

Pedestrian and Vehicular Improvements, Route 28, Andover MA

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Main Street Project is a pedestrian and vehicular improvement project for Main Street from Stevens Street to Wheeler Street. The federal and state governments committed 3.9 million dollars to fund improvements such as sidewalk and roadway reconstruction to improve drainage, signalization to improve vehicular flow, crosswalk and sidewalk upgrades to improve pedestrian safety and handicap access, and intersection alignment for vehicular safety. The citizens of Andover appropriated over \$500,000 to upgrade the existing street lighting to historic light poles, new trees and landscaping, provide pavers for the crosswalks, install additional park benches, and provide other amenities to enhance the appearance of the downtown. The project is expected to take two years to complete.

During construction, both directions of traffic flow should remain open, however parking restrictions will take effect depending on the location of construction. Construction will occur during daytime business hours. The project definitely will have temporary impacts. However when the project is complete, Main Street Andover will be an attractive pedestrian friendly place for those looking for a comfortable, safe and enjoyable experience.

PROJECT HISTORY

In 1998, a proposal was submitted to the Massachusetts Highway Department (Mass Highway) on behalf of the Town of Andover for funding to improve the traffic flow and increase pedestrian safety along Main Street (State Route 28) in Andover, Massachusetts. Several issues prompted the need for the project, including inefficient traffic flow, haphazard crosswalk locations, handicap accessibility, deteriorated sidewalks, poor drainage, unattractive street lighting and insufficient gathering spaces.

The Board of Selectmen created the Main Street Committee in December 2000 as an advisory committee to provide a forum for local businesses, citizens, and government to discuss the project and make recommendations. Numerous public meetings were held to solicit comment from the general public and local businesses.

The Main Street Committee's goals were to identify opportunities and obstacles associated with Main Street; seek community consensus on public and private actions; maintain a robust and lively Main Street during construction; improve its functional and aesthetic strengths; and safely accommodate pedestrians and vehicles now and in the future.

In March 2006 funding was secured and the 100% design plans were submitted to Mass Highway in June 2006. The construction contract was awarded to Newport Construction in July 2007.

Construction began in January 2008 and is underway!



Date: March 13, 2008

“Main Street is the heart of the community; the traditional and modern focus for commercial, civic, cultural, and social activity. Its condition serves as an indicator of the health, capacity and self-regard of the entire community.”

~The National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Streets Program~

QUESTION AND ANSWER

Q. How long will project take? A. Approximately two years.

Q. Who's in charge? A. Mass Highway is in complete charge of the project construction. The Andover Department of Public Works will monitor the project for the Town. The Planning Division will work with the different committees and departments to collect information and distribute it to the public.

Q. Will there be disruption downtown? A. Yes. The contractor will work in segments along one side of the road at a time to reduce disruptions. However, during any construction project, disruption and inconvenience does occur. Please be patient and think about the long term benefits to Andover.

Q. What will happen to parking? A. The municipal parking lots will remain open. There will be lost parking spaces when the contractor is working on sections of roadway and sidewalk. New signage will be added indicating where and how long vehicles may park.

Q. Will there be detours? A. Main Street should be open to two-way traffic at all times.

Q. Will shops and banks remain open? A. It is anticipated that businesses will be able to remain open.

Q. What are the short-term impacts? A. Traffic congestion, loss of parking spaces, and inconvenience. But please continue to patronize the businesses during this difficult time in downtown Andover.

Q. Why do we need this project anyway? A. To reduce the traffic congestion, increase pedestrian safety and handicap accessibility, and enhance the streetscape to keep downtown competitive.

BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT

The downtown will be easier to navigate for pedestrians of all ages and abilities;

The crosswalks will provide visible and safer places for people to cross, especially at Elm Square and Memorial Hall Library;

The signals will be synchronized to move traffic safely and efficiently through downtown;

The signals will have coordinated “red-light” systems for police and fire emergencies;

The alignment of the pavement and sidewalks will drain more effectively;

The sidewalks, crosswalk ramps and crosswalks, will make it easier for persons of all abilities to maneuver downtown;

There will be new trees, park benches, and historic lighting in scale to the buildings; and

The downtown will be attractive and provide for a comfortable and enjoyable experience.

STAY INFORMED

During Construction, please stay informed. There are several ways to do this:

- 1.) Memorial Hall Library's Website: www.mhl.org/main_street_project.htm
- 2.) The Town Website: www.andoverma.gov
- 3.) e-Notice: Sign up for the Town's e-Notice via the Town Website.
- 4.) Direct Email: Please contact Paula Hamel (978) 623-8310 to add your name to the list.
- 5.) Keep reading the local newspaper.

Remember, a vibrant and attractive Main Street retains and creates jobs. It protects property values throughout the Town of Andover. It increases the community's options for good and services. Main Street Andover is a symbol of the Town's economic health, the quality of life and pride of its residents.