



DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

MARCH 14, 2019

AT

NEW BEDFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY

613 PLEASANT STREET

NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

6:30 PM

FOR THE PROPOSED

NEW BEDFORD ROUTE I-195 TO ROUTE 18 INTERCHANGE REHABILITATION

PROJECT FILE NO. 606527

IN THE CITY OF NEW BEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION**

**JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR**

**PATRICIA A. LEAVENWORTH, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER**

**THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION
NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING
Project File No. 606527**

A Design Public Hearing will be held by MassDOT to discuss the New Bedford Route I-195 to Route 18 Interchange Rehabilitation.

WHERE: New Bedford Public Library
613 Pleasant Street, New Bedford, MA 02740

WHEN: Thursday, March 14, 2019 @ 6:30 PM

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed New Bedford Route I-195 to Route 18 Interchange Rehabilitation Project. All views and comments made at the meeting will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: The proposed project consists of the rehabilitation and replacement of the existing viaduct bridge structure that carries Interstate I-195 over the Route 18 interchange, Mass Coastal Railroad, Mt. Pleasant Street, Purchase Street, State Street and Weld Street. Once the project has been completed, the I-195 interchange will feature new signage and lighting to enhance daytime and nighttime visibility, new drainage, and safety enhancements such as wider auxiliary lanes for weaving, longer deceleration lanes, road shoulders, and safer roadside barriers. Aged, damaged guardrail will be replaced.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions of permanent or temporary easements may be required. MassDOT is responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands. MassDOT's policy concerning land acquisitions will be discussed at this meeting.

Written views received by MassDOT subsequent to the date of this notice and up to five (5) days prior to the date of the hearing shall be displayed for public inspection and copying at the time and date listed above. Plans will be on display one-half hour before the hearing begins, with an engineer in attendance to answer questions regarding this project. A project handout will be made available on the MassDOT website listed below.

Written statements and other exhibits in place of, or in addition to, oral statements made at the Public Hearing regarding the proposed undertaking are to be submitted to Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E., Chief Engineer, MassDOT, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Roadway Project Management, Project File No. **606527**. Such submissions will also be accepted at the hearing. Mailed statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be postmarked within ten (10) business days of this Public Hearing. Project inquiries may be emailed to dot.feedback.highway@state.ma.us

This location is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (including but not limited to interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, open or closed captioning for videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats, such as audio tapes, Braille and large print), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), fax (857-368-0602), TTD/TTY (857-368-0603) or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible prior to the meeting, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten (10) business days before the meeting.

In case of inclement weather, hearing cancellation announcements will be posted on the internet at <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/Highway/>. **A snow date for this meeting has been scheduled for March 19, 2019 at the same time and location.**

JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

PATRICIA A. LEAVENWORTH, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER



Dear Concerned Citizen:

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) is committed to building and maintaining a transportation infrastructure that is both safe and efficient for all who use our roadways, bridges, bicycle facilities and pedestrian paths, while maintaining the integrity of the environment.

As part of the design process for this project, we are conducting this public hearing to explain the proposed improvements, listen to your comments and answer any questions you may have. At the conclusion of the hearing, MassDOT will review all of your comments and, where feasible, incorporate them into the design of the project.

We recognize that road and bridge construction can create inconveniences for the public. MassDOT places a great deal of emphasis on minimizing the temporary disruptive effects of construction.

MassDOT encourages input from local communities and values your opinions. Please be assured that we will undertake no project without addressing the concerns of the community.

Sincerely,

Patricia A Leavenworth, P. E.
Chief Engineer

WHAT IS A PUBLIC HEARING?

WHY A PUBLIC HEARING?

To provide an assured method whereby the Commonwealth of Massachusetts can furnish to the public, information concerning the State's highway construction proposals, and to afford every interested resident of the area an opportunity to be heard on any proposed project. At the same time, the hearings afford the Commonwealth an additional opportunity to receive information from local sources which would be of value to the State in making its final decisions to what design should be advanced for development.

WHY NOT A VOTE ON HIGHWAY PLANS?

The hearings are not intended to be a popular referendum for the purpose of determining the nature of a proposed improvement by a majority of those present. They do not relieve the duly constituted officials of a State highway department of the necessity for making decisions in State highway matters for which they are charged with full responsibility.

WHAT DOES A PUBLIC HEARING ACCOMPLISH?

It is designed to ensure the opportunity for, or the availability of, a forum to provide factual information which is pertinent to the determination of the final alternative considered by the State to best serve the public interest, and on which improvement projects are proposed to be undertaken.

It is important that the people of the area express their views in regard to the proposal being presented, so that views can be properly recorded in the minutes of the meeting. These minutes will be carefully studied and taken into consideration in the determination of the final design.

TO SAFEGUARD THE PROPERTY OWNER

If your property, or a portion of it, must be acquired by the State for highway purposes in the interest of all people of the Commonwealth, your rights are fully protected under the law. Briefly, here are some of the answers to questions you might ask.

1. WHO CONTACTS ME?

Representatives of the Right of Way Bureau of the Massachusetts Department of Transportation's Highway Division. They will explain the impacts and your rights as protected under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 79.

2. WHAT IS A FAIR PRICE FOR MY PROPERTY?

Every offer is made to ensure that an equitable value is awarded to you for the property, or to appraise the "damage" to the property as a result of the acquisition. MassDOT appraisers, independent appraisers, MassDOT "Review Appraisers" and a Real Estate Appraisal Review Board may all contribute in arriving at an award of damages. The State also pays a proportionate part of the real estate tax for the current year for fee takings, and interest from the date the property is acquired to the payment date, on all impacts.

3. MUST I ACCEPT THE DEPARTMENT'S OFFER?

No. If, after the figure established as market value has been offered to the owner, the owner feels he or she is not being offered a fair price, he or she has the right, within three years, to appeal to the courts. Pending a court decision, he or she can be paid on a "pro-tanto" basis (or "for the time being") that in no way prejudices the court appeal.

4. WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO MY HOUSE?

The owner will have the opportunity to buy back his or her house, provided he or she has a location to which it can be moved, and the proper permits for its removal. If the owner does not wish to repurchase, the house will be advertised for bids. The highest bidder, who must also have a location and permits for removal, will be awarded the house. Otherwise, the structure will be slated for demolition.

5. WHAT HAPPENS IF I MUST RELOCATE?

In addition to the market value of the property, the Department pays certain relocation benefits for both owners and tenants of acquired residences and businesses who meet eligibility requirements. Assistance in relocation is also provided. Department brochures are available for details on these benefits.

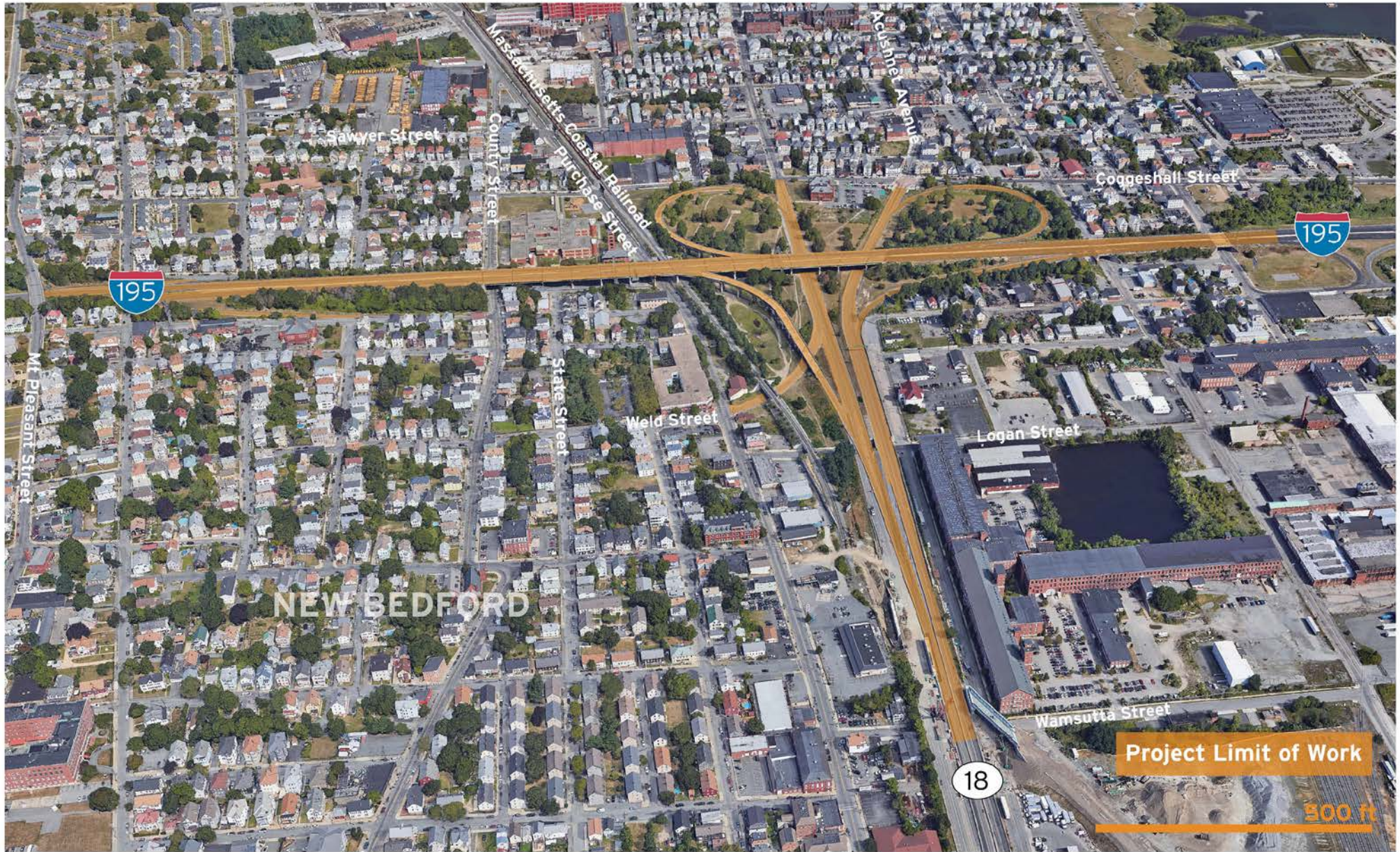


Figure 1 Project Location

New Bedford Route I-195 to Route 18 Interchange Rehabilitation Project



Project Location

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation – Highway Division (MassDOT) is proposing to repair and rehabilitate the Route I-95 to Route 18 interchange in New Bedford. Through the project area, I-95 carries over 75,000 vehicles per day and the project ramps carry almost 50,000 vehicles on and off the interchange per day. Route 18 in New Bedford carries over 36,000 vehicles daily, as well as pedestrian and bicycle traffic between Coggeshall Street and Weld Street.

The I-95 to Route 18 Interchange runs through a dense neighborhood. Homes, businesses, and the Hayden-McFadden School abut the structure. Parking lots and an informal skate park are located directly beneath the viaduct bridge structure.

Purpose

The purpose of this project is to repair and rehabilitate the existing 1,350-foot-long viaduct bridge structure that carries I-95 over the Route 18 interchange, Mass Coastal Railroad, Mt. Pleasant Street, Purchase Street, State Street and Weld Street. The structure was constructed in 1965 and, while safe to traverse, is structurally deficient. Once the project has been completed, the I-95 interchange will feature new signage to enhance daytime and nighttime visibility, new drainage, and safety enhancements such as wider auxiliary lanes for weaving, longer deceleration lanes, road shoulders, and safer roadside barriers.

Existing Conditions

In addition to the spalling concrete, exposed reinforcing and deteriorated steel superstructure, the bridges display other deficiencies. The mainline sections of the bridge and Ramp F, Exit 15 I-95 Eastbound to Route 18 Southbound, are classified as functionally obsolete. The Ramp C Bridge, Exit 15 I-95 Westbound to Route 18 Southbound, is structurally deficient. Along I-95 Westbound, there is insufficient weaving area, where vehicles cross paths in order to access different destinations, between the Ramp D on-ramp, Route 18 Northbound to I-95 Westbound, and the Ramp C of-ramp. From 2012 to 2014, 41 crashes were reported in the project area, mostly due to these narrow lanes on the exit ramps that did not provide enough room for weaving to safely take place. The signalized intersections experience frequent traffic delays and traffic signal heads do not mitigate sun glare effects.

Proposed Project

Proposed improvements are focused on replacing and rehabilitating the 15-span elevated section of I-95, as well as the similarly elevated sections of Ramps C and F. It will also increase safety and improve operations on the mainline and throughout the interchange area. The bridge work will be a combination of superstructure replacement /substructure rehabilitation. Ramp bridges will be replaced by embankment retained ramps. Merge lanes will be widened and on- and off-ramps will be lengthened. A new retaining wall along Cedar Grove Street will also be introduced to allow for the mainline widening, potentially offering an opportunity for aesthetic improvements.

Right of Way

The Proposed Design will likely not require any permanent right-of-way action on private property. Temporary easements and occupation of city streets and intersections for construction operations is anticipated. No permanent impacts to city streets or intersections are anticipated at this time.

Maintenance of Traffic During Construction

During construction, four travel lanes (two in each direction) will be maintained for the duration of construction on the I-195 mainline. To accomplish this, median crossovers will be constructed east of and west of the bridge to allow westbound traffic to use the eastbound barrel (Phase 2) and subsequently allow eastbound traffic to use the westbound barrel (Phase 3). A detour plan with proper signage will be provided as part of the Traffic Management Plan to guide throughout all construction phases. To replace the superstructure of Ramps C and F, the ramps will be closed to traffic for extended construction periods. Ramp C and Ramp D will be closed concurrently to efficiently complete the work.

During the closure of Ramp C on I-195 Westbound, traffic seeking to access Route 18 south will be detoured to Exit 17, Coggeshall Street. During the closure of Ramp D, traffic on MA Route 18 northbound seeking to connect to I-195 westbound will proceed under the viaduct and turn right onto Coggeshall, and then right onto I-195 Westbound at the Sawyer Street on-ramp. During the closure of Ramp F in Phase 3, traffic heading eastbound on I-195 seeking to access Route 18 southbound will be rerouted to Exit 14 to Penniman Street, then north on Purchase Street and east on Coggeshall Street before turning right onto Route 18. During the Weld Street off-ramp closure, traffic will be detoured to the Route 18/JFK Highway southbound off-ramp, approximately 3,000 feet to the south, then north on Purchase Street to Weld Street.

Project Schedule

The project is currently at the 25% Design Stage. This project has been programmed in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) for Federal Fiscal Year 2023. The design phase is anticipated to proceed with the 75%, 100%, and Final design submissions. Comments from this evening will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extents possible.

Project Cost

The estimated total contract cost for this project is approximately \$120 million. The project construction cost will be funded with a combination of monies from the Federal Highway Administration and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

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Appropriate
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Patricia A. Leavenworth, P.E.
Chief Engineer
MassDOT – Highway Division
10 Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116-3973

RE: Public Hearing
New Bedford Route I-195 to Route 18 Interchange Rehabilitation
Project File No. 606527
Attn. Bridge Project Management Section

