

**MASSDOT - HIGHWAY DIVISION**  
**Project Initiation Form**

Proponent: John F. Stevens Title: Chair. Board of Selectman

Municipality/Organization: Town of Spencer

PIF completed by: Steven J. Tyler, P.E. Title: Superintendent of Utilities and Facilities

Phone: (508)885-7525 Email: styler@spencerma.gov

Date: 6/27/2017

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**Part I – General Information**

**Project Location:** Meadow Road, Spencer, MA

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**Scope of Work:** Describe the proposed improvements including limits of work, length of the project, major improvements, proposed cross-section, improvements to secondary assets, and related work. The description of improvements to secondary assets should include any proposed improvements to curbing, sidewalks, traffic signals, signs, lighting, landscaping, drainage, walls, etc. The scope of work for a multi-use path should also identify any proposed at-grade crossing treatments.

The Reconstruction of Meadow Road with comprehensive intermodal complete streets enhancements, including but not limited to the addition of new pedestrian sidewalks, transit and bicycle accommodations, traffic safety, and drainage and stormwater quality improvements. The proposed design will address the safety improvements recommended by the 2014 CMRPC / CMMPO Holden – Paxton –Spencer Route 31 Corridor Profile. The intermodal access and safety and environmental improvements included in the proposed project are also consistent with Complete Streets priorities of the community and the context of the corridor. See Project Need Form for further information. The typical cross-section will be (2) 11 foot travel lanes, (2) 5 foot shared shoulders and (1) 6 foot sidewalk with granite curbing. Refer to PNF for further information.

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**Regional Benefit:** Describe any regional benefits that would be realized should the Project Need be met.

Meadow Road links communities from south and west regions to communities in north and east regions, and provides direct access to the Town's commercial and retail facilities on Route 9. Meadow Road services high commercial volumes including the E. Brookfield/Spencer automotive railyard facility. Each end of the project has been identified as critical evacuation control intersections per the regional emergency plan by CMRPC. Meadow Road is part of the only transit route in Spencer and is the primary access to the Spencer Fairgrounds. This project will greatly enhance access to public transit and other intermodal connections.

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**Right-of-Way:** Identify how much right of way is anticipated to complete the project, including fee takings, permanent and temporary easements.

The existing overall right of way (ROW) width for Meadow Road typically varies in a range from 50 to 60 feet and is greater at several locations, curves and intersections. It is anticipated that all roadway and sidewalk improvements will fit within the existing ROW. Some easements or takings for drainage and resiliency improvements may be required. The total estimated ROW costs are \$250K.

**Part II – Project Costs and Responsibilities**

**Estimated Costs:** Provide available cost estimates or estimated cost ranges in current-year dollars and attach any cost estimate work sheets or summaries.

Estimated Construction Costs:		Estimated Other Costs:	
Construction Items:	\$5.0 mill.	Planning/Design:	\$800 K
Utility Relocation:	\$500 K	Right-of-way:	\$250 K
Contingencies (10%):	\$500 K	Environmental Mitigation:	\$250 K
Other Constr. Costs (10%):	\$500 K	<b>Total Other Costs:</b>	\$1.3 mill.
<b>Total Construction Cost:</b>	\$6.0 mill.		

<b>Anticipated Funding Program:</b> Indicate all potential sources of funding that may apply to the project	STP	x	CMAQ	x	HSIP	
	TAP	x	NHPP		HPP	
	NFA		Other			

Project Responsibilities:	MassDOT	Comm unity	Other (specify)
<b>Project Management</b>	Oversight and Review	100%	
<b>Design</b>	Oversight and Review	100%	
<b>Permitting</b>	Oversight and Review	100%	
<b>Right of Way</b>	Oversight and Review	100%	

**Part III: Project Description****A. System Preservation**

**1. Primary Asset and Condition:** Identify the Primary Asset included in the project area (e.g. roadway, bridge, or bike trail), condition of asset (specify if asset is a new facility), and what project improvements are anticipated by project.

Roadway is the primary asset. The roadway is in poor condition, heavily cracked, and has numerous pot holes and patches. Also, there are currently no existing pedestrian or bicycle accommodations along Meadow Road. The proposed reconstruction will be comprised of comprehensive intermodal roadway improvements including addition of new bicycle and sidewalk accommodations.

**2. Proposed Treatment to the Primary Asset:** Describe the proposed rehabilitation methods that are being considered for the primary asset (e.g. overlay, reclamation, full depth reconstruction). Keep in mind that the final pavement improvements will be identified through the development of a pavement design submitted as part of the project design process.

Full-depth reclamation and reconstruction with box widening.

**3. Describe Improvements to Other Existing Assets:** Identify efforts to retain or preserve existing Infrastructure. Other existing assets may include: signal reconstruction, signal upgrades or improvements, large diameter culverts (4'+), box culverts, retaining walls, sidewalks, ramps, guardrail, drainage, signs, and curbing (or bridges, paths, and pavement if not already the primary asset).

This project will include substantial drainage and stormwater resiliency and water quality improvements. It will also include improvements to the existing WRTA stop at the southern end of Meadow Road. All new sidewalk, curbing, signage, guardrail and ramps will be included.

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**4. Potential Impacts to Utilities:** Identify any anticipated impacts or complications the proposed improvements will have on utilities. List utilities that will be impacted.

There is a wastewater pump station located near the intersection with Fourth Avenue. There are underground water and sewer as well as overhead electric, phone, and cable utilities. The area is not serviced by natural gas at this time.

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## **B. Mobility**

**1. Effect on Motor Vehicle Mobility and Congestion:** Describe how the proposed improvements will impact the mobility of motor vehicles. Please note the presence of bottlenecks or congestion, and include any traffic analysis, including LOS (Level of Service) data, if available. Please include existing and proposed LOS, delays que lengths and travel time.

At the Meadow Road and W. Main Street (Route 9) intersection, northbound vehicle queuing lanes from South Spencer Road are of insufficient length and during peak flow periods drivers have been observed driving over the roadway curbing. Refer to Appendix 2 – Excerpts from Holden - Paxton - Spencer Route 31 Corridor Profile (by CMRPC / CMMPO Sept. 2014) for further information. Safety improvements are also anticipated at the intersections throughout the corridor.

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**2. Effect on Pedestrian Mobility and Accommodations:** Describe how the improvements are addressing pedestrian accommodation, including ADA/AAB requirements, through improving existing facilities, improving safety and traffic calming, or proposing new or expanded pedestrian facilities. HTP requires 2 sidewalks in urban areas. (Examples of improved pedestrian facilities are new or expanded sidewalks, crossings, pedestrian signals, RRFBs, shared-use paths, side-paths, etc.).

The Town will be working with CMRPC to do a Walkability Study and Roadway Safety Audit for Meadow Road. The addition of sidewalks along the entire length of Meadow Road are part of the town's sidewalk betterment and connectivity plans and the Town's Complete Streets Prioritization Plan. In addition to providing safe access for pedestrians to residential, commercial and transit areas, it also connects pedestrians to the Spencer Fair Grounds and Powder Mill Park, a heavily used playground facility.

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**3. Effect on Bicycle Mobility and Accommodations:** Describe how the improvements are addressing bicycle accommodation through new or improved facilities. HTP requires a minimum 5 ft. shoulder for improved bicycle accommodations. (Examples of improved bicycle facilities are new or expanded 5' shoulders, marked or buffered bicycle lanes, shared-use paths, etc.).

There are no designated bicycle facilities currently. This project proposes to have a shared use shoulder in both directions and bike racks at key locations where sufficient ROW exists.

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**4. Effect on Transit Mobility and Accommodations:** Describe how the improvements are addressing transit mobility through new or improved facilities or accommodations. (Examples include dedicated bus lanes, transit signal prioritization, BRT, or new park & rides, bus stops, shelters, bump outs, etc.)

The WRTA has an existing bus termination/start/rest stop location on Meadow Road, and this project would like to coordinate with the WRTA for multiple transit improvements along Meadow Road, including expanding the WRTA route, providing additional stops; new kiosks and the possibility of a mini hub. We have had early consultation with the WRTA in 2016 regarding potential transit improvements.

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**5. Connectivity:** Identify whether the proposed improvements will impact connectivity or access along the corridor or to other facilities. Please specify whether the project completes a link between existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities, or if the project creates new connections to businesses, residences, open space, transit stops, etc.

The proposed improvements include adding new sidewalk / pedestrian and bicycle accommodations to this roadway consistent with the Town's Complete Streets Prioritization Plan, which will greatly improve intermodal connectivity and safety. Also, the shoulders are used heavily for pedestrian and some bicycle traffic, creating unsafe situations for those users. The proposed sidewalk and bicycle accommodations will connect commercial and shopping areas at southerly limits to high density residential areas to the north and other new Complete Streets priority sidewalk projects on Pleasant Street and Smithville Road. The Meadow Road intersections with W. Main Street (Route 9) and N. Spencer Road (Route 31) are identified as critical intersections in the region's emergency preparedness and evacuation plans.

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**6. Design Exceptions:** Identify whether any exceptions to MassDOT design criteria are anticipated, such as exemptions for meeting AASHTO 13 design requirements or HTP.

The addition of sidewalks will be on one side for the entire length of the project. Sidewalks are proposed on both sides where a need exists, including the southerly commercial end and the area near the Fair Grounds.

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## **C. Safety**

**1. Motor Vehicle Safety:** Describe any improvements that are expected to reduce the crash potential or improve the general safety for motor vehicles. Please provide any highway safety analysis that has been completed, including Road Safety Audits.

Safety concerns exist at the N. Spencer Road (Route 31) intersection, which has had high crash rates in the past. Intersection visibility and safety improvements have been made at both of these intersections over the past few years, which seem to have reduced the number of accidents. This project will incorporate further safety improvements at these and all other intersections along the corridor.

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2. **Safety for Other Users:** Describe any improvements that are expected to improve the safety for other multi-modal users such as pedestrians, bicyclists, persons with disabilities, transit riders, school children, etc. Please provide any highway safety analysis that has been completed, including Road Safety Audits.

The proposed improvements will provide considerable improvements for multi-modal access and connectivity to all of these and other nearby resources. A Roadway Safety Audit will be completed early in the design process.

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3. **Evacuation Routes:** If the project is a known evacuation route identified at the state, local or private level, indicate how the project impacts the route.

Meadow Road is a designated evacuation route for the Central Massachusetts Region. Also, the Meadow Road intersections with W. Main Street (Route 9) and N. Spencer Road (Route 31) are identified as critical intersections in the region's emergency preparedness and evacuation plans. The proposed project will improve access, safety and resiliency along the entire Meadow Road segment and key evacuation control intersections of the regional emergency evacuation plan / routes.

#### **D. Economic Impacts**

1. **Economic Impact on a City, Town, or Village Center:** If the project is located within a city/town/village center, an area  $\geq 5000$  population per square mile, or is a roadway that provides an important connection to a city/town/village center or population center, please identify any economic impacts the project is anticipated to have on the city/town/village or population center.

The addition of new pedestrian sidewalks, bicycle accommodations and greatly enhanced WRTA public transit service along Meadow Road will encourage all intermodal users to utilize the Meadow Road connection between origins/destinations to the north via N. Spencer Road (Route 31) and the south via W. Main Street (Route 9). New sidewalks along the facility will promote better access for pedestrians to move from the commercial and retail areas in the south to the urban and recreational area in the north. Improvements to existing and new WRTA transit stops will promote a better connection from other sections of the WRTA transit system to resources and urbanized areas serviced by Meadow Road. The areas adjoining Meadow Road are currently experiencing commercial/retail growth at this time. It is anticipated that this project will enhance economic opportunities in the commercial, retails and recreational areas and improve access for all modes of transportation.

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2. **Priority Development Areas:** Identify any positive impacts to a Priority Development Area(s), as well as any improved access to services, industry clusters, or job creation in the project area (including the number of jobs to be created, if available). Please note any other proposed improvements that reflect the Commonwealth's Smart Growth/Smart Energy programs or Sustainable Development principles.

The goals of this project include substantially improved access to services for all users, including but not limited to, a comprehensive approach to providing intermodal access for pedestrians, bicyclists and transit. This project will greatly improve connections and options for employers/employees, commercial/retail, housing and will certainly promote developmental growth and job creation in the area. The project is expected to promote economic growth along Meadow Road and adjoining areas.

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**3. Local Economic Considerations:** Identify if the project includes any improvements with the specific intent to fill vacant storefronts or office spaces in city/town/village center, or if it incorporates any amenities that improve accessibility, wayfinding, pedestrian accommodations, or beautification of a city/town/village center with the intent of attracting consumers. (Examples of amenities or improvements can be new or ornamental lighting, benches, bike racks, landscaping enhancements, new parking, wayfinding signs, etc.)

New sidewalks along Meadow Road will ease and encourage travel from recreational areas in the north to commercial and retail areas in the south. This will allow consumers to more readily flow into the commercial area. The project is expected to promote economic growth along Meadow Road and adjoining areas.

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## **E. Environmental & Health Effects**

**1. Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases:** Indicate if the project is expected to produce an improvement to Air Quality or a reduction in Greenhouse Gases, confirmation pending completion of the Air Quality Analysis Worksheet. Please note any Traffic Operational Improvements, any increase to motor vehicle capacity, any expanded transit accommodations or park-and-rides that decrease motor vehicle miles travelled, and any new bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure proposed.

Traffic improvements at the W. Main Street (Route 9) intersection may result in air quality improvements. In addition, it is anticipated that much greater improvements to air quality will result from the substantial intermodal improvements provided by this project as described in greater detail above including new accommodations for pedestrians, bicyclists and much greater improved access to transit. This project will promote reductions in greenhouse gas emissions all along the Meadow Road project corridor.

**2. Stormwater Improvements/Impaired Waterbodies:** Indicate the potential impact to any impaired waterbodies or TMDL watersheds near the project, and list any proposed BMP's that will be included to improve stormwater treatment. State how the proposed BMP's will meet or work towards MassDEP stormwater standards or TMDL requirements. Also include whether the project is proposing to decrease or increase the amount of impervious cover.

Adjacent to Meadow Road is the Town of Spencer's Public Water Well Zone II Aquifer Protection District wellhead and water treatment plant. As touched on above, the proposed water quality improvements will be much greater than the typical roadway improvement project approach. Advanced water quality improvement technics will be incorporated into the design of this project. As described above the Town will begin implementing stormwater quality improvements in advance of this project as part a Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 319 water quality improvement grant in 2017. The CWA Section 319 project will also identify and conceptually design additional more extensive stormwater quality measures that will be incorporated into the design of the Meadow Road reconstruction project. The project will result in tremendous improvements to stormwater quality and resiliency.

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**3. Wetland(s) and Resource Areas:** If there any wetlands, watersheds, or resource areas adjacent to the project, discuss how the project impacts the identified locations. Include an estimate of the quantity of temporary and permanent impacts to any wetlands, and a summary of how impacts will be mitigated.

There are valuable wetlands along the westerly side of Meadow Road associated with the Seven Mile River watershed and the Town's Wellhead Zone II Aquifer Protection District. This project will provide much needed stormwater treatment and water quality improvements that will ensure that the values of the wetland resource areas and associated wildlife habitat values are maintained. The addition of pedestrian and bicycle accommodation will also promote the outdoor experience and enjoyment of these resources for those users.

**4. Wildlife Habitat(s):** Identify any priority habitats within a 1/2 mile of the project limits, and discuss how the project may impact any locations identified. Include a discussion of temporary and permanent impacts, and any improvements that are being proposed. If project includes work on bridges or culverts, discuss if new structures will meet the Massachusetts River and Stream Crossing standards. (Examples of priority development areas include: Core Habitat and Critical Natural Landscape, Coldwater fisheries, diadromous fish runs, Vernal Pools, and NHESP Priority and Estimated Rare species habitat.)

Meadow Road falls within and adjacent to Priority Habitat 1419. The water quality improvements to be included in this project will promote the long term protection and security of the priority habitat as well as all wetland and wildlife resources adjacent to and downstream of this project. Stormwater resiliency improvements will also be designed per the stream crossing standards and improve biological / environmental connectivity.

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**5. Resiliency:** Indicate if the project is located within a 100-year floodplain or any area identified as vulnerable through a municipal, state, or federal vulnerability assessment. Identify any improvements to the system's resiliency to flood events and other climate change stressors through resiliency best management practices (BMPs) such as increasing the hydraulic opening of a bridge or culvert(s), armoring of hydraulic and/or hydrologic features, replacement a standalone headwall replacement, scour protection at a structure, or erosion prevention along a bank or shoreline.

The Seven Mile River 1% Annual Chance Flood Hazard runs adjacent to Meadow Road for the entire length from route 9 to route 31. At one point, the hazard overlaps with Meadow Road. In order to follow the Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP), this project will improve flood resiliency for Meadow Road by increasing the size and capacity of all existing cross culverts as well as storm water systems. The Town of Spencer will evaluate and improve the resiliency of culverts and stormwater systems across the whole town including along emergency evacuation routes such as Meadow Road and other critical routes.

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**6. Historic/Cultural/Archaeological Resource(s):** If there is any Open Space, National Register listed or eligible properties, or 4(f) or Article 97 protected land in the area, discuss any positive or negative impacts to these resources, including improved or hindered access. Please reference the MACRIS database to determine if any National-Register Listed or Eligible properties are located within the project limits.

The Mary Queen of Rosary Cemetery, Pine Grove Cemetery, Spencer Fair Grounds and Powder Mill Park are all adjacent to the Meadow Road Project. In addition, the Smalls Farm Preservation area and trails are located adjacent to the northerly terminus of the project at the intersection with N. Spencer Road (Route 31) and Wire Village Road. The addition of sidewalks will ease access to all of these resources by pedestrians and cyclists.

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**7. Hazardous Materials:** If there are any hazardous materials or sites adjacent to the project, discuss how the project will handle any hazardous materials.

There are no known hazardous materials concerns impacted by this project. There is an old DEP BWSC Tier II site (# 2-0017396) near the intersection of Meadow Road and Olde Main Street; however, there are not any anticipated disturbances to potentially contaminated soils anticipated.

## F. Social Equity

**1. Environmental Justice:** If the project is located in, or within a ¼ mile of, an Environmental Justice area, please identify any elements of the project designed to decrease environmental impacts or improve the safety, sustainability, or mobility of the EJ community. Identify any improvements that involve community planning and equitable sharing of benefits/burden or are particularly targeted within an Environmental Justice area.

As read above, this project plans to include the construction of new sidewalks and pedestrian/bicycle friendly routes. This will allow those living in the EJ area to gain more access to the commercial area of Town without the struggle or danger of walking on the roadway with vehicles. Mobility of those in the EJ area will be increased thus allowing access to possible income (reason for EJ, based on the 2000 US Census) to be increased.

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**2. Title VI:** If the project is located in, or within a ¼ mile of, a Title VI area, please identify any elements of the project designed to have a positive impact on the community through public outreach. Identify any improvements that involve community planning and equitable sharing of benefits/burden or are particularly targeted within a Title VI community.

This project will greatly improve access to services, jobs, housing transit and recreation for residents within the area and for all users going to/from the project area.

**3. Regional Equity:** Please note the last project the proponent initiated seeking Federal Transportation Funds, along with the year initiated (other than this project). If any projects have been constructed using Federal Transportation Funds in the last 5 years, please identify along with the year completed. If this project is located in a rural area, discuss the importance of this project to the community or region.

The last project the proponent initiated seeking Federal Transportation Funds was the Main Street and Downtown Revitalization Project. Upon completion, this project will have been vital to beautifying downtown Spencer and attracting consumers to the commercial regions.

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## G. Policy Support

**1. Risk Assessment and Appropriateness:** Discuss any other alternatives considered, and how the chosen concept is the most appropriate solution to the projects needs and potential risks in comparison to other alternatives, if any. Identify whether the project involves any innovative or non-traditional design or construction techniques intended to improve safety, reduce costs, improve customer service, reduce environmental or climate impacts, expedite project completion, or enhance the statewide or national transportation system.

One alternative considered was leaving the roadway the same width after the renovation of the roadway. This would not allow for sufficient room for sidewalks, or bicycle accommodations. As stated previously, the addition of sidewalks and bicycle lanes, the town will become a better place for pedestrians and will become closer to its goal of the town's Complete Streets Prioritization Plan.

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**2. Statewide Policies and Plans:** If the project concept or location is mentioned or supported by any other MassDOT policy or plan not noted elsewhere, please describe. If the project is supported by any other state entities, please describe level of support. Examples of other state entities may be DCR, MBTA, RTA, etc. Statewide Plans may include, but are not limited to, the following: Bicycle, Freight, Pedestrian, Port, Rail or ITS.

Plans to reach out to WRTA to expand the route along Meadow Road and include an addition of stops along the route. Plan to also meet policy P-13-0001 "Healthy Transportation Policy".

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**3. Regional Policy:** Describe how the project meets regional policies or performance measures supported by a regional entity such as a Regional Planning Agency. Reference any regional studies or plans that include the project location. Identify efforts to coordinate with relevant government agencies, including RTA(s), DCR, regulatory agencies, or neighboring municipalities.

The Town will be working with CMRPC to do a Walkability Study and Roadway Safety Audit for Meadow Road.

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**4. Local Policy:** Describe how the project meets local policies. Reference any local studies or plans that reference the project or location. (Examples of local policies or plans may include the Master Plan, community compacts, livability plans, health assessments, local ordinances, bylaws, a designated Green Community, a Complete Streets Policy, etc.)

The addition of sidewalks are part of the town's sidewalk betterment and connectivity plans and the Town's Complete Streets Policy and Tier II Prioritization Plan. The intermodal access and safety and environmental improvements included in the proposed project are also consistent with Complete Streets priorities of the community and the context of the corridor.

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## **5. Planning and Public Outreach and Support**

1. Describe any Public Outreach that has occurred. Include any public informational meetings, local mailings, workshops, planning documents, etc., where the proposed improvements were specifically presented to abutters, businesses and/or the general public. Please note any local support or opposition to the project, including any local advocacy groups.

The Meadow Road corridor is part of the Route 31 corridor profile by CMRPC, which included public hearings in Spencer and other adjacent communities. The Meadow Road Project was also integral to numerous Public Hearings and meetings for the Town FMPC Roads Bond Program and the Complete Street Prioritization Planning feedback, review and approval hearings. The Meadow Road project also held a public hearing before the Board of Selectmen on 2/27/2017 to review and discuss the design and the Project Need Form. The Meadow Road project has received overwhelming support from the public during all hearings and meetings held to date.

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**Thank you for completing this form. Please submit the PIF to the Regional MPO/RPA and the MassDOT Highway Division District office.**