

## Elm St – Railroad to Main - Complete Streets Project FAQs

### 1. What is a “Complete Street?”

Complete Streets is an approach to planning, designing and building streets and roads that enables safe access for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities.

### 2. Why does Elm Street need to be a Complete Street?

Elm Street between Railroad and Main currently has

- Narrow sidewalks in poor shape
- No tree belt, vegetation or other landscaping
- Angled parking is challenging for people with mobility issues and for anyone when backing out
- Little differentiation between public sidewalk and private business spaces
- No bike facilities
- No other street amenities such as benches, lighting or trash receptacles

### 3. What kind of improvements are planned?

- 10’ Shared-use path with a landscape buffer on the North side of Elm Street
- Intermediate high and low points to help direct water into new storm drains and infrastructure
- A new Elm Street crosswalk with flashing beacons leading to the Municipal Parking lot

### 4. How long has this been in the works?

Complete Streets improvements to downtown South Deerfield have been discussed for more than a decade.

- 2012: Nelson Nygaard planning effort identifies possible improvements to Elm Street and Leary Lot
- 2019: Tier 1 – Deerfield adopts a Complete Streets Policy
- 2020: Tier 2 – Deerfield develops a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan making Elm Street between Railroad and Main the #3 priority behind two Town Common projects
- 2024: Tier 3 – Deerfield is awarded \$500,000 in construction funding to implement a project from the Prioritization Plan

### 5. Did these other studies accomplish anything?

Yes! Previous efforts laid the groundwork for the redevelopment of the former Oxford Pickle Site as well as the Leary Lot. Possible improvements to the Town Common were also identified though they have not come to fruition yet due in part due to ongoing discussion with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation regarding road ownership. The Leary Lot now serves as an expanded municipal parking lot, ensuring reconfiguration of parking on Elm Street will not pose a challenge for businesses and their patrons.

Ultimately, these efforts allowed Deerfield to become a Tier 3 community, eligible for \$500,000 in construction funding across a four-year timeframe.

## 6. What is the timeline for the project?

Assuming grant funding is awarded, the timeline for the project stretches over the next year:

- January 2025: Town received notification of \$500,000 Complete Streets funding award
- June 2025: Applied for \$1-million Small Town Road Improvement Fund grant to extend work through Main Street Intersection
- Fall 2025: Town receives notification of additional funding and advances project into full design; next opportunity for public feedback
- Winter 2025: Finalize plans, request rights of entry
- Spring 2026: Contract awarded, and construction commences

## 7. How will it be paid for?

As a Tier 3 community, Deerfield was awarded \$500,000 in Complete Streets funding through the Massachusetts Department of Transportation. There is no local match required.

Additionally, the Town has applied for the Small Towns Road Improvement Fund through the Massachusetts Office of Economic Development. The local match is covered by the \$500,000 Complete Streets Award. Awards from this program have not yet been announced.

To date, survey work and conceptual design have been covered by \$40,000 appropriated by Town Meeting in 2019. This will also cover schematic design pending award of grant funding. The Commonwealth's Complete Streets program does not cover design costs. As such, the project may come back to Town Meeting in April 2025 to request funds for bid document development, construction administration and other soft costs. Design typically runs at 10% of construction.

## 8. What kind of feedback are you looking for?

Concept 3 from the Complete Streets work last fall was selected by the Community. We are now looking at minor edits and ensuring members of the community, in particular, our small businesses and patrons are prepared for the approximately 6-month construction this coming summer.

## 9. What is the next step for the project?

We are awaiting the results of the \$1-million request from the STRI fund. Should the funding be awarded, the Town would be notified in December 2025 at the latest and launch into further design in preparation for putting the project out to bid in the spring. Keep an eye out for future opportunities to weigh in on this project!

## 10. Who to contact?

Planning & Economic Development Coordinator – Alexandria Galloway – 413-665-1400 x117 or via email [planner@town.deerfield.ma.us](mailto:planner@town.deerfield.ma.us)