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Northampton Receives \$500,000 Complete Streets Grant for Locust Street Project

NORTHAMPTON - The City of Northampton is thrilled to have received a \$500,000 Complete Streets Grant award from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) for bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements in addition to the repaving of Locust Street from Straw Avenue to Prospect Street. Funding for this project has been made possible through years of prioritization and planning by the Office of Planning and Sustainability and the Department of Public Works.

This project will improve safety on Locust Street between Berkshire Terrace/Straw Avenue and Hatfield Street. Planned work includes restriping to create a five-foot bicycle lane with a four-foot striped buffer, 11-foot travel lanes in each direction, and a 14-foot center left-turn lane will be added in front of Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School, along with curb extensions and crosswalks. A Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon will also be installed at the Berkshire Terrace/Straw Avenue crosswalk. These improvements are designed to reduce vehicle speeds, provide a safer and more comfortable environment for bicyclists, and close a major gap in the bicycle network, as no bicycle facilities currently exist on Locust Street between Berkshire Terrace/Straw Avenue and Prospect Street. Design work for construction plans will begin immediately.

MassDOT defines a "Complete Street" as one that provides safe and accessible options for all travel modes - walking, biking, transit, and vehicles - for people of all ages and abilities. Mayor Sciarra shared, "I am proud that the Commonwealth has recognized our dedicated efforts to improve safety for all roadway users in this vital corridor, and I remain committed to making our streets safer and more accessible for everyone in our community."

The Locust Street area is one of the top 20 priorities submitted to MassDOT in 2022 as part of the planning process to become eligible for Complete Streets funding. This complete streets prioritization plan process was facilitated by the team at Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, who collected data, made field observations, and collected input and feedback from the Transportation and Parking Commission and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Subcommittee during 2021-2022. The process also included scoring to narrow eligible projects to a prioritized list for future funding awards.

For more information, please contact the Mayor's Office at 413-587-1249 or mayor@northamptonma.gov.