

Cover Sheet – Non-Social Service Activity

AGENCY NAME: Town of Amherst
AGENCY ADDRESS: 4 Boltwood Ave.
AGENCY PHONE NO: 413-259-3040 CONTACT PERSON: David Ziomek
CONTACT PERSON EMAIL: ziomekd@amherstma.gov
CDBG FUNDING REQUEST: \$500,000.00

1. Project Name
East Hadley Road Pedestrian Improvements Project
 2. Project Description (1-2 sentences)
The Town intends to replace the existing failed sidewalk with a new 8-10' wide continuous walkway that connects residents with public transit, Groff Park and Route 116 where there are sidewalks that lead to the Pomeroy Village Center.
 3. Project Location (Street address)
East Hadley Road
 4. Budget Request
\$500,000.00
 5. Type of Activity (check one):
 - Rehabilitation
 - Acquisition
 - Demolition/clearance
 - Infrastructure
 - Public Facility
 - Architectural Barrier Removal
 - Other – please explain
 6. National Objective:
Total number of beneficiaries (individuals served): approx. 2,635
Total Low/Mod beneficiaries (individuals served): approx. 1,550 (59% low/mod)
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Please submit responses to the following questions:

Project Name: East Hadley Road Pedestrian Improvements Project

Project Location: East Hadley Road, Amherst, MA

Census Block Group: 250158208013 (south of East Hadley Road) and 250158205005 (north of East Hadley Road)

National Objective Description

The Block Group south of East Hadley Road has a low/mod percentage of 81% representing 1455 people. Although this block group extends down Route 116 and includes properties north along West Pomeroy Lane, most of the low/mod individuals live along East Hadley Road. The neighborhood north of East Hadley Road contains approximately 110 properties that are mostly single family homes. Eleven percent of this block group is low/mod so that a small proportion of this neighborhood is income eligible.

Combining the populations of the block groups north and south of East Hadley Road yields a majority (approximately 60%) of residents who are income eligible.

Demonstrate Consistency with Sustainable Development Principles

By improving pedestrian connections to public transit, recreation amenities and a village center, the East Hadley Road infrastructure improvement project meets three sustainable development principles: 1) concentrate development and mix uses, 2) advance equity, and 7) provide transportation choice.

Demonstrate Consistency with Target Area requirements

East Hadley Road is located within the East Hadley Road/Pomeroy Village Center Target Area. Within this target area, East Hadley Road has a large proportion of income eligible residents.

A. Demonstrate Consistency with Community Development Strategy

The project is consistent with priority project #4, improving public infrastructure in the village centers and target areas. A multi-use path along East Hadley Road will create a barrier free sidewalk that connects residents with public transportation and other amenities. This project will also help connect residents with Groff Park, a widely used recreation area in South Amherst. Bringing neighborhood residents to public transit and the recreation area achieves goals articulated in the Strategy and is part of projects aimed at making Amherst more sustainable in

terms of pedestrian connectivity, encouraging alternative modes of transportation, and allocating resources to meet a high community need and demand.

B. Agency Information

The Town offers high level government services, quality education, support for open space and agriculture, promotion of economic development, and respect for its history. Town government has been in existence for decades, with numerous departments and citizen boards and committees all working toward common goals that benefit its citizens and the community. Currently, Amherst has professional staff in all of its departments, in particular its Accounting, Conservation, Planning, Facilities and Public Works Departments who commonly work with consultants and contractors to manage and develop such projects as feasibility studies and assessments, development of engineering specifications, and construction projects ranging from public infrastructure to affordable housing. Town staff is competent with procurement regulations, balancing budgets, and efficiently managing contracts so that deliverables are received on time. The Director of Facilities and Planning Department Staff will work closely with the contractors to oversee the project. This is the same staff who:

- Managed energy-efficient upgrades at the local schools
- Supervised \$250,000 HVAC and roof upgrades to the childcare center
- Managed \$300,000 rehabilitation of the North Amherst School.

C. Project Budget Information

The project budget was prepared by town staff, including the Town Engineer. The budget represents an estimate to install an 8-10' wide multi-use path along East Hadley Road.

The project budget was developed using unit costs published by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation Highway Division and quantities estimated by the Engineer. There are no funds requested for operations or maintenance, as the Town would maintain following its annual schedule.

D. Project Description

The goal is to have a continuous multi-use path on East Hadley Road that serves pedestrians and cyclists.

The project involves the installation of an 8-10' wide multi-use path along East Hadley Road. The path would provide an accessible, safe route that connects residents with bus stops, Groff Park, and Route 116 (where additional bus routes are available and where there is a continuous sidewalk to the Pomeroy Village Center).

Currently the sidewalk crosses East Hadley Road three times at crosswalks that have limited safety features. The sidewalk is extremely narrow in places and not accessible. The plan is to increase the safety of the crosswalks with raised pavement that has increased line painting and

flashing lights. The roadway would be widened in sections for the installation of dedicated bus pull offs and stops that permanent shelters.

The new path would intersect Route 116 on the south side of East Hadley Road (its current location) and would have new pedestrian signals and curb cuts to connect with the sidewalk to north, which provides access to Groff Park.

The realignment of the path and crosswalks would also involve new drainage infrastructure and the removal and planting of street trees.

E. Project Need

The project is needed to safely bring over 1,000 low- and moderate-income residents along East Hadley road to access public transit, Groff Park, and the Pomeroy Village Center. Currently, residents often walk in the road and do not use the crosswalks, creating dangerous, unsafe conditions. Although there is public transportation available on East Hadley Road, more routes are available from stops on Route 116. On a daily basis, many residents walk to Route 116 to take advantage of this public transit. Residents of this area use Groff Park very frequently as it offers open space, playing fields, playgrounds, access to the Fort River, and a wading pool. In 2014, the Amherst Health Department conducted a survey of East Hadley Road residents and found that many use public transportation and Groff Park, and that more would take advantage of these resources if they were easier to access.

The Town is planning to upgrade Groff Park and anticipate this will encourage even more use from the East Hadley Road neighborhood. A new multi-use path would be able safely accommodate existing users and increase use.

F. Community Involvement and Support

Following up on the work of the Health Department that identified Groff Park as a widely used amenity and the high use of public transportation by East Hadley Road residents, the Town has planned three improvement projects for this area: modernize Groff Park, new multi-use path along East Hadley Road (to connect to Groff, public transportation and Crocker Farm Elementary School), and a paved connection to the Norwottuck Rail Trail (this project is mainly in Hadley). Plans to improve Groff Park included a community-wide survey with targeted outreach to East Hadley Road. Respondents indicated a desire to improve the Park as well as the pedestrian connection to it to make it easier and safer to access. The Town's intention is to implement the plans at Groff Park in 2017 and 2018.

Improvements to East Hadley Road would follow shortly after, and would involve input from stakeholders (residents, Pioneer Valley Transit Authority) about exact locations of the new bus stops and other amenities and features of the path that would be used by residents such as seating.

G. Project Feasibility

Currently the project is in concept design and cost estimating, but is at a point where staff are confident the project is feasible and can be completed within budget. The new path would remain within the Town right-of-way, and steps have been taken to minimize extending beyond this point, although it is necessary on some properties. The actual construction of the path and crosswalks is straightforward, and involves minor changes to existing drainage infrastructure and roadway (for the bus stops and crosswalks). Impacts to the roadway would be minimized and the plans do not include changes to other utilities (water and sewer and electric).

There are wetlands along the road and the nearby Fort River. This work would need permitting through the Conservation Commission, with review by the State because these nearby resources are within the floodplain of the Mill River (approx. 2,000 LF) and in an area that falls within Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP) estimated habitat of rare wildlife (Approximately 3000LF+/-). Included in this review would be a detailed environmental site assessment, associated wetland and riverfront flagging followed by a detailed site and topographic survey.

The additional predevelopment work would be completed in calendar year 2017 and early 2018 with an expected procurement in spring 2018. The project would follow Massachusetts procurement regulations for horizontal construction and would occur in summer and fall 2018. Town staff would provide procurement and construction oversight while the work would be completed by outside contractors.

H. Project Impact

The impacts will be a safer, completely accessible path for residents that will result in fewer complaints. The bus stops will also be safer with the dedicated pull offs and new pedestrian signals at Route 116 will make it easier for residents to walk to Groff Park and access the sidewalks on Route 116 to walk into the Pomeroy Village Center and Crocker Farm Elementary School.

EAST HADLEY ROAD PEDESTRIAN IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

