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Roundabout Project Delayed to Allow for Federal Fund Access

At the Oct. 7 Select Board meeting, when members agreed to cancel the BETA engineering design contract for the **Route 27/North Meadows Road and West Street roundabout project**, it appeared as if the move was a deal killer.

However, Town Administrator Kristine Trierweiler explained that the town now has an opportunity to **use federal funds for project design** (in addition to construction), instead of state Chapter 90 infrastructure dollars. But as a result, Medfield must go out to bid for the remainder of the project to meet Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) federal procurement guidelines. She noted that BETA intends to bid on the project.

"We have been working closely with MassDOT and Congressman Auchincloss's office to ensure we don't lose the federal funding," Trierweiler explained. "We have been assigned a dedicated MassDOT team for the project, which has been very helpful. After several meetings with MassDOT, they strongly encouraged the Town to access the federal funds sooner rather than later, now that the earmark guidelines allow this funding to be used for both design and construction."

A year ago, MassDOT guidance indicated that the earmark could only be used for the construction phase, which is why the Select Board voted to proceed with Chapter 90 covering the design funds. Now those funds can be used for other town needs.

In prior meetings to discuss intersection options for Route 27 and West Street to improve safety, it was ultimately determined that a **MassDOT-suggested roundabout** would be the best solution. **The most recent schematic can be found here.**

For many community members, improvements to the intersection can't come soon enough, especially after a **near-fatal accident in March 2024**, and other motor vehicle accidents since, including one on **Oct. 8**.

Seeking Clarification on Project Status

Questions that surfaced as part of the recent Select Board discussion were posed to Trierweiler, and her answers are as follows:

Q. **How will the extra time needed to go through the procurement process impact the roundabout project schedule-wise?**

A. It's estimated that 3-4 months will be lost in the design phase due to the federal procurement process.

Q. **What happens to the Intersection Control Evaluation (ICE) process, for example, can it simply pick up where it left off?**

A. The next step will be to pick up where the BETA design and ICE Process had paused to bring the design to 25 percent completion, which is where BETA left off. We do not have to repeat any of the ICE steps to date. The 25 percent design will be followed by a public hearing once MassDOT has reviewed it as part of the ICE process.

Q. **What are the anticipated state Chapter 90 fund savings with federal dollars paying for design?**

A. We anticipate roughly $200,000 in savings in Chapter 90 funds. Procurement bids are accepted based on both the lowest cost and most responsible bidder.

Q. **Does our deadline for starting to use the funds (by September 2026) remain the same, or do we get an extension?**

A. The deadline to begin accessing the funds remains the same. The ability to use federal funds for design (as well as construction) expedites our access.

Trierweiler is happy to answer any questions about the Route 27/North Meadows Road and West Street intersection/proposed roundabout project. She can be reached by either **e-mail** or phone (508-906-3011).