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# Town of Middleborough

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# Town of Middleborough Continues Collaboration with Legislators, MassDOT on Safety Changes for Route 28/Merchant's Plaza Intersection

## Rapid Flashing Beacons to be Installed in Coming Months

MIDDLEBOROUGH – Town Manager James McGrail and Select Board Chair Mark Germain are pleased to announce that the Town of Middleborough, legislators, and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) have continued their collaboration on proposed changes to improve safety at the Route 28 and Merchant's Plaza intersection.

On Tuesday, Aug. 1, Town of Middleborough officials met with Rep. Norman Orrall, Sen. Marc Pacheco, and MassDOT representatives to continue discussing ways in which the

town and state can improve safety at the Route 28 and Merchant's Plaza intersection.

During Tuesday's meeting, MassDOT committed to installing four rapid flashing beacons, two at each crosswalk. The beacons are expected to be installed by mid-September. According to the [Federal Highway Administration](#), rapid flashing beacons can reduce crashes involving pedestrians by up to 47% and increase driver yielding rates up to 98%.

In addition, MassDOT has refreshed pavement markings, upgraded the crosswalks and pedestrian signage, and addressed vegetation.

"We are grateful to MassDOT and state legislators for collaborating with our town in an effort to create a safer intersection for all," said Chair Germain. "Our top priority is to ensure the safety and well-being of pedestrians and motorists."

Following a [previous meeting](#) on May 23, the Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District completed a Traffic Signal Warrants Analysis, which concluded that the Route 28 and Merchant's Plaza intersection would operate well under traffic signal control and that a signal would likely improve operations. To move forward, MassDOT must conduct an Intersection Control Evaluation to determine if a traffic signal is the best option. The construction timing for any further changes will be determined once the study is completed.

"We remain committed to taking action and advancing solutions to address safety concerns," said Town Manager McGrail. "I want to thank all involved who continue working to improve this longtime area of concern."

Officials have previously discussed various potential short-term, medium-term and long-term solutions for safety changes. The Route 28 and Merchant's Plaza intersection, which is also located near the Goode Elementary and Burkland Elementary Schools, has prompted safety concerns since 1988. In 1989, the then-police chief identified the need for a traffic signal at this location, stating that there would be a serious public safety problem without one.

Safety solutions were revisited once again following the tragic death of 15-year-old Middleborough resident Dylan Levesque as a result of a crash in May 2023.

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