



TOWN OF WEST BROOKFIELD HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Anne Garwood-Hampp

Phone: (508) 867-1417

Email: agarwood-hampp@wbrookfield.com

Ground Breaks on \$30 Million Dollar, Route 9 Reconstruction Project Between West Brookfield and Ware

[WEST BROOKFIELD, MA, January 10, 2025] When West Brookfield Highway Superintendent Jim Daley was hired in 2010, he knew something had to be done about the dangerous section of West Main Street/Route 9 between West Brookfield and Ware. At his request, MassDOT agreed to perform a Road Safety Audit in 2012 which confirmed his fears. This specific portion of road was found to be one of the most dangerous segments of Route 9 in the state due to its high incidence and severity of motor vehicle crashes. He quickly realized that annual Chapter 90 funds which most small towns rely on to fund their road projects, would not be sufficient to fund an undertaking of this magnitude. Depleting Chapter 90 funds on Route 9 would also make it impossible to do smaller, more routine public works projects in the rest of the town for years to come. In 2011, the Route 9 Reconstruction project was accepted into the highly competitive, federally and state funded Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). West Brookfield was awarded just over \$8 million dollars needed to fund Phase I, which begins at the Ware town line and proceeds to Welcome Road. Due to the size of the project, it has been divided into three Phases which will take place in succession starting from the Ware town line up to where the State Highway begins near Cutler and Old Warren Road in West Brookfield, with a total TIP award of about \$30 million. All work is projected to be complete by 2030.

"MassDOT is dedicated to enhancing safety and accessibility along our roadways, and we are proud to collaborate with the town of West Brookfield on this significant reconstruction project," said Transportation Secretary and CEO Monica Tibbits-Nutt. "We would like to thank our municipal partners for their advocacy on this project and look forward to improved safety, accessibility, and resiliency along Route 9."

Superintendent Daley, just a couple years away from retirement, is pleased to finally be overseeing the start a project he initiated nearly 15 years ago. He is grateful for the guidance he's received from the Engineers at CHA Consulting, the State Aid office at Mass DOT, Central Massachusetts Regional Planning (CMRP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding, "without these federal and state funding opportunities, professional collaborations and the support of the West Brookfield town leadership and its residents, a project of this scope would not have been possible in our small town."

"This kind of funding is absolutely essential for the growth and safety of our roadway infrastructure in small-town Massachusetts," said Chairman of the West Brookfield Board of Selectmen Eric Von Bleicken. "Thanks to our Highway Superintendent's due diligence and persistence in applying for these federal and state monies, we can move ahead."

Identified by a 2012 Road Safety Audit as one of the most dangerous sections of Route 9 in the state due to the high number of motor vehicle incidents, the section between West Brookfield and Ware will be reconstructed with the primary objective of improving safety for all users.

The initial Phase I portion of the project consists of a large amount of full depth road reconstruction as well as resurfacing a one-mile section of West Main Street/Route 9 between Welcome Road and the Ware town line. The roadway will also be widened to include a 5-foot shoulder on each side, to improve safety for all roadway users including emergency vehicles, maintenance vehicles, disabled vehicles, and to provide bicycle accommodation. Drainage modifications will improve stormwater runoff which will also help prevent icing during winter conditions. All existing guardrails will be replaced, and new signage and pavement markings will be included.

Travelers should expect temporary lane closures and increased delays during the construction of Phase I which is scheduled to be completed by the end of April 2026.

###



TOWN OF WEST BROOKFIELD HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT

The Town of West Brookfield (pop. 3,752) is a rural community that still retains the many charming and picturesque characteristics of a typical small New England town. Located on the western edge of Worcester County, West Brookfield boasts a beautiful Center Historic District centered around its scenic town common. The essential mission of the West Brookfield Highway Department is to maintain safe and passable roadways, sidewalks and public ways through caring for and preserving public roadways, parks, grounds and trees, managing storm water systems and by planning and directing public works projects.

If you would like more information about this topic, please call Anne Garwood-Hampp at 508-867-1417, or email agarwood-hampp@wbrookfield.com