

ENF Environmental Notification Form

<i>For Office Use Only</i> <i>Executive Office of Environmental Affairs</i>	
EOEA No.:	<u>13202</u>
MEPA Analyst:	<u>Anne Canaday</u>
Phone: 617-626-	<u>1035</u>

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: Route 12 Reconstruction Phase 1 Route 12 Reconstruction Phase 2		
Street: Water and North Main Street (Route 12)		
Municipality: Leominster and Fitchburg	Watershed: Nashua River	
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: Start: N 923885.4288 E 176906.9119 End: N 922001.8635 E 178531.8178	Start: Lat: 42 33 55 N Long: 71 46 52 W End: Lat: 42 32 54 N Long: 71 45 41 W	
Estimated commencement date: Phase 1 September 2004 Phase 2 April 2005	Estimated completion date: Phase 1 June 2006 Phase 2 June 2007	
Approximate cost: \$4,400,000	Status of project design: Phase 1 75% complete Phase 2 60% complete	
Proponent: Massachusetts Highway 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: Matthew DeSorbo		
Firm/Agency: Massachusetts Highway Dept.	Street: 10 Park Plaza	
Municipality: Boston	State: MA	Zip Code: 02116
Phone: (617)973-7882	Fax: (617)973-8879	E-mail: matthew.desorbo@mhd.state.ma.us

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 301 CMR 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): Federal HPP -80%, Massachusetts Highway Department - 20%

Are you requesting coordinated review with any other federal, state, regional, or local agency?

Yes (Specify _____) No

List Local or Federal Permits and Approvals: Order of Conditions from the Fitchburg Conservation Commission, Federal highway Administration Categorical Exclusion Check List

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

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input 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
LAND				<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 type="checkbox"/> Other Permits (including Legislative Approvals) – Specify:
Total site acreage	10.1			
New acres of land altered		0.5		
Acres of impervious area	9.0	0.6	9.6	
Square feet of new bordering vegetated wetlands alteration		0.0		
Square feet of new other wetland alteration		75		
Acres of new non-water dependent use of tidelands or waterways		0.0		
STRUCTURES				
Gross square footage	8500	-8500	0.0	
Number of housing units	2.0	-2.0	0.0	
Maximum height (in feet)	30.0	-30	0.0	
TRANSPORTATION				
Vehicle trips per day	23,000	0	23,000	
Parking spaces	0.0	0	0.0	
WASTEWATER				
Gallons/day (GPD) of water use	0	0	0	
GPD water withdrawal	0	0	0	
GPD wastewater generation/treatment	0	0	0	
Length of water/sewer mains (in miles)	0	0	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 (Specify _____) 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

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.*)

The Massachusetts Highway Department, in conjunction with the Cities of Fitchburg and Leominster proposes to reconstruct Water Street and North Main Street (Route 12) in the Cities of Fitchburg and Leominster from 450 feet north of Bemis Road to 300 feet south of Erdman Way, a distance of approximately 8366 feet (2550 meters). The road is functionally classified as an urban arterial. The average daily traffic varies substantially through the corridor with a present ADT of approximately 13,100 north of Bemis Road to an ADT of 33,800 south of Erdman Way. The ADT in the central portion of the project is approximately 23,000 vehicles. The posted speed limit is 35 miles per hour. Land use within the corridor is predominantly commercial with some residential use.

The existing pavement width throughout the project is approximately 32 to 36 feet with discontinuous sidewalks on both sides of the road. The existing roadway layout is 50 feet. The majority of the project site is paved behind the layout to provide parking for the many commercial properties that line the corridor. The existing traffic signals at the junction of Route 12 and Bemis Road in Fitchburg and at the junction of Route 12 and State Street in Leominster are equipped with outdated pedestrian actuation without AAB compliant handicapped access. Erdman Way at the southern project limit is the only other signalized crossings within the project limits.

The proposed project will be divided into two design and construction phases. Phase 1 consists of the central portion from north of Benson Street to south of State Street a distance of 3159 feet (963 meters). The design of the Phase 1 portion is at the 75 % design stage. Phase 2 consists of the most northerly portion from north of Bemis Road to north of Benson Street and the most southerly portion from south of State Street to south of Erdman Way. The total distance of Phase 2 is 5,207 feet (1587 meters). The design of the Phase 2 portion is at the 60 % design stage.

The proposed work for Phase 1 will involve widening the roadway from a two lane section to a four lane section. The proposed work will reconstruct the pavement with new granite curbing and drainage facilities. The roadway will be built with new cement concrete sidewalks on both sides of the road for the length of the project. In addition, new traffic signals will be installed at the intersection with Benson Street and at the intersection with Battles and Nichols Street as well as an upgrade to the existing signal at the intersection with State Street. The roadway will taper down at the northerly and southerly limits of

Phase 1 to match the proposed two lane cross section of Phase 2

In the area of the four lane cross section the proposed typical section consists of four 11 foot travel lanes, two 2 foot shoulders and 5.5 foot sidewalks within a new layout width of 59 feet. In the area of the two lane cross section, the proposed typical section consists of two 11.5 foot travel lanes with two 8.0 foot shoulders and 5.5 foot sidewalks maintaining the present layout width of 50 feet.

The intersections of Benson Street and the Battles and Nichols Street with Route 12 are experiencing high enough accident rates to justify the installation of a traffic signal. In order to provide the signals at these locations, additional lanes are required on Route 12 at the signalized intersections to maintain the capacity of Route 12 and to prevent Route 12 traffic from experiencing severe delays and congestion. The intersections themselves are so close that the provision of additional lanes at the intersections require that the additional lanes be carried from the Benson Street intersection through the State Street Intersection.

The proposed work for Phase 2 will involve widening the roadway from its present variable width of 32 to 36 feet to a proposed width of 39 feet. In the area of the two lane cross section the proposed typical section consists of two 11.5 foot travel lanes with 8.0 foot shoulders and 5.5 foot sidewalks maintaining the present layout width of 50 feet. In the vicinity of the Bemis Road and Erdman Way intersections 11 foot travel lanes with 2 foot shoulders and 5.5 foot sidewalks will be utilized. At the Junction of the signalized intersection of Bemis Road, Route 12 will be widened from its present cross section of four travel lanes to provide a five lane cross section. An additional departure lane will be added to the Bemis Road leg of the intersection. Horizontal and vertical improvement will be implemented at this intersection to facilitate traffic movements. At the Junction of the signalized intersection of Erdman Way the present Route 12 five lane cross section will be modified to provide an exclusive Right turn lane into Erdman Way for Route 12 Northbound traffic. The existing storage lane for Southbound Route 12 Left turning traffic will be increased to accommodate present and future traffic projections.

At this time, fire and police emergency response time is significantly delayed by the fact that vehicles are slowed in traffic along Route 12. Traffic can also be delayed when a left turning vehicle prevents through traffic from passing due to the fact there is insufficient pavement width. This leads to driver frustration which can lead to the unsafe situation of motorists making hazardous moves to escape traffic.

The proposed improvements are the result of a lengthy planning study to resolve transportation problems in the Fitchburg/Leominster/Lunenburg region conducted in conjunction with the Montachusets Regional Planning Commission. This overall planning study recommended the upgrading of Route 12 as the most environmentally sensitive alternate to improve access to Downtown Fitchburg. The project has the strong support of the Mayors of the Cities of Fitchburg and Leominster.

Alternatives considered in the development of the proposed improvements were:

1. Doing nothing but that would not address any of the safety concerns along the corridor and the conditions causing the high numbers of accidents would be likely to get far worse. The no build alternative would not accomplish any of the goals of the project.
2. Development of a two lane cross section throughout the project limits other than at the intersections. This was ruled out in Phase 1 due to the closeness of the proposed signalized intersections and the transitional lengths between them.
3. Development of a two travel lane cross section with a center turn lane. This was ruled out due to the high Route 12 traffic volumes and the fact that the resulting Route 12 cross section would be essentially the same width as that which is being proposed for the four lane cross section.

Design Exceptions for minimum lane and shoulder widths were approved by the Department as part of the advancement of the preferred alternate.

In Phase 1, to provide the necessary proposed pavement width, approximately 55 strip land takings will be required. The removal of one business structure will also be required.

In Phase 2, to provide the necessary proposed pavement width, approximately 24 strip land takings will be required. The removal of two residential properties, one shed and one business structure will also be required.

In order to mitigate the impacts of the additional paved roadway brought forth with this project, there are threetwo intersecting streets within the project limits where existing roadway pavement is being removed and a landscape area proposed to provide a balance of pervious are to impervious area. This also will present an opportunity to increase the aesthetics of the area. The total area of existing pavement to be removed and replaced with landscape area is approximately 0.3 acres.

The Cities of Fitchburg and Leominster will be responsible for all land acquisitions in their respective communities.

The MEPA threshold met in the design of this project is that the project will result in widening the existing Route 12 Roadway by 4 feet or more for more than one half of a mile.