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Newton ARPA Investment Washington Street Pilot - \$3,000,000

For some time now, we have been exploring how we might make improvements to the stretch of Washington Street from West Newton Square to Newton Corner along the Mass Pike. This is one of the most important transportation corridors in the City, serving many businesses and residents along its route. Currently, the corridor is not very attractive or safe. Along many sections, it is wide with four travel lanes and two parking lanes. Cars and trucks drive at high speeds. It has no bicycle facilities and unappealing pedestrian accommodations.

The City Council approved \$500,000 in May 2022 to design the first phase of a major, long-term “complete streets” redesign of Washington Street. The long-term goals are to:

- Create a vibrant, welcoming and inviting boulevard for customers, businesses, and residents of all ages through streetscape and sidewalk improvements, such as improved street lighting, better stormwater management, more plantings, and the addition of street furniture.
- Improve safety and accessibility for everyone, with a particular focus on vulnerable users such as people with disabilities as well as older and younger users.
- Improve biking and walking, including increasing the number and safety of pedestrian crossings, ensuring accessibility, and providing dedicated bike lanes.
- Support public transit service, optimizing MBTA bus operations and enhancing access for transit riders to the commuter rail and buses.

One of the first steps is to finish the design and then pilot a realignment of a section of the Washington Street corridor from Chestnut Street to Lowell Avenue in between West Newton Square and Newtonville. Once designed, we will trial a realignment of this portion of the corridor. It is likely to include a redesign from four to two travel lanes, plus turn lanes where needed. The pilot will maintain as much parking as possible and add bikes lanes. After the pilot, the City will move forward, applying complete streets design

principles that work well for this unique street for the entire length of Washington Street along the Mass Pike.

I am allocating \$3 million in ARPA funds to advance this key project with construction funding for the pilot once the design is completed.

The larger scale project for the entire length of Washington Street will take many years and will require funding from the State. This ARPA investment will allow us to complete Phase 1a and 1b (as described below) and move these important improvements forward:

Phase 1a: Develop Design Concept and Evaluation Criteria for Pilot and Construct Pilot -

A professional services team will assist the City in designing a “complete streets” pilot for Washington Street as a boulevard, most likely from Chestnut Street to Lowell Avenue. This will most likely include the re-alignment of Washington Street from 4 to 2 lanes (plus turn lanes where needed), with parking and dedicated bike lanes. Public input and outreach will be extensive. Once we have an agreed upon design, the City will construct the pilot.

Phase 1b: TIP Project Planning and Initiation – Create the plan for a phased approach to design and implementation of a MassDOT Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) funded project for the long-term, full reconstruction of Washington Street along the Mass Pike between West Newton Square and Newton Corner).

Phase 2: Create the 25% Design for a MassDOT TIP Project

Phase 3: Create the 100% Engineering Design for a MassDOT TIP Project

Phase 4: Construction of the full stretch of Washington Street from West Newton Square to Newton Corner

Update (Fall 2023): As we get a better understanding of what the pilot will entail, we are revising the construction budget to an estimated \$2,770,000, as anticipated construction costs trend slightly downward.

Update (January 2024): Construction estimate adjusted to \$2 million. We are continuing to reserve \$2,770,000 in the overall ARPA budget for this project, as we don't yet have a qualified estimate from our consultants. We expect to receive that estimate with their 25% design submission in April, and we will share the estimate with the City Council at the 25% design approval Public Facilities meeting. Additionally, whatever the projected construction estimate, we will still need to go out to bid for the project. Reserving \$2.7

million for construction will enable us to cover the projected construction estimate as well as any unanticipated bid or cost escalations.