

CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
MAYOR KATJANA BALLANTYNE  
DEPARTMENT of INFRASTRUCTURE & ASSET MANAGEMENT  
ENGINEERING DIVISION



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DIRECTOR OF ENGINEERING

Date: 18 October 2023  
To: Public Utilities & Public Works (PUPW) Committee, City Council  
From: Brian C. Postlewaite, Director of Engineering  
CC: Hannah Carrillo, Neha Singh, Rich Raiche, Dan Amelin, Jesse Moos  
RE: Highland Avenue Partial Paving

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The Engineering Division is responding to the following two Council orders referred to PUPW:

- #23-1355 – That the Director of Engineering re-pave Highland Avenue from Central Street to Walnut Street this year instead of waiting until 2024.
- #23-1399 – That the Administration report to this Council on the ability to require further repairs on Highland Ave, and if none, an explanation on whether that complies with road engineering regulations.

The FY24 City Budget, approved by the City Council last June, allocates \$375,000 to repave the travel lanes on Highland Avenue from Central St to McGrath Hwy. This will be executed as a partial paving effort, which restricts trench/utility construction during our 5-year paving moratorium, requiring coordination with private utilities.

Eversource Gas notified us that they need to replace the gas line in the section of Highland between Benton Road and School Street. This work will take approximately five months to complete. We are coordinating with Eversource Gas to execute this work as soon as possible, hopefully during the winter months, similar to their winter gas work on Central Street in 2021.

The earliest we could pave Highland Avenue would be in June 2024, immediately following Eversource's gas work. Our paving policy recommends finish paving a full season after the last trench work. This duration ensures an appropriately compacted trench that will last the pavement's expected design life, approximately twenty-five years.

Highland Avenue has poor existing pavement conditions, and its full reconstruction is currently planned for 2026-2027 according to the 2023 CIP. Accordingly, it is prudent to proceed with partial paving of Highland Avenue immediately following the Eversource gas relay in the late spring or early summer of 2024, understanding the pavement will not last its full design life.

Paving earlier would result in the gas work trenching through new pavement and paving later unnecessarily delays the benefit of new paving.

