

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

**Executive Office of Environmental Affairs ■ MEPA Office**

**ENF**

**Environmental Notification Form**

<i>For Office Use Only</i>	
<i>Executive Office of Environmental Affairs</i>	
EOEA No.:	13504
MEPA Analyst:	Beriony Angus
Phone:	617-626-1029

The information requested on this form must be completed to begin MEPA Review in accordance with the provisions of the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act, 301 CMR 11.00.

Project Name: NORTHAMPTON – Intersection Improvements at Bridge Road and North Maple Street		
Street: Bridge Road and North Maple Street		
Municipality: Northampton	Watershed: Connecticut River Watershed	
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 18 691790E 4690648N (WGS84/NAD83)	Latitude: 42 20 40.08 N	Longitude: 72 40 17.12 W
Estimated commencement date: Spring/Summer 2005	Estimated completion date: Spring/Summer 2006	
Approximate cost: \$575,000.00	Status of project design:	75 %complete
Proponent: MassHighway Department		
Street: 10 Park Plaza		
Municipality: Boston	State: MA	Zip Code: 02116
Name of Contact Person From Whom Copies of this ENF May Be Obtained: Lori Macdonald		
Firm/Agency: MassHighway Department	Street: 10 Park Plaza	
Municipality: Boston	State: MA	Zip Code: 02116
Phone: 617-973-7764	Fax: 617-973-8879	E-mail: lori.macdonald@state.ma.

- Does this project meet or exceed a mandatory EIR threshold (see 301 CMR 11.03)?  
 Yes  No
- Has this project been filed with MEPA before?  
 Yes (EOEA No. \_\_\_\_\_)  No
- Has any project on this site been filed with MEPA before?  
 Yes (EOEA No. \_\_\_\_\_)  No
- Is this an Expanded ENF (see 301 CMR 11.05(7)) requesting:
- a Single EIR? (see 301 CMR 11.06(8))  Yes  No
  - a Special Review Procedure? (see 301CMR 11.09)  Yes  No
  - a Waiver of mandatory EIR? (see 301 CMR 11.11)  Yes  No
  - a Phase I Waiver? (see 301 CMR 11.11)  Yes  No

Identify any financial assistance or land transfer from an agency of the Commonwealth, including the agency name and the amount of funding or land area (in acres):  
80% of the construction costs will be Federally funded and 20% will be State funded.

Are you requesting coordinated review with any other federal, state, regional, or local agency?  
 Yes (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)  No

List Local or Federal Permits and Approvals: Chapter 278 of the Acts of 2004 State Legislative Approval (August 9, 2004) and Northampton City Council Approval for conversion of park land for intersection improvements

Which ENF or EIR review threshold(s) does the project meet or exceed (see 301 CMR 11.03):

- |                                          |                                       |                                                                |
|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land | <input type="checkbox"/> Rare Species | <input type="checkbox"/> Wetlands, Waterways, & Tidelands      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water           | <input type="checkbox"/> Wastewater   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy          | <input type="checkbox"/> Air          | <input type="checkbox"/> Solid & Hazardous Waste               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ACEC            | <input type="checkbox"/> Regulations  | <input type="checkbox"/> Historical & Archaeological Resources |

Summary of Project Size & Environmental Impacts	Existing	Change	Total	State Permits & Approvals
<b>LAND</b>				<input type="checkbox"/> Order of Conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Superseding Order of Conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter 91 License <input type="checkbox"/> 401 Water Quality Certification <input type="checkbox"/> MHD or MDC Access Permit <input type="checkbox"/> Water Management Act Permit <input type="checkbox"/> New Source Approval <input type="checkbox"/> DEP or MWRA Sewer Connection/ Extension Permit <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Permits <i>(including Legislative Approvals) – Specify: <u>Chapter 278 of the Acts of 2004 State Legislative Approval of the Conversion of Article 97 Land (APPENDED)</u></i>  <b>Bridge Road</b> <b>North Maple Street</b>
Total site acreage	1.9			
New acres of land altered		0.257		
Acres of impervious area	1.117	0.257	1.374	
Square feet of new bordering vegetated wetlands alteration		0		
Square feet of new other wetland alteration		0		
Acres of new non-water dependent use of tidelands or waterways		0		
<b>STRUCTURES</b>				
Gross square footage		0		
Number of housing units		0		
Maximum height (in feet)		0		
<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>				
Vehicle trips per day	<u>13,120</u> 3,650	0	<u>13,120</u> 3,650	
Parking spaces		0		
<b>WATER/WASTEWATER</b>				
Gallons/day (GPD) of water use		0		
GPD water withdrawal		0		
GPD wastewater generation/ treatment		0		
Length of water/sewer mains (in miles)		0		

**CONSERVATION LAND:** Will the project involve the conversion of public parkland or other Article 97 public natural resources to any purpose not in accordance with Article 97?

- Yes (less than 0.0045 acres for vehicle turning movements and sidewalk)       No

Will it involve the release of any conservation restriction, preservation restriction, agricultural preservation restriction, or watershed preservation restriction?

- Yes (Specify \_\_\_\_\_)       No

**RARE SPECIES:** Does the project site include Estimated Habitat of Rare Species, Vernal Pools, Priority Sites of Rare Species, or Exemplary Natural Communities?

Yes (Specify \_\_\_\_\_ )  No

**HISTORICAL /ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES:** Does the project site include any structure, site or district listed in the State Register of Historic Place or the inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth?

Yes (Specify \_\_\_\_\_ )  No

*"In compliance with Section 106 of the Natural Historic Preservation Act of 1966 as amended (36 CFR 800), MassHighway's Cultural Resource Unit (CRU) will coordinate project review with the MA State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) for potential impacts on the National/State Registered-listed or National Register-eligible properties, districts or sites. Source: Mass Highway's Cultural Resources Unit"*

If yes, does the project involve any demolition or destruction of any listed or inventoried historic or archaeological resources?

Yes (Specify \_\_\_\_\_ )  No

**AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN:** Is the project in or adjacent to an Area of Critical Environmental Concern?

Yes (Specify \_\_\_\_\_ )  No

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The project description should include (a) a description of the project site, (b) a description of both on-site and off-site alternatives and the impacts associated with each alternative, and (c) potential on-site and off-site mitigation measures for each alternative (You may attach one additional page, if necessary.)

MassHighway in cooperation with the City of Northampton is proposing to install traffic signals and make minor intersection improvements at Bridge Road and North Maple Street. Bridge Road is considered an Urban Minor Arterial with high volume vehicle counts intersected by a local cross street, North Maple Street. The limits of work on Bridge Road extend from approximately 30 meters (m) west of Lake Street and end approximately 70 m east of Howes Street for a distance of 400 m and include approximately 70 m of North Maple Street, north of the intersection and 30 m of North Maple Street, south of the intersection. The project involves minor roadway widening to accommodate turning lanes, improvements to roadway geometry for turning movements, the installation of new traffic signals and other pedestrian amenities in order to improve traffic and pedestrian circulation along a heavily traveled way. The project is consistent with the State's Fix it First and Communities First policies and is in line with the City's goal to make all recreational areas safely accessible by pedestrians and individuals with physical disabilities. An Environmental Notification Form (ENF) is required for this project due to the conversion of Article 97 land (301 CMR 11.03) and removal of five or more mature public shade trees measuring fourteen (14) inches (in) or more in diameter at breast height (301 CMR 11.03(6)(b) 2.b.).

The existing curb-to-curb width of Bridge Road is 9.2± m and carries a single travel lane in each direction with no turning lanes. Yellow flashing light(s) for Bridge Road and flashing red light(s) for North Maple Street warn traffic approaching the intersection. Bridge Road is a heavily used commuter road with an average daily traffic volume of 13,120 vehicles per day (VPD) in 1999. The traffic is anticipated to increase to 14,500 VPD by 2019. Residential neighborhoods line the roadway. The JFK middle school is located on Bridge Road west of the intersection. A large number of children utilize the sidewalk(s) in this intersection to walk to school. In addition, a City recreation park, Arcanum Field, is located immediately north of Bridge Road and east of North Maple Street with limited means of pedestrian access. The existing signal lights have no pedestrian activation and pedestrians are at risk when crossing, though there are painted crosswalks. Current school busing policies require students within 1.5 miles of the school to walk or find other means of travel. Approximately 200 students walk to school on Bridge Road every morning and every afternoon.

As a part of the project Bridge Road will undergo full-depth pavement construction in areas of widening to provide for a new variable width curb to curb roadway carrying a 3.25 m travel lane and 1.25 m shoulder in each direction separated by a variable width striped median east and west of the intersection. At the immediate area of the

intersection, the widest width, a 3.09 m dedicated left-turn lane, 3.25 m general-purpose lane, and 1.25 m shoulder will approach the intersection from each direction. Existing paved surfaces will be milled and over-layed. Side road approaches and driveway aprons will be reconstructed or resurfaced. The existing sidewalks will be maintained in their current location with the exception of the construction of a new asphalt walking surface between North Maple Street and Arcanum Field. Concrete handicap ramps will be constructed at all four quadrants of the intersection and will match in with the existing sidewalks. New emergency vehicle pre-emptive traffic signals with a push-button pedestrian phase will be installed to facilitate pedestrian flow to and from adjacent City recreation land and the nearby middle school. The traffic signal will be equipped with a protected left turn phase from Bridge Road to North Maple Street. Video detector cameras are to be installed to control vehicle and bicycle movements. Areas disturbed during construction will be loamed and seeded. Thermoplastic markings will be placed on the new pavement. Traffic management, safety controls and other incidental items are also included. Utilities (except storm drainage) will be relocated by others.

Fifteen (15) Public Shade Trees will be removed for this project of which eight (8) are fourteen (14) in. or more in diameter at breast height. In 2004, the City planted four (4) trees along the northerly side of the project in the park land as mitigation. In addition, eleven (11) more trees are proposed to be installed by the City this year along the north side of Bridge Road, adjacent to the park to serve as a visual buffer between the park and road.

The majority of the work will be within the existing roadway layout except for additional right of way necessary to accommodate the new geometry for vehicle turning movements. The total right of way takings amount to 501 square feet (sf) from four (4) parcels. One of the land takings involves the conversion of 197 sf from Arcanum Field in order to accommodate a pedestrian sidewalk, handicap ramp and an additional lane on Bridge Road. State legislative approval in accordance with Article 97 of the MA Constitution has been issued (see attached).

The City of Northampton acquired the park property from the Florence Athletic Association (Association), an unincorporated association. The trustees of the Association transferred the property to the City "subject to the restriction and condition that the land hereby conveyed be used for sports and playground purposes". It is documented that prior to this transfer, the property was for recreational use as the name Florence Athletic Association implies, however privately owned. The park, now known as Arcanum Field, currently has recreational fields for soccer and baseball, basketball courts, Safety Village (a child safety program), parking facilities and general open space use. Arcanum Field is bound by three (3) City streets and private residences. Arcanum Field is a significant resource to the City. The recent land conversion, as approved by the Governor (Chapter 278 of the Acts of 2004) on August 9, 2004 is 197 square feet in area or approximately 0.05% of the approximately 8.6 acre park. This conversion is predominately for pedestrian access (sidewalks and handicap access) in the proposed project. The City has determined that this conversion is insignificant and will not adversely affect the use of the park for its intended purposes. The City recently completed construction of three (3) new recreation fields on 8.7 acres of the old Northampton State Hospital land which was given to the City by the Commonwealth. The City believes that this newly created recreation land overly mitigates the 197 sf conversion required for the project.

Alternatives considered were as follows: 1. Shifting the alignment northerly to minimize abutter (fee taking) land takings on the south side was considered but rejected since the alignment shift would result in a substandard horizontal curvature and associated safety issues as well as a reduction of the speed limit from 35 to 30 mph. In addition, the horizontal limits of work would increase substantially. This alternative would also result in more land takings from the park and other properties on the north side of Bridge Road. Shifting the alignment southerly was not explored since the main goal of an alignment shift was to minimize impacts to residential land takings on the south side of Bridge Road and impacts to the recreational field were considered insignificant. 2. Designing the project without exclusive left turn movements from Bridge Road were also explored as an alternative. However, this would require the traffic to queue behind the waiting vehicle until the movement occurred resulting in a limited free flow condition through the intersection. In addition, without these turn movements the turning radii for straight body trucks would be substandard and result in an unsafe condition where the trucks could encroach onto the opposing travel lane(s).