

Diane N. Tradd
Assistant City Manager/Director

R. Eric Slagle
Director

David Fuller
Building Commissioner

MEMORANDUM

TO: Eileen M. Donoghue, City Manager *EMD*

FROM: Jared Alves, Senior Planner

DATE: July 28, 2020

RE: Motion Response – Shared Streets Grant Program

6/23/2020 – Councilor Elliott – Req. City Mgr. Have DPD Prepare Plan to Submit a Request to MassDOT for Funding Under the Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program, for Projects Which Will Re-Purpose Parking to Better Support Curbside Pick-Up and Outdoor Dining.

An interdepartmental group of City Staff including representatives from Economic Development, Transportation, Engineering, Public Works, and Development Services met on Friday, June 12 to discuss the then newly announced MassDOT Shared Streets grant program. MassDOT solicited applications that can advance four goals: (1) create safe connections to essential destinations, (2) create safe, family-friendly neighborhood walking and biking opportunities that allow for social distancing, (3) create safe routes to school and other facilities used by children and youth, and (4) repurpose roadways or parking areas to support curbside retail and dining. **On July 10, MassDOT awarded nearly \$166,000 to Lowell—17 percent—of the total first round funding awarded under this program.**

As described in this memorandum, the interdepartmental team applied for three projects designed to advance the goals of Sustainable Lowell 2025, the Complete Streets Policy and Prioritization Plan, and the GoLowell Multimodal Transportation Plan. While we believe these projects will generate economic activity, the application submitted on June 23, 2020 did not focus exclusively on outdoor dining or curbside pickup. The interdepartmental team feels that the City has done an incredible job supporting small businesses during this unprecedented time and this grant opportunity allowed us to shift our focus to address other pedestrian safety needs throughout the City.

Starting on March 31, the Parking Department collaborated with the Economic Development Office to allow free 10-minute curbside parking in front of restaurants and retailers. This program is ongoing and interested businesses may contact parking@LowellMA.gov, call (978) 674-4014, or visit lowellma.gov/1413/Restaurant-Relief-Program to complete the one-page application.

On June 9, the City Council unanimously passed the ordinance titled Street Seats in the Public Space. Prior to and since passage, Development Services staff have coordinated with the Department of Public Works to review and approve applications for 28 eligible businesses to operate outdoor dining. Eligible businesses can continue to submit applications before the ordinance

sunsets on October 31, 2020. Call Development Services at (978) 674-4144 or download the application at lowellma.gov/1463/Temporary-Outdoor-Seating.

We have received an overwhelmingly positive response from members of our community and small business owners about the outdoor dining. The program has allowed restaurants to remain open and enabled customers to feel safe while supporting our local economy. The City waived all fees and streamlined its permitting, so now we have many new outdoor dining spaces throughout the City that have activated the public space and improved neighborhood quality of life. In addition, the City has already fielded multiple requests to make this program permanent.

Currently, no applications are pending for the temporary outdoor dining and the Department of Public Works has sufficient jersey barriers and related materials to enable future applicants to open outdoor seating in the City right-of-way. Importantly, the additional jersey barriers ordered to support this ordinance will be reimbursable under FEMA funding.

MassDOT began accepting applications for the Shared Streets grant program on June 22. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until the \$5 million allotted for the program is awarded, so the interdepartmental group worked quickly to brainstorm eligible projects and submit an application. Since the temporary curbside pickup and Street Seats programs have been so successful and we did not foresee needing any additional City resources to enable eligible businesses to expand into outdoor dining, we focused on projects that address the other three goals of the Shared Streets program.

MassDOT also limited applicants to a maximum of three projects and awarded bonus points for projects that could be launched within 30 days, those that could be made permanent, that are located in Environmental Justice Census Block Groups, and if they included dedicated bus lanes. The three projects selected by the interdepartmental working group are eligible for all but the bus lane extra credit points and target at least two of the four program goals. Each of these projects corresponds directly to the City's Complete Streets Policy and Prioritization Plan, the goals of Sustainable Lowell 2025, the GoLowell Multimodal Transportation Plan, and ongoing safety concerns for people walking and biking during the current period of high vehicular speeding. MassDOT agreed and selected our three proposed projects from among a competitive applicant pool:

1. **Upper Merrimack Street Cycle Track (budget: \$37,380):** construct an 1,800 linear foot, two-way cycle track on Merrimack Street from Cardinal O'Connell Way to Decatur Street. The City's Complete Streets Prioritization Plan identifies this corridor and early design work is complete. This project would use flex posts, paint, and signs to pilot the concept, which connects the University to downtown, students in the Acre to the high school, and customers to businesses on Upper Merrimack.
2. **VFW Highway Multi-Use Path (budget: \$89,880):** construct a 2,100 linear foot long multi-use path by repurposing the shoulder and one travel lane between the intersection with Varnum Ave and the Sampas Pavilion. Using jersey barriers, the project will create a safe space to recreate and access the esplanade in an area where a driver recently struck and killed two pedestrians.
3. **Pawtucket Street Multi-Use Path (budget: \$38,495):** construct a 2,000 linear foot and 8-10-ft. wide multi-use path from Fletcher Street to the Pawtucket Canal using flex posts and wheel stops. This project would pilot the proposed path identified in the City's Complete Streets Prioritization Plan and the UMass Lowell Transportation Master Plan. The corridor links to UMass Lowell, the Bartlett School, and the Francis Gate Park path.

Since receiving the Notice to Proceed from MassDOT, the Departments of Public Works and Planning and Development have started finalizing the design and are readying to procure and deploy the materials necessary for these three projects. The award terms dictate that the City must install the projects by October 9, 2020 and submit a report detailing lessons learned to MassDOT by December 31, 2020.

Attached: Lowell MassDOT Shared Streets Grant Application



Eileen M. Donoghue
City Manager

Diane Tradd
Assistant City Manager
Director of Planning and Development

June 23, 2020

Stephanie Pollack
Secretary and CEO
Massachusetts Department of Transportation
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116

RE: Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program

Dear Secretary Pollack:

I am pleased to submit this application on behalf of the City of Lowell, which harnesses the flexibility of tactical urbanism to ensure our community returns from the COVID-19 pandemic with more equitable space to commute, recreate, and travel.

Our application includes three quick-build projects that target existing areas of high vehicle crashes and inadequate pedestrian and cyclist accommodation. Each site is within at least one designated Environmental Justice community. They are projects aligned with the goals of our Complete Streets Prioritization Plan, Complete Streets Policy, Sustainable Lowell 2025 master plan, and ongoing GoLowell multimodal master planning process.

With the resources provided by this grant program, we will acquire the temporary materials we need to pilot the interventions with the goal of making them permanent once implemented and iterated. These temporary materials will then become the components for replicating and repeating the interventions in other parts of our City.

I am confident that our Departments of Public Works and Planning and Development are ready to act quickly when awarded these grants. We stand ready to answer any questions that you and your team might have.

Sincerely,

Eileen M. Donoghue
City Manager

City of Lowell

MassDOT Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program Application

Application Contact

Jared Alves
Senior Planner
Division of Development Services
Department of Planning and Development
978.674.1464
JAlves@LowellMA.gov

Project Goal:

Deploy temporary materials to pilot safe paths for walking and biking that connect to workplaces and recreational opportunities in Environmental Justice neighborhoods. Through these tactical urbanism pilots, the City will redress existing challenges, advance current plans, and iterate designs before implementing permanent infrastructure and redeploying the temporary materials to replicate the success in new projects elsewhere in the city.

Projects:

We propose three projects that will advance the goals of the Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program. Each project may be pursued independently if funding is not available for all three:

1. Upper Merrimack Street Cycle Track
2. VFW Highway Multi-Use Path
3. Pawtucket Street Multi-Use Path

The subsequent pages outline each of these projects.

Upper Merrimack Street Cycle Track



See appendix for full size version

- GPS coordinates: 42.645962, -71.313724 to 42,649776, -71.323123
- Cost estimate: \$37,380
- Ownership: City of Lowell right-of-way (see attached street plans)
- Responsibility: City of Lowell Department of Public Works (DPW) and Department of Planning and Development (DPD)

Project Description:

Through this project, the City will construct a two-way cycle track on the northern edge of Merrimack Street from Cardinal O’Connell Way to Decatur Street. This over 1,800 linear feet of new cycle track will connect to the existing 830-ft. Decatur Way separated path to link the UMass Lowell University Crossing building to downtown Lowell and the mixed-used corridor in-between. The City has previously identified this corridor on the Complete Streets Prioritization Plan and has completed some initial design work for the cycle track.

This grant award will enable the city to more rapidly deploy infrastructure on the street, test the design, and generate support for future permanent infrastructure. We are requesting funds to

purchase flex posts, wheel stops/curbs, paint, and signs to delineate the new cycle track. This project will comply with all Americans with Disability Act (ADA) and Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MAAB) requirements by preserving compliant crosswalks and ensuring access to Lowell Regional Transit Authority (LRTA) bus stops along the corridor.

Relationship to program goals:

- **Shared Streets and Spaces:** the two-way cycle track will provide a new, safe route for bicyclists and free up space on the sidewalk for pedestrians who currently share the space with cyclists who do not feel comfortable riding on the street.
- **Outdoor Dining and Commerce:** the cycle track will replace underused on-street parking on one side of Merrimack Street and will increase the number of potential customers who can readily stop to support the retail stores and restaurants on the corridor.
- **Safe Routes to School:** the cycle track will be safe option for the many Lowell High School students who commute from the Acre neighborhood to school to each morning and afternoon.

Extra credit considerations:

- **Quick launch/quick build:** After acquiring the materials, DPW is ready to deploy them within 30 days onto Merrimack Street.
- **Equity:** the corridor is within Environmental, Income, and English Isolation Environmental Justice-designated Census tracts
- **Pilots for Permanence:** this project is in the City’s Complete Streets Prioritization Plan. Deploying temporary materials will allow the City to test and refine the concept before ultimately making permanent infrastructure changes.

Timeline:

1. Finalize project design – 1 week
2. Purchase and receive materials – 1.5 weeks
3. Install materials – 2 weeks
4. Complete close-out tasks (e.g., install signs) – 1 week

Detailed Budget:

Material	Quantity	Cost per unit (\$)	Subtotal (\$)
Flex posts	150 +/-	\$40 each	\$6,000
Wheel stops or equivalent	150 +/-	\$200 each	\$30,000
Road Tape	1,800 Linear Ft. (LF)	\$0.70 per LF	\$1,260
Signs	4	\$30 per sign	\$120
Total			\$37,380

VFW Highway Multi-Use Path



See appendix for full size version

- GPS Coordinates: 42.642566, -71.341534 to 42,647248, -71.336996
- Cost estimate: \$89,880
- Ownership: City of Lowell right-of-way (see attached street plans)
- Responsibility: City of Lowell DPW and DPD

Project Description:

This project would construct a 2,100 linear foot long and 20-ft. wide multi-use path in the shoulder and one travel lane of this stretch of highway from the Sampas Pavilion to the intersection with Varnum Avenue. The path would provide a safe connection from many residential streets in the Pawtucketville neighborhood to Department of Conservation and Recreation-owned Lowell Heritage State Park, the Sampas Pavilion, and Rynne Beach. Further, the path would connect to the separated Merrimack riverfront trail to link the park to the Vandenberg Esplanade and the UMass Lowell Bellegarde Boathouse, about 4,500-ft.

On May 22, 2020 two pedestrians died on this stretch of highway when a speeding driver lost control and struck and killed them on the sidewalk. This project would avoid further such

tragedies by installing 240 jersey barriers and impact attenuators at the ends of the barriers along the roadway to defend pedestrians and cyclists from high-speed traffic. By removing the shoulder and a lane of travel, the project will also have the visual effect of narrowing the travel way, thereby discouraging and reducing speeding. This project will comply with all ADA and MAAB requirements by greatly increasing the space for pedestrians and cyclists and by preserving compliant curb ramps and crossings.

Relationship to program goals:

- **Shared Streets and Spaces:** this project will provide considerably more space for pedestrians and cyclists to recreate while appropriately social distancing as they head to the Lowell Heritage State Park. The project responds directly to the tragedy that occurred in May and ensures that nearby residents will have a safe place to enjoy the outdoors this summer.

Extra credit considerations:

- **Quick launch/quick build:** After acquiring the materials, DPW is ready to deploy them within 30 days onto VFW Highway.
- **Equity:** the corridor is within Minority Environmental Justice-designated Census tracts
- **Pilots for Permanence:** this project responds to a serious safety need along VFW Highway and the City intends for the intervention to be permanent. The pilot can inform future work, such as a grade-separated and protected multi-use path that extends along the entire roadway from Dracut to Tyngsborough.

Timeline:

1. Finalize project design – 1 week
2. Purchase and receive materials – 1.5 weeks
3. Install materials – 2 weeks
4. Complete close-out tasks (e.g., install signs) – 1 week

Detailed Budget:

Material	Quantity	Cost per unit	Subtotal
Jersey barriers	233	\$300 each	\$69,900
Impact attenuators	2	\$9,900 each	19,800
Signs	6	\$30 per sign	\$180
		Total	\$89,880

Pawtucket Street Multi-Use Path



See appendix for full size version

- GPS coordinates: 42.647135, -71.331506 to 42.649594 to -71.325577
- Cost estimate: \$38,495
- Ownership: City of Lowell right-of-way (see attached street plans)
- Responsibility: City of Lowell DPW and DPD

Project Description:

This project would construct an approximately 2,000 linear foot long multi-use path on Pawtucket Street in the Acre neighborhood from Fletcher Street to the Pawtucket Canal. This path is in the City’s Complete Streets Prioritization Plan, is a high priority project in the UMass Lowell Transportation Master Plan, and has been submitted for inclusion in NMCOG’s Transportation Improvement Program. By promoting bike and pedestrian mobility, this project will also advance a central goal of Sustainable Lowell 2025, the City’s master plan and of GoLowell, the City’s multimodal planning project. The existing right-of-way between the sidewalks is approximately 40-ft. wide, which leaves ample room for an 8-10-ft. multi-use path and two 11-ft. travel lanes.

Similar to the Upper Merrimack Street Cycle Track, the City would use the grant funding to purchase flex posts, wheel stops, signs, and paint to delineate the multi-use path. These temporary materials would enable the City to pilot and iterate the project before moving forward with reconstructing the street. The corridor would connect to the existing 1,500-ft. long Francis Gate path that follows the Pawtucket Canal and links Pawtucket Street to Broadway Street. The path also passes by the entrances to the Bartlett Community Partnership School and Koumantzelis Park. This project will comply with all ADA and MAAB requirements by greatly increasing the space for pedestrians and cyclists and by preserving compliant curb ramps and crossings.

Relationship to program goals:

- **Shared Streets and Spaces:** The multi-use path will provide additional space for social distancing and encourage more people to walk and bike on this corridor.
- **Safe Routes to School:** The path provides a safe corridor for students to reach the Bartlett School on foot or by bike.

Extra credit considerations:

- **Quick launch/quick build:** After acquiring the materials, DPW is ready to deploy them within 30 days onto Pawtucket Street.
- **Equity:** The project location is within Minority and Income Environmental Justice-designated Census tracts
- **Pilots for Permanence:** The City and UMass Lowell have prioritized this corridor for new pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure. The grant will fund a pilot that will inform the future reconstruction of the corridor.

Timeline:

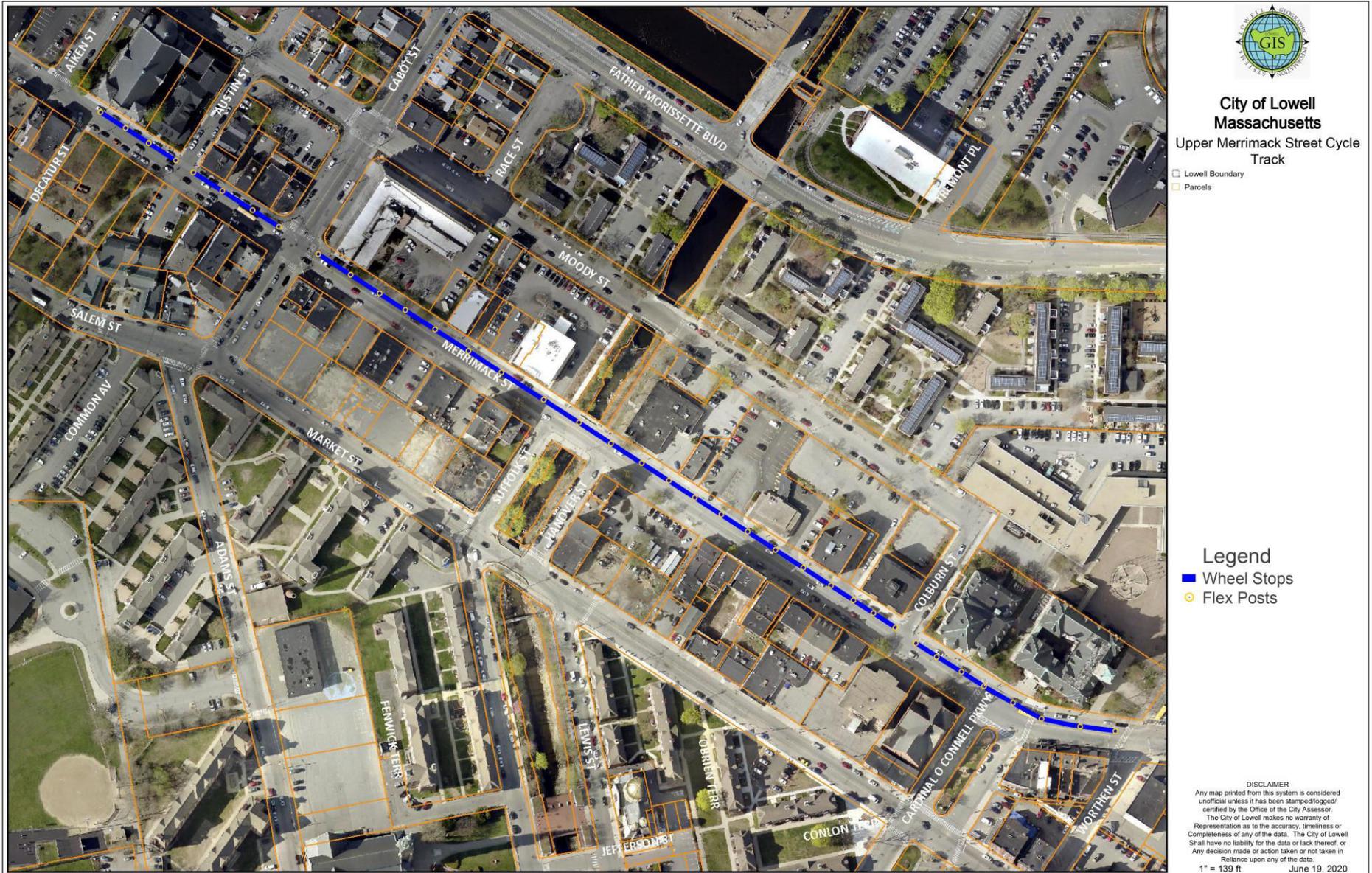
1. Finalize project design – 1 week
2. Purchase and receive materials – 1.5 weeks
3. Install materials – 2 weeks
4. Complete close-out tasks (e.g., install signs) – 1 week

Detailed Budget:

Material	Quantity	Cost per unit	Subtotal
Flex posts	154	\$40 each	\$6,160
Wheel stops or equivalent	154	\$200 each	\$30,800
Road Tape	1,850 LF	\$0.70 per LF	\$1,295
Signs	8	\$30 per sign	\$240
		Total	\$38,495

Appendix – Full Size Maps

Upper Merrimack Street Cycle Track



VFW Highway Multi-Use Path



**City of Lowell
Massachusetts**
VFW Highway Multi-Use Path

- Lowell Boundary
- Parcels

- Legend**
- Jersey Barriers
 - Impact Attenuators

DISCLAIMER
Any map printed from this system is considered unofficial unless it has been stamped/signed/certified by the Office of the City Assessor. The City of Lowell makes no warranty of Representation as to the accuracy, timeliness or Completeness of any of the data. The City of Lowell Shall have no liability for the data or lack thereof, or Any decision made or action taken or not taken in Reliance upon any of the data.
1" = 190 ft June 21, 2020

Pawtucket Street Multi-Use Path



**City of Lowell
Massachusetts**
UML Pawtucket Street Multi-
Use Path

- Lowell Boundary
- Parcels

Legend

- Wheel Stops
- Flex Posts

DISCLAIMER
Any map printed from this system is considered unofficial unless it has been stamped/signed/ certified by the Office of the City Assessor. The City of Lowell makes no warranty of Representation as to the accuracy, timeliness or Completeness of any of the data. The City of Lowell Shall have no liability for the data or lack thereof, or Any decision made or action taken or not taken in Reliance upon any of the data.
1" = 160 ft June 22, 2020

PLAN AND PROFILE

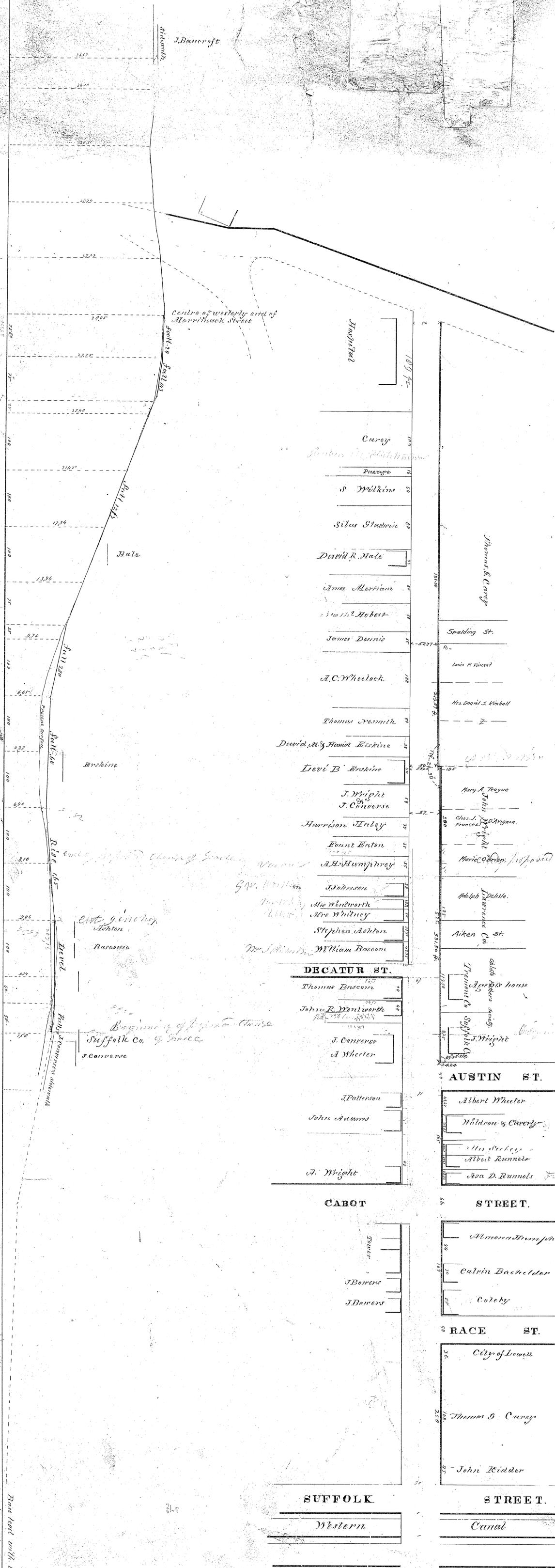
OF THE WESTERLY PART

MERRIMACK STREET.

Scale { Horizontal 80 } feet in inch
 { Vertical 2 } feet in inch

C. Johnson Engineer.

Note - Lines and figures in red show northern line of Merrimack St. from Austin to Spalding St. as related by resolution of City Council. Passed Dec. 26, 1911.
 7-30-64 - 2647-1911
 7-25-64 - 647-1911



Section	Owner	Lot No.
NORTH OF SPALDING ST.	Hospital	100
	Curray	100
	Peaslee	100
	S. Wilkins	50
	Silas Gladwin	50
	David R. Hale	50
	Amos Merriam	50
	Saml. A. Robert	50
	James Dennis	50
	A.C. Wheelock	100
BETWEEN SPALDING ST. & AUSTIN ST.	Thomas Nesmith	50
	David M. & Janet Eiskine	50
	Levi B. Eiskine	50
	J. Wright & J. Converse	50
	Harrison Haley	50
	Frank Eaton	50
	A.H. Humphrey	50
	J. Johnson	50
	Mr. Wendworth	50
	Mrs. Whitney	50
BETWEEN AUSTIN ST. & CABOT STREET.	Stephen Ashton	50
	William Bascom	50
	Thomas Bascom	50
	John R. Wendworth	50
	J. Converse	50
	A. Wheeler	50
	J. Patterson	50
	John Adams	50
	J. Wright	50
	J. Bowers	50
SOUTH OF CABOT STREET.	J. Bowers	50
	J. Bowers	50
	Western	50

Section	Owner	Lot No.
SOUTH OF SPALDING ST.	Spalding St.	50
	Louis P. Vincent	50
	Mrs. Daniel S. Kimball	50
	Mary A. Teague	50
	Chas. J. & Frances D. Aragon	50
	Maries O'Brien	50
	Alphonse Delisle	50
	Lawrence Con.	50
	Aiken St.	50
	John & Sons	50
BETWEEN AUSTIN ST. & RACE ST.	Albert Wheeler	50
	Waldron & Caverly	50
	Mr. Stebbins	50
	Albert Rumelo	50
	Ava D. Rumelo	50
	Almanah Humphrey	50
	Calvin Bachelder	50
	Cady	50
	City of Lowell	50
	Thomas B. Carey	50
SOUTH OF RACE ST.	John Kidder	50
	Canal	50

Base level with top of undisturbed ground
 City Hall
 Elevation of base 39.100 above datum

A Plan of Merrimack Street from Merrimack to
 Western Canal showing the names of abutments and of abutting
 lines, also of Suffolk Street from Merrimack to Gudge Street
 with the laying out of said portions of Suffolk Street
 By Follen & Lowell Survey 18th 1834

Scale of 1 inch to 100 feet
 Scale of 1 inch to 100 feet



COPY OF
PLAN OF ROAD

LOWELL

MIDDLESEX COUNTY

LOCALLY KNOWN AS THE PAWTUCKET BOULEVARD

LAI D OUT AS A STATE HIGHWAY

Massachusetts Highway Commission

SCALE: 40 FT. TO THE INCH

APPROVED
Shaw Davis
CHIEF ENGINEER

THIS CERTIFIES THAT THE HIGHWAY AS SHOWN ON THIS PLAN
WAS LAID OUT AS A STATE HIGHWAY BY THE MASSACHUSETTS
HIGHWAY COMMISSION JUNE 16, 1927.
IN ACCORDANCE WITH CHAPTER 497 OF THE ACTS OF 1924.
T. C. Marshfield } MASSACHUSETTS
M. S. Rubin } HIGHWAY
M. C. W. Clifton } COMMISSION.

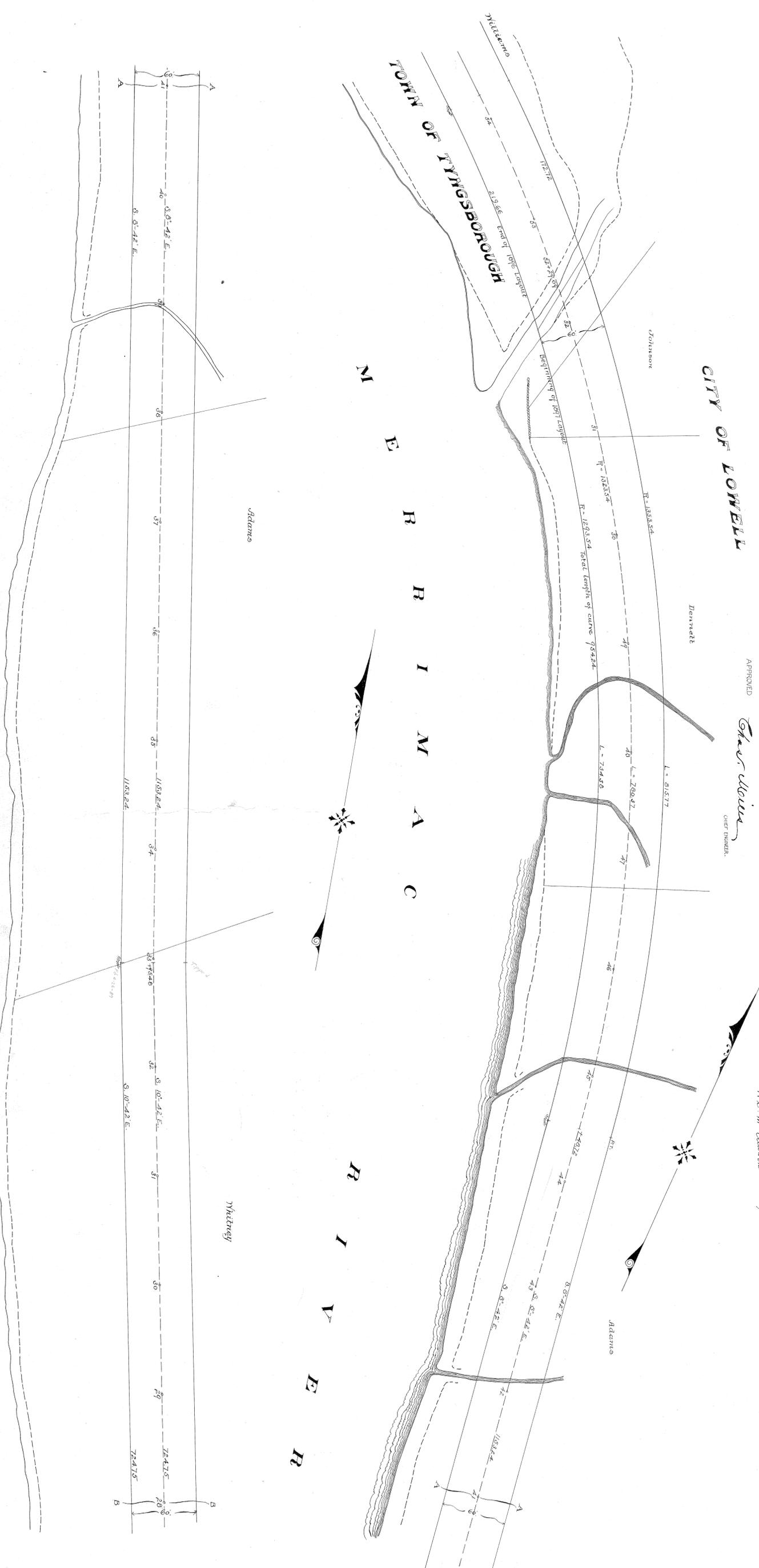
NO RELEASES WERE SECURED AS
COUNTY COUNTY COMMISSIONERS LINE AND GRADE ARE TO BE FOLLOWED
A. Blodgett
CLERK

CITY OF LOWELL

TOWN OF TYNGSBOROUGH

M
E
R
R
I
M
A
C

R
I
V
E
R



SHEET NO. 4

OFFICE No. 1328
SECTION T
DRAWN BY
CHECKED BY
DATE

1328
FEB 1928
1500
No. 5 14 Day Book

PLAN
of
PAWTUCKET STREET.

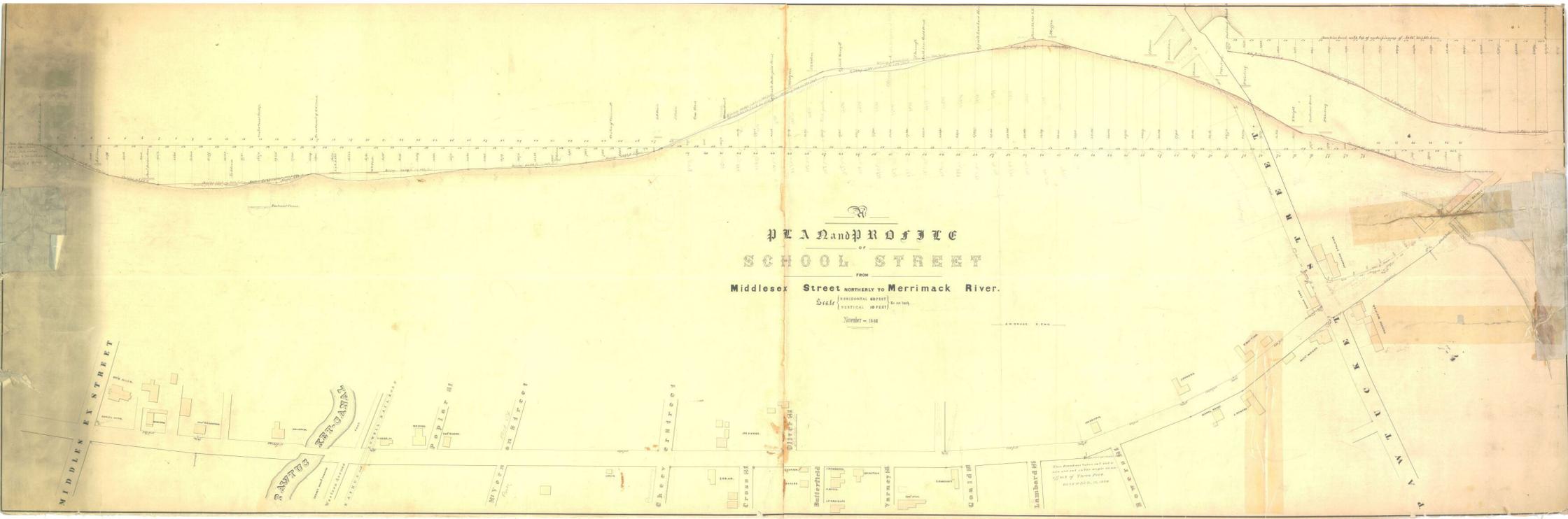
Designed in 1837 by
John C. Smith *By* *J. C. Smith*



J. A. HAND & CO.
OF
SCHOOL STREET

FROM
Middlesex Street NORTHERLY TO Merrimack River.

Scale
HORIZONTAL 40 FEET
VERTICAL 10 FEET
November - 1858





Charles D. Baker, Governor
Karyn E. Polito, Lieutenant Governor
Stephanie Pollack, MassDOT Secretary & CEO



July, 10, 2020

Jared Alves
375 Merrimack Street, Room 51,
Lowell, MA 01852

Dear Mr. Alves:

Thank you for submitting a project application to the MassDOT Shared Streets and Spaces Program. Your project application has been reviewed, and we are pleased to notify you that the Lowell safe paths project has been approved for funding. We received many applications and had a competitive applicant pool from which to select, and your application stood out. The Lowell project will be funded at \$ 165,755.00 under Chapter 90 Contract Number/ MMARS # 50863.

The Shared Streets and Spaces Program is intended to support projects that promote public health, safe mobility, and renewed commerce by quickly providing new or repurposed space for socially-distanced walking, bicycling, dining, retail, and bus travel. Because of the urgency of this effort, the Lowell project will need to be fully implemented by Friday, October 9, 2020. A member of the Shared Streets and Spaces team will contact you via email shortly regarding next steps. Please note that any pavement markings or signage included in your project that are not compliant with the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices should be used with caution, and only on a temporary basis. Please feel free to contact the Shared Streets Team to discuss this issue in more detail, if needed.

By December 31, 2020, a report detailing lessons learned from the project must be submitted to MassDOT. Grant recipients may also be invited to participate in a learning exchange with other municipalities to share experiences. MassDOT will work directly with you to determine the best evaluation process for your particular project.

We are excited to work with you and the full Lowell team as this project advances.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Pollack

Secretary and CEO