

Canton Street Preliminary Design Public Hearing - Responses to Comments
Westwood, MA
Date: March 1, 2021

Comment Reference #	Name	Comment	Response
1	Commenter 1	What confidence level do you have regarding the project being fully funded inclusive of state/federal funds as planned? Thank you.	The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) Project Review Committee has approved the project for funding through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP); however, the year that funds will be available will be subject to other infrastructure needs within the Metropolitan Area Planning Council region. As the project proceeds, the Town will work with the regional planning agency to identify a construction funding year. To advance this project as part of the TIP program, the Town is responsible for the cost of survey, design, environmental permitting, and any necessary right of way acquisition.
2	Commenter 1	Given this project is 2-4 years away, best case scenario, can something be done to make this street friendlier for crossing, e.g. crosswalks at Everett, Hedgerow and a few other natural spots?	This comment will be further considered by the Department of Public Works. There are currently no plans to improve the roadway in the interim.
3	Commenter 1	This would be a great addition to the neighborhood, thank you for all the hard work here. Would really connect the fragmented neighborhoods and increase ped access to University Plaza as well.	Thank you for the positive feedback and support.
4	Commenter 2	Is completion dependent on state funding?	There is currently no source of construction funding identified for the project, other than to pursue funding through the State's Transportation Improvement Program.
5	Commenter 2	Can the timeframe be expedited? =)	As the project proceeds, the Town will work with the regional planning agency to identify a construction funding year. The year that funds will be available is subject to prioritization of all infrastructure projects seeking funding within the Metropolitan Area Planning Council region. Project readiness is a key factor considered when programming a project.
6	Commenter 3	Hello. My concerns about this sidewalk are preserving the historic stone wall as well as the trees. As a Westwood resident of 46 years, I am concerned about safety. The cars go very fast and anyone walking on the sidewalk is at risk of being hit by a car. I have seen the aftermath of people getting hit by cars on this street.	The project will aim to minimize impacts to stone walls and trees; however, we expect several sections of walls will need to be rebuilt and that trees will be impacted. We will be working with a landscape architect to limit the project's aesthetic impacts to the corridor. We expect that the addition of the pedestrian facilities will improve pedestrian safety.
7	Commenter 3	How wide will the sidewalk be? Will my 350 year old stone wall be torn down?	Conceptual plans prepared to date depict a 5-foot wide sidewalk and a 10-foot wide shared-use path, consistent with applicable design standards and guidelines. We will share updated design plans as the design progresses and more details and information regarding specific impacts become available.
8	Commenter 3	The traffic calming areas that were added are ineffective. I am happy they have not disrupted the stone wall but they keep getting hit by cars. Again, this is not a safe project.	Thank you for the feedback.
9	Commenter 3	Will it be the resident's responsibility to pay for the reconstruction of the stone wall?	No. The project will cover construction costs; in some cases abutters will be compensated for impacts through the right-of-way process.
10	Commenter 3	Are residents going to have the opportunity to vote or is this already a done deal?	While it is not anticipated that there will be a formal vote, there will be ample opportunity for the public to voice their opinions to help shape the improvements through public meetings and other forums.
11	Commenter 3	Building a side walk is not going to change the fact that Canton Street is used a cut through. I agree with John. We are not connecting to a bike path that currently exists. My biggest concerns remain the stone wall and the fact that cars speed despite the calming area and the speed signs.	The project seeks to improve bicycle and pedestrian connectivity.
12	Commenter 3	Unless you make Canton Street a one way street, it just doesn't seem wide enough for a side walk and bike path.	The roadway will remain a similar width as it exists today. The sidewalk and shared path would be added beyond the edges of the existing roadway. The existing public right-of-way is generally wide enough to accommodate this.
13	Commenter 4	Will sidewalks and path be maintained in the winter months - snow and ice removal?	Yes, the Town will provide winter maintenance of the sidewalk and shared-use path, consistent with other municipally-owned sidewalks.
14	Commenter 5	Will homeowners with property on Canton street be informed about what on their property will be affected?	Yes, the Town will coordinate property impacts directly with property owners.

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15	Commenter 6	I live on Everett Street and I bike and run. Can the shared use path be used to bike in the opposite direction? The shared use path is almost like having 2 sidewalks: one on each side.	Yes, the shared path will be wide enough to accommodate bikes travelling in both directions and pedestrians.
16	Commenter 6	How much is DOT going to help pay for this project by complying with their guidelines? Is it a percentage of the project?	We seek to fund as much of the construction as possible with the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which is a combination of State and Federal dollars. There may be items that are not eligible for funding through the TIP, such as restoration of private landscaping. These items will be identified as the project progresses.
17	Commenter 6	I think this is a needed project and look forward to making it work.	Thank you for the positive feedback and support.
18	Commenter 7	Who would be in charge of maintaining the new sidewalk and shared path clear of snow? Would this be covered by DPW? Or would property owners need to clear the space? I'm concerned about keeping the shared use path clear in the winter for bicycles in particular.	The DPW would be responsible for snow and ice removal.
19	Commenter 7	I really love the shared use path idea that's separated from the road. If we find we don't have funding to cover the whole project, I'd rather have one shared use path as you've presented it here vs. curb sidewalks on both sides.	Thank you for the feedback.
20	Commenter 7	I've wanted a sidewalk on Canton St. FOREVER!!! This is wonderful.	Thank you for the positive feedback and support.
21	Commenter 7	Thank you all so much! This was a great presentation and I really appreciate the work you all have already put into this project.	Thank you.
22	Commenter 8	How will the project impact power lines? Can/will the utility lines be buried?	The project will need to relocate several utility poles along the corridor to accommodate the proposed improvements. There is currently no plan to bury the utility lines. Burying overhead utilities would add significant cost to the project and would need to be paid for by the Town.
23	Commenter 9	It was my understanding that canton st was a county rd with scenic road designation. Do you have to get permission from other agencies?	A public hearing must be held and consent received from the Planning Board and Tree Warden.
24	Commenter 9	The concrete that was already put done on canton that you are talking about is already falling apart.	Thank you, this is noted.
25	Commenter 9	Is canton st a county road?	Canton Street was originally laid out as a County road; however, it is now under the jurisdiction of the Town.
26	Commenter 9	Great, then people get to look at flashing lights. No one wants that	The methods for maximizing pedestrian safety at the crosswalks will continue to be reviewed. Additional information and recommendations will be available as the design develops.
27	Commenter 10	What is the approx. width of the shared use path (paved section) versus sidewalk only on west side?	The sidewalk is a standard width sidewalk and would measure 5'-6" from the face of curb to the back of the sidewalk. The shared path would typically be 10-feet wide, consistent with applicable design standards and guidelines.
28	Commenter 10	I believe it was reported during the traffic calming project Canton St is a county road and not a Westwood road per se. Does this have any impact on the project's boundaries and considerations?	Canton Street was originally laid out as a County road; however, it is now under the jurisdiction of the Town.
29	Commenter 11	Can the public be heard or just use notes?	Just Q&A.
30	Commenter 11	I can see each of you!	

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31	Commenter 11	My most important concern is that Canton St is designated a scenic way. I feel a sidewalk placement needs to keep this feeling and design. I am hoping you are going to address this in the presentation?	The project will aim to minimize impacts to stone walls and trees; however, we expect several sections of walls will need to be rebuilt and that trees will be impacted. We will be working with a landscape architect to limit the project's aesthetic impacts to the corridor. We expect that the addition of the pedestrian facilities will improve pedestrian safety.
32	Commenter 11	I feel the sidewalks on both side of street change the scenic feeling. Can we not just place one side, shared with a larger buffer>	Sidewalks are proposed on both sides to provide pedestrian access for direct abutters and side streets on both sides of Canton Street . Additionally, to be eligible for TIP funding the project will need to comply with MassDOT's Healthy Transportation Policy and associated Engineering Directives, which require pedestrian accommodations on both sides.
33	Commenter 11	The trees and amount of cement seen are also aesthetically important!	This is noted. Thank you
34	Commenter 11	Dover and Sherborn have wonderful examples of a sidewalks removed from road and large green, trees buffer from road. These keep a very scenic feel versus busy street feel. I think cars will feel more entitled going fast with side walks.	Thank you for the comment.
35	Commenter 11	I saw pictures of Gay st too much sidewalk, and that is only on one side?	Correct, the Gay Street project proposed sidewalk on one side.
36	Commenter 11	Can you please address the need for sidewalks on both sides of the street?	Sidewalks are proposed on both sides to provide pedestrian access for direct abutters and side streets on both sides of Canton Street. Additionally, to be eligible for TIP funding the project will need to comply with MassDOT's Healthy Transportation Policy and associated Engineering Directives, which require pedestrian accommodations on both sides.
37	Commenter 11	What are the guidelines?	For projects intended to be funded through the Transportation Improvement Program, MassDOT requires roadways in urbanized areas to have sidewalks on both sides of the street. Please feel free to review MassDOT's Healthy Transportation Policy Directive at: https://www.mass.gov/doc/healthy-transportation-policy-directive/download
38	Commenter 11	I don't object to sidewalk it is how it is designed. Do the guidelines mandate 2 sidewalks? Th design should not be directed by the state.	The project needs to meet State requirements to be eligible for funding through the TIP. Additionally, the sidewalk on the west side of the street is proposed to benefit residents that live west of Canton Street.
39	Commenter 11	I feel that a large part of this is being pursued due to the dollars from the state,,,this should not be the case!	Implementation of bicycle and pedestrian accommodations along Canton Street is a Town goal. The potential availability of funding through the TIP is a benefit that aligns with the Town's goals.
40	Commenter 11	one side walk is one design...it seems the state is requiring both sides. This is a large change for Canton st which is a scenic road designation.	Thank you for the feedback.
41	Commenter 12	Will there be crossing lights at the crosswalks?	The methods for maximizing pedestrian safety at the crosswalks will continue to be reviewed. Additional information and recommendations will be available for discussion as the design develops.
42	Commenter 13	are you guys recording this meeting?	Yes, the meeting recording is available here: https://www.townhall.westwood.ma.us/departments/public-works/projects
43	Commenter 13	and/or sharing the slide deck?	Yes, the slides are available at the link above if you click on "March 1, 2021 Canton Street Sidewalk Presentation"
44	Commenter 13	this is a great concept, I love it!	Thank you for the positive feedback and support.
45	Commenter 13	Is there a way to accelerate the project? I am walking/jogging on Canton St every day, and it would increase my life expectancy :-)	As the project proceeds, the Town will work with the regional planning agency to identify a construction funding year. The year that funds will be available is subject to prioritization of all infrastructure projects seeking funding within the Metropolitan Area Planning Council region. Project readiness is a key factor considered when programming a project.
46	Commenter 13	A comment: this would finally allow me a nice jogging course down Canton St, then University Ave, up to Partridge and back to Canton :-)	The project aims to close gaps in pedestrian and bicycle facilities just like this.
47	Commenter 13	BTW, this will increase the resale value of Canton St houses, which will raise tax income for the town.	Thank you for the positive feedback.
48	Commenter 14	I know this is a long-term project with many issues to consider, but I am glad to see it. We live on Adams and Canton and have 4 children. having a clear path for them to bike on would make a large difference. Excited to see it even though it will impact our frontage on canton	Thank you for the positive feedback and support.
49	Commenter 15	Is the town taking any privately owned land or is the plan to only use the publicly owned right of way?	The project aims to limit permanent private property impacts to the extend practical. Temporary property impacts can be expected. The public right-of-way is generally wide enough along the entire corridor to accommodate the proposed improvements. Property impacts will be identified as the design develops.

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50	Commenter 15	Could other funding sources be used to expedite the project then refunded when the state funds are available?	The Transportation Improvement Program is not a reimbursable funding source. Other reimbursable funding grants in the State would likely not be substantial enough to construct the entire project.
51	Commenter 15	Is there a total cost estimate?	The preliminary construction cost estimates are in the range of \$7 million to \$9 million.
52	Commenter 16	We are very supportive of this as a family with young children. It looks like design phase will push into 2022-2042. Is your expectation to build this in segments or as a big bang?	Thank you for the positive feedback. The project would be constructed after the design and environmental permitting is complete and when funding is available through the Transportation Improvement Program. It is anticipated that the project would be constructed in one phase and likely take two construction seasons, which run from April to November.
53	Commenter 16	2024*	
54	Comment 17	just a quick comment, why 2 side walks and not just one shared use sidewalk? my concern is it is a narrow street to begin with, and with the addition of a second sidewalk it takes up much needed real estate for commercial vehicles and landscape companies parking on the side of the road...despite the fact that commercial vehicles are prohibited within certain weight limits. just again thinking about safety for walkers.	The roadway width will be similar to the existing conditions. Sidewalks are proposed on both sides to provide pedestrian access for direct abutters and side streets on both sides of Canton Street. Additionally, the project will need to comply with MassDOT's Healthy Transportation Policy and associated Engineering Directive, which require pedestrian accommodations on both sides, to be eligible for TIP funding.
55	Commenter 18	I missed some of the start of the meeting, but the los on Canton Street are not uniform in terms of setbacks etc. unlike other streets with sidewalks (like Forbes where I am). How are you going to deal with all the properties that have walls, fences, etc, that are close to the road? Are those going to have to be removed.	Features that are close to the road will likely be impacted by the project and will need to be removed or relocated. A recording of the meeting is available at the following link: https://www.townhall.westwood.ma.us/departments/public-works/projects
56	Commenter 18	is there going to be any widening of Canton Street. We worked very hard for very many years to get the traffic calming measures that are not on Canton Street. Any widening would be a worsening of conditions	The roadway width will intentionally remain generally consistent with the existing roadway width. This is so the roadway can continue to benefit from the traffic calming measures already in place. The pedestrian and bicycle facilities would be constructed beyond the edge of the roadway.
57	Commenter 18	Is the Town going to be responsible for snow removal	Yes, the DPW will be responsible for snow removal.
58	Commenter 18	In terms of bike usage what are you trying to link up to. It doesn't seem that this would be creating an actual transportation route as Canton is bounded by the East Street rotary on one end and University Ave on the other, neither of which are suitable for bike useage	The project will allow for any potential future expansion of bicycle facilities. Canton Street will have on-street bike lanes south of University Ave for a southerly connection. Blue Hill Drive has on-street bike lanes, and several side streets have less vehicle traffic that enable bicyclists that are comfortable doing so to ride along the street.
59	Commenter 18	Did anyone ever ask the people on Canton Street if they want this? it appears to just have dropped out of the sky.	This is the first outreach meeting and the project is early in the process. The Town has been hearing requests for bicycle and pedestrian accommodations on Canton Street for several years, including during the public outreach conducted for the traffic calming efforts implemented in 2015.
60	Commenter 18	Is the DOT funding 100 per cent or does the Town have to pay toward it	We seek to fund as much of the construction as possible with the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which is a combination of State and Federal dollars. There may be items that are not eligible for funding through the TIP, such as restoration of private landscaping. These items will be identified as the project progresses. Additionally, the Town is responsible for the cost of survey, design, environmental permitting, and any necessary right of way acquisition.
61	Commenter 18	Will the slides of the conceptual layout be on the Town website	Yes, the slides are available here: https://www.townhall.westwood.ma.us/departments/public-works/projects if you click on "March 1, 2021 Canton Street Sidewalk Presentation".
62	Commenter 19	Thrilled to have sidewalks for our family!	Thank you for the positive feedback and support.

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63	Commenter 20	Hi! This is great - and will make a big difference for safety! It is frightening to walk on Canton street today. As you make these improvements, are you looking to adjust the speed limits on the road at all and/or post them so people have a better sense of speed that is allowed?	Thank you for the positive feedback. The posted speed limit is not planned to be changed as part of this project. The setting and adjustment of speed limits is regulated by MassDOT, subsequent to an engineering study. All new signage will be placed within the work limits.
64	Commenter 20	Since you will have an arborist, you should have them consider visibility as you pull out of the side streets like Aran, Spellman, Kilronen, etc - some of the views are very obstructed especially if taking a left hand turn from these streets onto Canton.... With pedestrians traversing more often on the street, these corners should be maintained for visibility. To be honest, this would even be good to start doing now to prevent auto accidents...	Thank you. The design development process will include a review of sight distances and potential sight line obstructions exiting side streets.
65	Commenter 21	To preserve land, trees, aesthetics, costs...why not side walk on one side?	Sidewalks are proposed on both sides to provide pedestrian access for direct abutters and side streets on both sides of Canton Street. Additionally, to be eligible for TIP funding the project will need to comply with MassDOT's Healthy Transportation Policy and associated Engineering Directives, which require pedestrian accommodations on both sides.
66	Commenter 21	Heard you say you would try to preserve trees, based on what you have shared (width, asphalt, concrete)...a LOT of trees are clearly coming down. Can you explain preservation?	There will be several trees impacted by the project. The location of existing trees relative to the proposed improvements will be reviewed in conjunction with an arborist. Adjustments to the shared path alignment may be considered to preserve some existing trees. New trees will also be proposed at appropriate locations along the corridor, aimed at preserving the corridor aesthetics.
67	Commenter 21	Many of these trees are 100+ years old with canopy....new trees will clearly not compensate huge aesthetic loss.	Thank you for this comment. We will continue to consider tree impacts throughout the design development.
68	Commenter 21	Thank you Todd. Please consider putting sidewalks on opposite side of stone walls to protect trees. Incorporate existing trees in grass buffer.	Thank you for this comment. We will consider these opportunities.
69	Commenter 21	Sounds like state will have re-classify Canton Street as no longer a "senic way" to fund this project....correct? There are conflicts to the protections afforded by Senic categorization.	Scenic roadways are a local designation and would not prevent the State from funding the improvements. A public hearing must be held and consent received from the Planning Board and Tree Warden.
70	Commenter 21	Can you do a different design with cost comparisson for a down-sized project? Perhaps without state funding...maybe a sidewalk on only one side of the street for safety and community use?	The main goals of the project include the installation of pedestrian facilities on both sides of Canton Street to benefit residents that come from neighborhoods on both sides of the roadway and to provide bicycle accommodations. The Town is not currently planning to pursue improvements that would not be eligible for funding through the State's Transportation Improvement Program.
71	Commenter 22	How much of the land contemplated is owned by the town or state? Does the project involve a taking by eminent domain?	Nearly all of the final improvements are expected be within the existing public right-of-way. There will be several properties with temporary impacts to construct the proposed improvements. All necessary property easements will be obtained by following the Uniform Relocation Act. The project team will work closely with property owners to mitigate the property impacts in a practical and agreeable manner.
72	Commenter 23	if this project goes thru, what is expected time to complete this project, and will canton st be closed, or become one lane one way?	It is anticipated that approximately two full construction seasons will be required to construct the project. The construction seasons run from April to November. During construction, temporary traffic control can be expected to consist of a combination of alternating one lane of traffic and/or detours, depending on the project phases.
73	Commenter 23	do the residents living on canton st have greater vote/consideration/say during town vote?	While it is not anticipated that there will be a formal vote, there will be ample opportunity for the public to voice their opinions to help shape the improvements through public meetings and other forums. All residents' viewpoints will be considered throughout the process.
74	Commenter 24	Pass code was not required to get in. Hope that doesn't create a problem.	Thank you.
75	Commenter 24	Are utilities overhead? If so, would those be placed underground?	The project will need to relocate several utility poles along the corridor to accommodate the proposed improvements. There is currently no plan to bury the utility lines. Burying overhead utilities would add significant cost to the project and would need to be paid for by the Town.
76	Commenter 24	Explain how the shared use path would work. Cyclists and pedestrians do not mix well. Cyclists who want to ride faster will want to use the roadway and that stretch is very dangerous, particularly around the traffic islands where the roadway narrows. Many drivers are not slowing at those points.	The proposed shared path would be wide enough to accommodate bi-directional bicyclists and pedestrians. More experienced bicyclists who are comfortable doing so may opt to utilize the travel lane.

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77	Commenter 24	Further to the question of funding and timing, I heard that even if the Town approves this project, there is at least a 5 year waiting list for funding. Can you comment on the timeline for the funding?	It could take five years or more for the project to be programmed for funding through the TIP. As the project proceeds, the Town will work with the regional planning agency to identify a construction funding year. The year that funds will be available is subject to prioritization of all infrastructure projects seeking funding within the Metropolitan Area Planning Council region. Project readiness is a key factor considered when programming a project.
78	Commenter 25	What is the estimated number of tree loss?	Several trees are expected to be impacted by the project. The number of impacted trees will be identified as the design develops and opportunities will be explored to plant new trees at appropriate locations along the corridor.
79	Commenter 25	The loss of trees will impact the air and noise pollution.	The project is expected to be reviewed through the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) process, due to the number of public shade trees impacted.
80	Commenter 26	Why would concrete be used for the sidewalk?	Concrete is proposed for the sidewalk to maximize the sidewalk's longevity.
81	Commenter 26	Just wondering why one side would be asphalt and the other concrete? Where are there concrete sidewalks in Westwood? Thx.	The shared path is initially envisioned to be asphalt, consistent with typical construction practice for recreational facilities accommodating bicyclists, pedestrians, joggers, etc. There are concrete sidewalks along a number of Westwood streets, including Washington Street and High Street.
82	Commenter 26	Would the town reconsider doing this project if the majority of those affected were opposed to it?	The project is currently being pursued because of the need for bicycle and pedestrian accommodations along the corridor that will benefit the community. We are hopeful that the project's abutters will recognize the benefits that this project can provide to adjoining neighborhoods and the community as a whole.
83	Commenter 26	Just a final comment, Todd. There is a big difference between one sidewalk and this huge project which will significantly affect our property.	We will continue to coordinate with you and are hopeful to address your concerns as the project progresses.
84	Commenter 27	this is a great idea, I love it	Thank you for the positive feedback.
85	Commenter 28	Based on your preliminary review, does it appear that all improvements can be done within the right-of-way; or will there be a need for any takings due to lay-out considerations.?	The project aims to limit permanent private property impacts to the extent practical. Temporary property impacts can be expected. The public right-of-way is generally wide enough along the entire corridor to accommodate the proposed improvements. Property impacts will be identified as the design develops.
86	Commenter 28	This is a great start to this project (which has been needed and desired for a long time). Thanks to the team that has done the preliminary work. Let's keep moving forward.	Thank you for the positive feedback.
87	Commenter 29	What is the time frame of this project?	The project is currently in the preliminary design phase. The final design will be advanced between 2022 and 2024. The construction start date will depend on the availability of construction funding from the MassDOT Transportation Improvement Program and the date is not yet determined.
88	Commenter 29	Glad that the design process has started. This is long overdue both for safety and benefit to our community	Thank you for the positive feedback.
89	Commenter 30	Who will be plowing the sidewalk in the winter?	The Department of Public Works will be responsible for snow removal.
90	Commenter 31	Have you considered just having the sidewalk on one side of the roadway?	Sidewalks are proposed on both sides to provide pedestrian access for direct abutters and side streets on both sides of Canton Street. Additionally, to be eligible for TIP funding the project will need to comply with MassDOT's Healthy Transportation Policy and associated Engineering Directives, which require pedestrian accommodations on both sides.
91	Commenter 32	I can see you but can't turn on my video. Bill Selles	Only presenter videos were available during the meeting.
92	Commenter 32	We are highly in favor of this project, for walking, biking, safety, and aesthetics. Thanks so much! - Canton St. resident.	Thank you for the positive feedback.