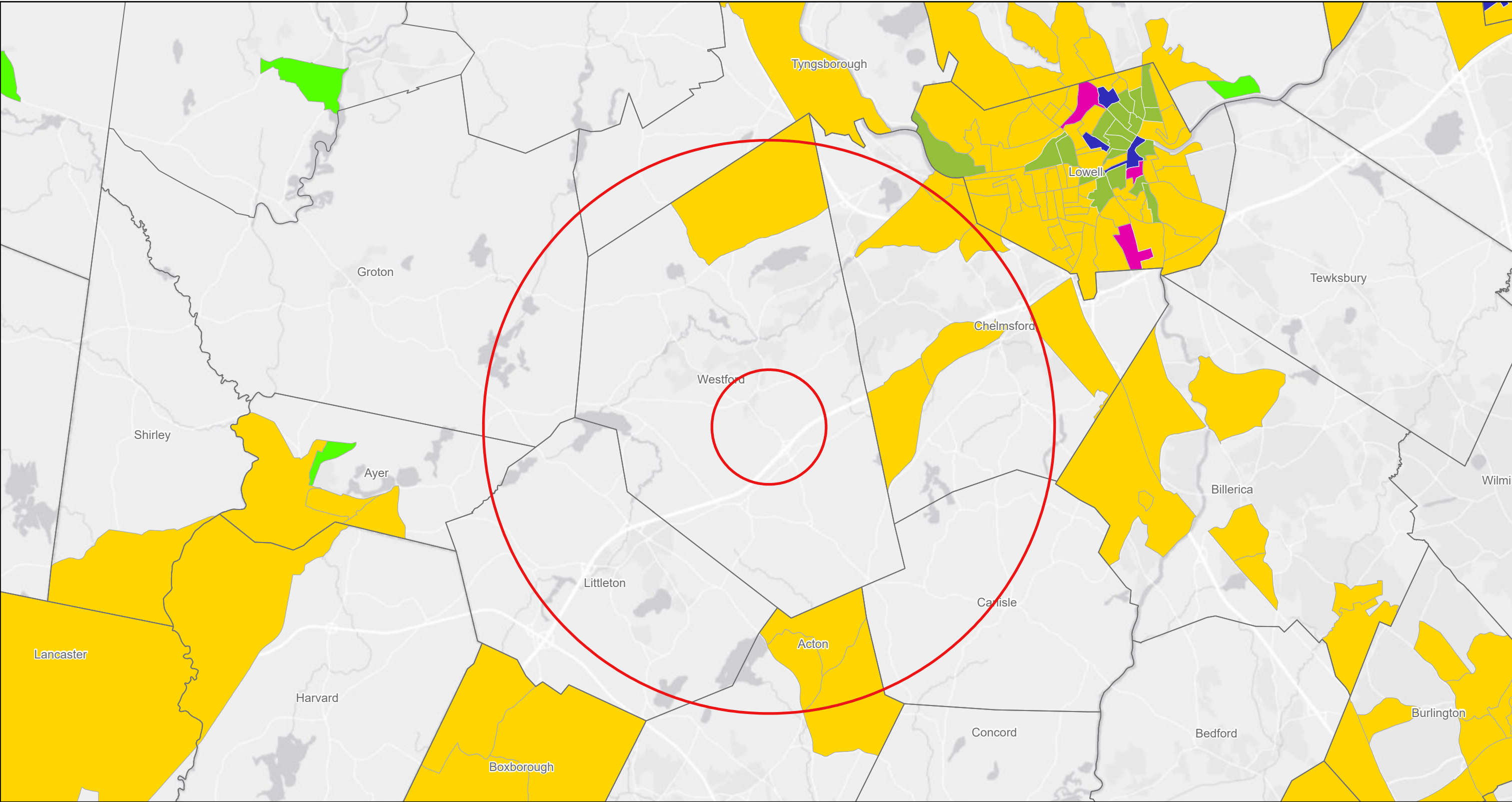
1. Block Group 2, Census Tract 3171.01, Middlesex County, Massachusetts
 - a. This 2020 blockgroup in Chelmsford is an EJ population with the criteria: Minority
 - b. EJ characteristics of the block group:
 - i. Median household income: \$81,648: this is 95% of the MA median.
 - ii. Total minority population: 28%
 - iii. Households with language isolation: 3%
 - c. This municipality has a median household income of \$116,111 which is 135% of the Massachusetts MHHI.
 - d. In 2020 this block group had a population of 1,879 in 827 households.
2. Block Group 4, Census Tract 3181, Middlesex County, Massachusetts
 - a. This 2020 blockgroup in Westford is an EJ population with the criteria: Minority
 - b. EJ characteristics of the block group:
 - i. Median household income: \$181,316: this is 211% of the MA median.
 - ii. Total minority population: 47%
 - iii. Households with language isolation: 3%
 - c. This municipality has a median household income of \$144,917 which is 169% of the Massachusetts MHHI.
 - d. In 2020 this block group had a population of 1,753 in 636 households.
3. Block Group 1, Census Tract 3631.06, Middlesex County, Massachusetts
 - a. This 2020 blockgroup in Acton is an EJ population with the criteria: Minority
 - b. EJ characteristics of the block group:
 - i. Median household income: \$105,385: this is 123% of the MA median.
 - ii. Total minority population: 48%
 - iii. Households with language isolation: 5%
 - c. This municipality has a median household income of \$141,665 which is 165% of the Massachusetts MHHI.
 - d. In 2020 this block group had a population of 2,945 in 1,198 households.
4. Block Group 2, Census Tract 3173.01, Middlesex County, Massachusetts
 - a. This 2020 blockgroup in Chelmsford is an EJ population with the criteria: Minority
 - b. EJ characteristics of the block group:
 - i. Median household income: \$73,000: this is 85% of the MA median.
 - ii. Total minority population: 40%
 - iii. Households with language isolation: 0%
 - c. This municipality has a median household income of \$116,111 which is 135% of the Massachusetts MHHI.
 - d. In 2020 this block group had a population of 571 in 228 households.

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A map from the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) online map viewer showing one (1) mile and five (5) mile radius from the project site is attached.

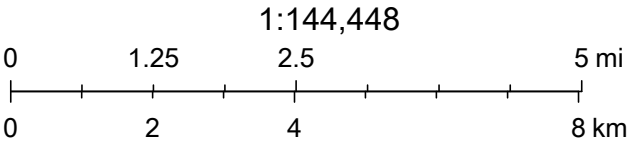
cc: J. Shrimpton, L. Fotos – MassDOT
P. Starratt – Town of Westford

2020 Environmental Justice Neighborhoods



5/2/2023, 10:08:23 AM

-  Override 1
- MA 2020 Environmental Justice Block Groups
-  Minority: the block group minority population is $\geq 40\%$, or the block group minority population is $\geq 25\%$ and the median household income of the municipality the block group is in is $< 150\%$ of the Massachusetts median household income
 -  Income: at least 25% of households have a median household income 65% or less than the state median household income
 -  Minority and Income
 -  Minority and English isolation
 -  Minority, Income and English isolation



MassGIS, Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, EPA, NPS