



**Routes 7/15 Interchange
Norwalk, Connecticut
State Project No. 102-358**

**Environmental Assessment,
Draft Section 4(F) Evaluation and
Environmental Impact Evaluation**

**Appendix A
Alternatives Assessment**

August 2022

Prepared for:
Connecticut Department of
Transportation Federal Highway
Administration





**Routes 7/15 Interchange
Norwalk, Connecticut
State Project No. 102-358**

**Environmental Assessment,
Draft Section 4(F) Evaluation and
Environmental Impact Evaluation**

**Appendix A1
Draft Purpose and Need Statement**

August 2022

Prepared for:
Connecticut Department of
Transportation Federal Highway
Administration

**ROUTE 7/15 INTERCHANGE PROJECT
NORWALK, CONNECTICUT**

DRAFT PURPOSE AND NEED STATEMENT



March 2017

Rev.

September 18, 2018

ROUTE 7/15 NORWALK PROJECT DRAFT PURPOSE AND NEED STATEMENT

PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed project is located in the northern portion of the City of Norwalk and encompasses the interchange of the Route 15 (Merritt Parkway) and Route 7; the interchange of the Merritt Parkway with Main Avenue; Main Avenue (SR 719); and Glover Avenue/Creeping Hemlock Drive in the vicinity of Main Avenue. The project area extends along the Merritt Parkway from approximately 0.5 miles west of Route 7 to approximately 0.5 miles east of Main Avenue and along Route 7 from approximately 0.5 miles south of the Merritt Parkway to approximately 0.5 miles north of the Merritt Parkway.

The design year for the proposed project is 2045. The project area is illustrated in Figure No. 1.

EXISTING TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

Route 7

Regionally, Route 7 serves as an important north-south transportation corridor in western Connecticut, connecting Interstate 84 (I-84) in Danbury and both the Merritt Parkway and Interstate 95 (I-95) in Norwalk. Route 7 is one of three limited access roadways between the Merritt Parkway and I-95 within southwestern Connecticut, with the other connectors being Route 8 in Bridgeport and the Milford Connector in Milford. Throughout the corridor, Route 7 provides essential service to residential communities and businesses in the towns of Ridgefield, Redding and Wilton as well as the cities of Danbury and Norwalk. Within and abutting the project area, Route 7 is a four lane limited access expressway between I-95 and Grist Mill Road in Norwalk, where it intersects with the Route 7 arterial roadway to the north. The roadway that previously functioned as Route 7 between I-95 and Grist Mill Road prior to the completion of the Route 7 expressway is now called Main Avenue.

Merritt Parkway

The Merritt Parkway is approximately 37 miles long. It connects the Hutchinson River Parkway at the New York State line in Greenwich to the Wilbur Cross Parkway at the Housatonic River in Stratford. The Parkway has two travel lanes in each direction and is restricted to non-commercial use. It was listed in the National Register of Historic Places for its significance in the areas of landscape design, transportation and architecture. It was also designated as a National Scenic Byway and State Scenic Road. Therefore, the overall character of the Merritt Parkway (its form, geometry and appearance) is an intrinsic element to its significance. In the project area, the Merritt Parkway carries traffic over Perry Avenue, Route 7 and Main Avenue as well as the Norwalk River and Metro North Railroad. This portion of the Parkway includes four historic bridges that are contributing resources to the Merritt Parkway National Register listing. They are the Perry Avenue Overpass (CTDOT Bridge No. 00719), the Main Avenue Bridge (Nos. 00530A and 00530B), the Metro North Railroad Overpass (No. 00720) and the Norwalk River Overpass (No. 00721).

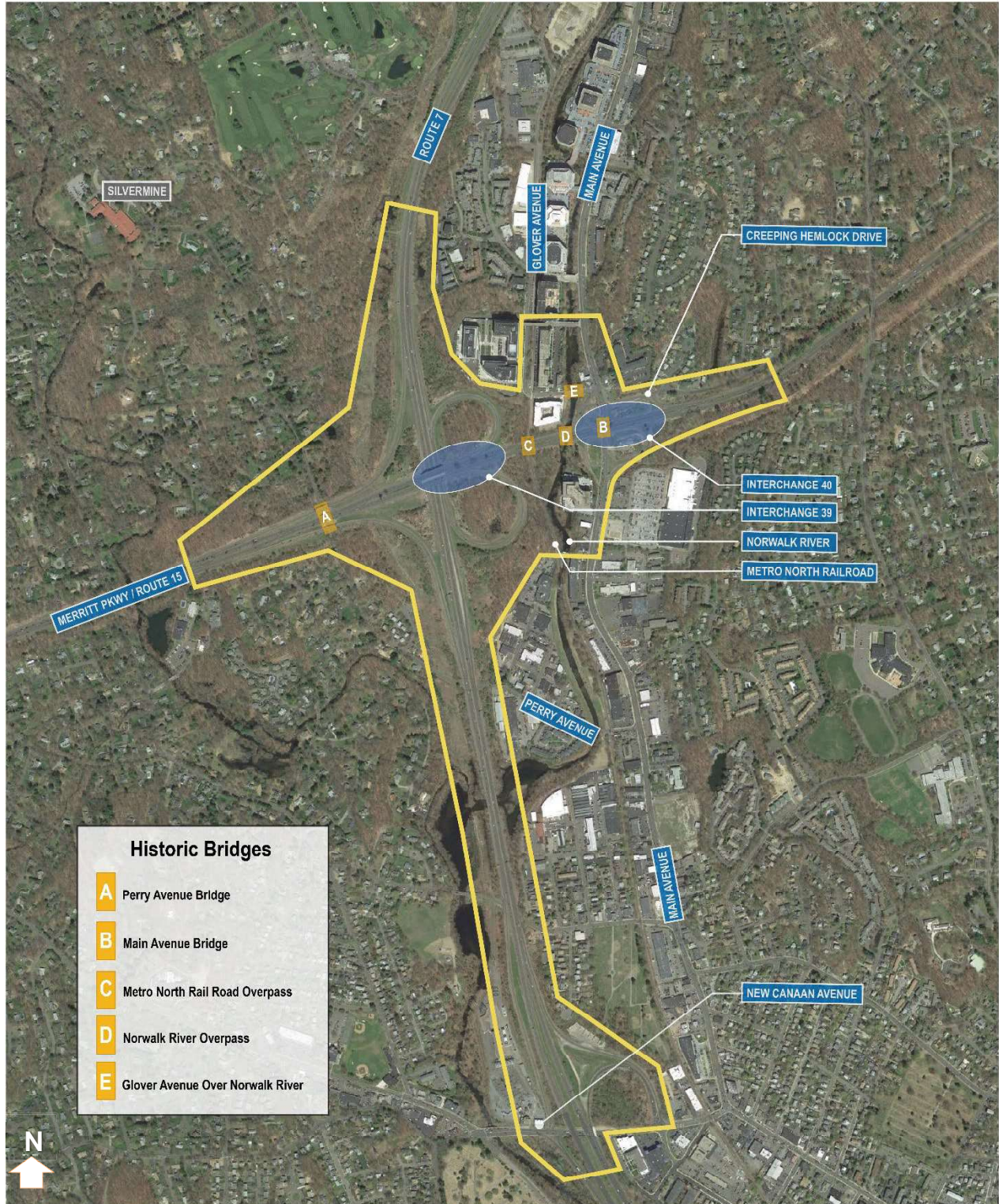


Figure No. 1: Project Area

Existing Interchanges

Interchange No. 39 provides partial connections between Route 7 and the Merritt Parkway. Connections are provided from Route 7 northbound to the Merritt Parkway southbound, from Route 7 southbound to the Merritt Parkway southbound, from the Merritt Parkway northbound to Route 7 northbound and from the Merritt Parkway northbound to Route 7 southbound. Connections between Route 7 and the Merritt Parkway to and from the north are not provided. Due to the missing connections, the Merritt Parkway southbound motorists must use the Merritt Parkway/Main Avenue interchange (Exit 40B) to access Route 7 northbound, north of Grist Mill Road. Merritt Parkway northbound motorists must use the Merritt Parkway /Main Avenue interchange (Exit 40A) to access Route 7 southbound south of Route 123/New Canaan Avenue. Similarly, motorists on Route 7 have no direct access to the Merritt Parkway northbound and must use Main Avenue to access the Parkway.

Interchange No. 40, a second nearby interchange provides connections in all directions between the Merritt Parkway and Main Avenue. This interchange is located approximately 1,500 feet east of the Route 7 and Merritt Parkway interchange and the Norwalk River.

Main Avenue

Main Avenue is a four-lane urban minor arterial which parallels Route 7 and the Norwalk River and extends north and south of the Merritt Parkway/Route 7 interchange. Connections between Route 7 and Main Avenue do not exist in the vicinity of Interchange No. 39 or Interchange No. 40. Main Avenue has two signalized intersections in proximity to Interchange No.40:

- Intersection of Creeping Hemlock Drive and Glover Avenue immediately north of the Merritt Parkway
- Intersection of Merritt View and the Shopping Center (e.g., Stop and Shop, TD Bank, etc.) south of the Merritt Parkway

Glover Avenue

The Glover Avenue Bridge (No. 04155) which carries Glover Avenue over the Norwalk River is independently eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Glover Avenue, also connects with Creeping Hemlock Drive at the signalized intersection with Main Avenue. Creeping Hemlock Drive serves the residential community east of Main Avenue.

Bike/Pedestrian/Transit Facilities

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the project area are limited, despite significant pedestrian activity during the weekday mid-day time period along office buildings on the west side of Main Avenue. There are no bicycle facilities in the study area, and shoulder widths are less than one foot wide on Main Avenue. Several segments of the roadway, particularly in the area around the Main Avenue and Creeping Hemlock intersection, have no sidewalks on one or both sides. Only one small roadway segment, along with Glover Avenue, is fully ADA compliant.

Main Avenue is served by both the Norwalk Transit District and the Housatonic Area Regional Transit organizations, with bus stops approximately every 1,000 feet on Main Avenue. The project area is also served by the Metro-North Railroad's Danbury branch at the Merritt 7 Station, approximately 1,500 feet away from the Main Avenue intersection with Glover Avenue and Creeping Hemlock Drive.

PROJECT PURPOSE

The purpose of the project is to improve roadway system linkage between Route 7 and the Merritt Parkway at Interchange No. 39; improve the mobility for vehicles at both the Merritt Parkway's Route 7 and Main Avenue Interchanges (No. 39 & No. 40) and improve the mobility for all users (motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists) along the immediate adjacent local roadway network (Main Avenue, Glover Avenue, and Creeping Hemlock Drive); and improve safety in the vicinity of these interchanges.

PROJECT NEEDS

CTDOT and FHWA are undertaking the project to address deficiencies of the existing Interchanges and streets in the vicinity of the interchanges.

Roadway System Linkage

The existing Merritt Parkway and Route 7 Interchange configuration does not provide all connections between Route 7 and the Merritt Parkway, specifically the following connections:

- SB Merritt to NB 7
- SB Merritt to SB 7
- NB 7 to NB Merritt
- SB 7 to NB Merritt



As a result, approximately 250 and 125 vehicles use the Main Avenue corridor to connect between Route 7 and the Merritt Parkway during the weekday morning and weekday evening peak hours, respectively. This is approximately 5 to 15 percent of the traffic currently using the Main Avenue corridor between CT 123 and CT 15 during either peak hour. These additional vehicles contribute to peak hour congestion along the Main Avenue corridor (Level of Service (LOS D/E)). Providing the missing connections would allow access in all directions, eliminate the need for motorists to

use Main Avenue to connect between Route 7 and the Merritt Parkway, and improve the efficiency of motorists connecting between the roadways.

Safety

The existing Main Avenue and Merritt Parkway Interchange ramps have inadequate acceleration and deceleration lanes, steep grades, sharp curves, and limited sight distance that contribute to a high number of crashes. Over a three-year period (2012-2014), a total of 190 crashes have occurred along Main Avenue or on the Merritt Parkway in the vicinity (within 1/4 mile) of Interchange No. 40. Of those, 28 crashes have occurred on Main Avenue and 162 crashes have occurred on the Merritt Parkway in the vicinity of the Interchange. Over a three-year period (2012-2014), a total of 120 crashes have occurred along Route 7 or on the Merritt Parkway in the vicinity of Interchange No. 39. Of those, 29 crashes have occurred on Route 7 and 91 crashes have occurred on the Merritt Parkway in the vicinity of the Interchange.

Mobility

Providing vehicular connections between Main Avenue and Route 7 would improve mobility for vehicles in the interchange areas. In addition, providing local road network improvements to Main Avenue, Glover Avenue, and Creeping Hemlock Drive) would improve mobility for all users (motorists, transit users, pedestrians, and cyclists) along Main Avenue and connecting roadways. Up to approximately 250 peak hour vehicles accessing the roadways from locations north or south of the project area either originate from or are connecting between portions of Route 7 and Main Avenue in the vicinity of the Merritt Parkway interchanges. Providing for pedestrian and bicycle accommodations would allow connections between neighborhoods, land uses, and transit facilities (e.g., Merritt 7 Railroad Station, bus stops) for pedestrians and bicyclists that currently do not exist.

PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals and objectives that provide other factors that would be considered in the alternative analyses screening process include:

- A. Reduce Congestion
 1. Minimize vehicular congestion at the Main Avenue/ Glover Avenue/Creeping Hemlock Drive intersection and the ramps connecting to/from the Merritt Parkway at Main Avenue.
- B. Provide Long Term Serviceability of the Affected Roadways within the Project Area:
 1. Creating opportunities for improved connections to existing and reasonably foreseeable alternative modes of transportation within the project area. (i.e. surface transit, Metro-North Railroad, bicycles/pedestrians, etc.)
 2. Coordinating with the City of Norwalk toward a workable solution that is compatible with city and regional initiatives.
- C. Optimize the value gained from Public Investment in the Project:
 1. Utilizing cost-effective solutions that maximize capital investment over the lifespan of the project.
 2. Reducing maintenance costs of the affected bridges and roadways.

3. Minimizing the impact of construction on the traveling public and local communities to the extent practicable.
 4. Implementing sustainable practices.
- D. Integrate the Project Roadways and Landscape with the Environment and Neighborhood context:
1. Creating a design that is consistent with the Merritt Parkway's historic and scenic character and design philosophy. Design intent includes preserving and restoring existing historic bridges and structures to the extent practical as documented in the National Register of Historic Places nomination and State Scenic Road designation, following guidelines in the Merritt Parkway Guidelines for General Maintenance and Transportation Improvements, Merritt Parkway Landscape Master Plan, and Merritt Parkway Bridge Restoration Guide.
 2. Preserving, enhancing, and/or restoring surviving historic landscape where practical or, where the landscape has been significantly altered, creating a new landscape design that is consistent with the Parkway's original design intent.



**Routes 7/15 Interchange
Norwalk, Connecticut
State Project No. 102-358**

**Environmental Assessment,
Draft Section 4(F) Evaluation and
Environmental Impact Evaluation**

**Appendix A2
Alternatives Assessments: Purpose and
Need
Criteria**

August 2022

Prepared for:
Connecticut Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

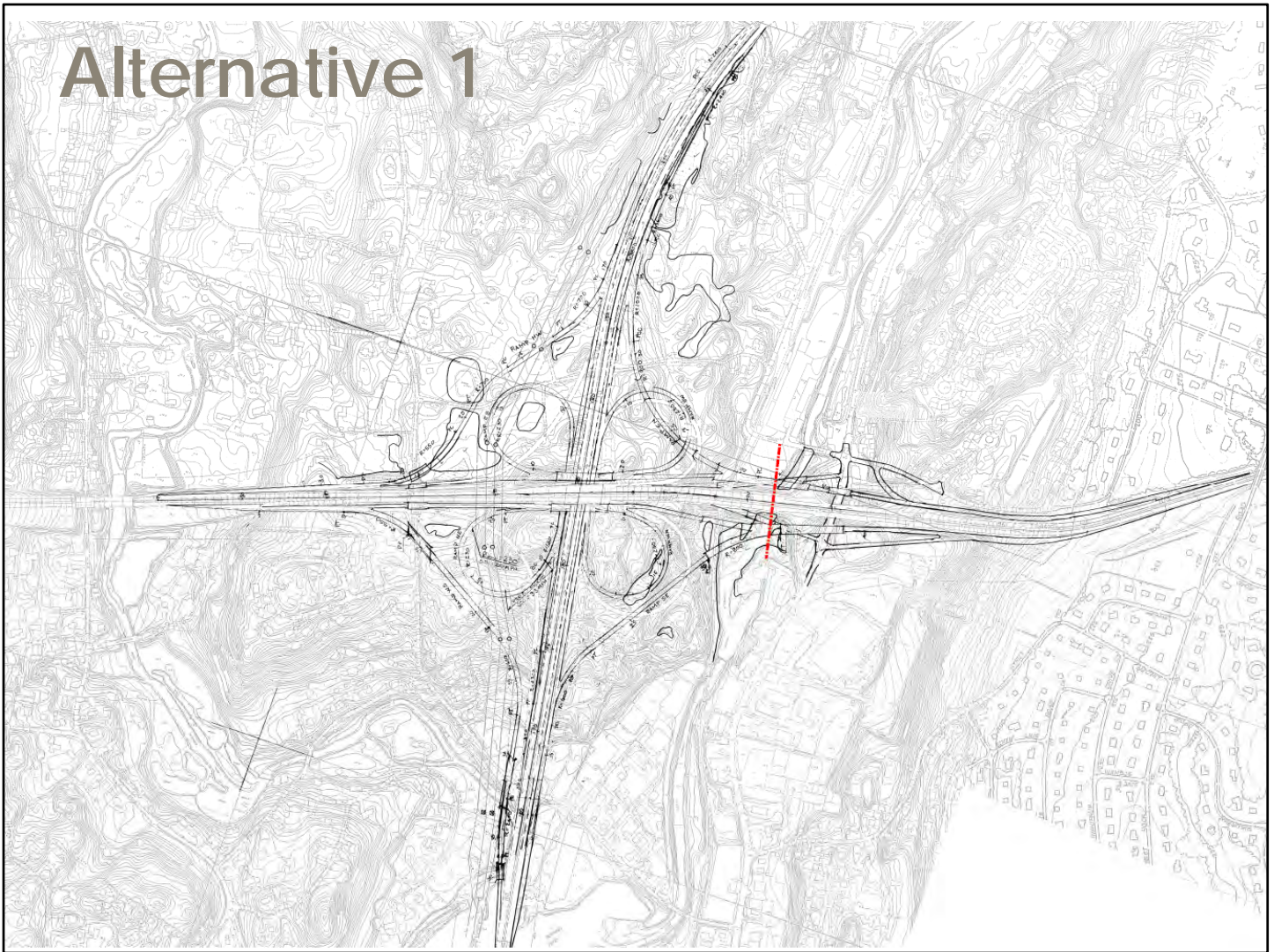
7-15 Interchange

Alternatives Assessments: Purpose and Need Criteria

Connecticut Department of Transportation

November 8, 2018





Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

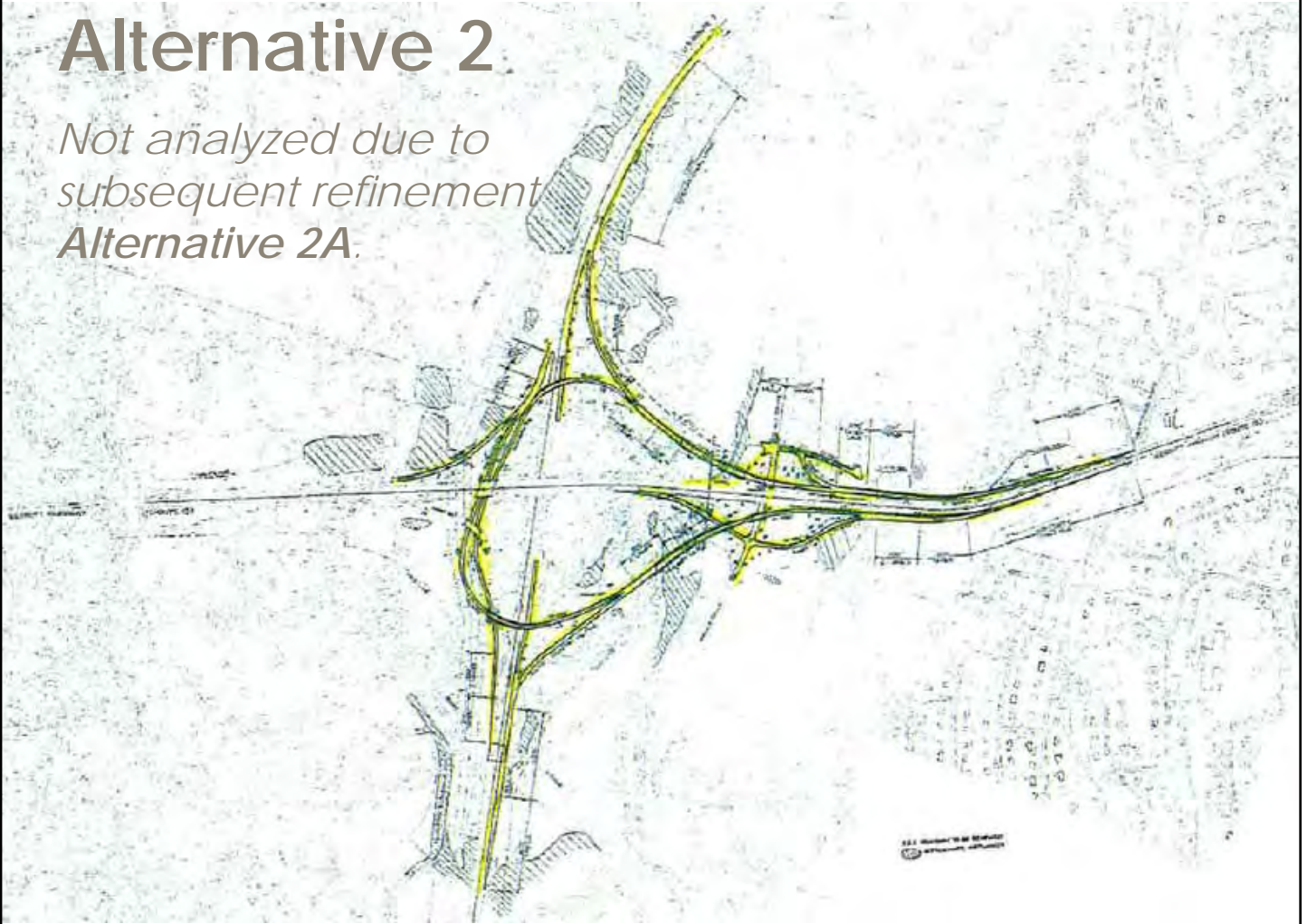
Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are not provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Some of the existing vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements are apparent.

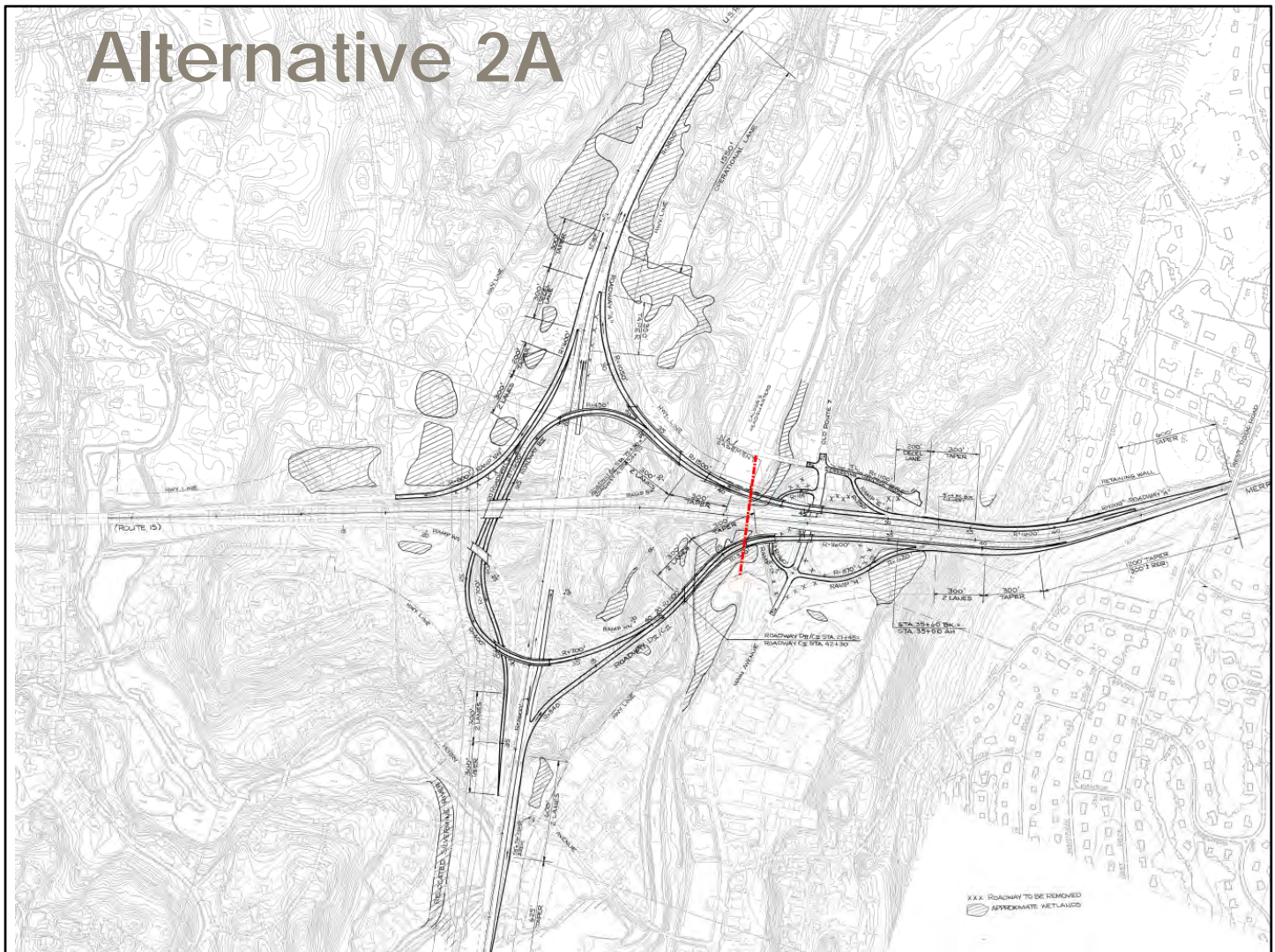
Safety – Geometric deficiencies (short weaving distances within Route 7/Merritt Parkway cloverleaf interchange) are apparent.

Alternative 2

Not analyzed due to subsequent refinement Alternative 2A.



NOT ANALYZED due to subsequent refinement Alternative 2A

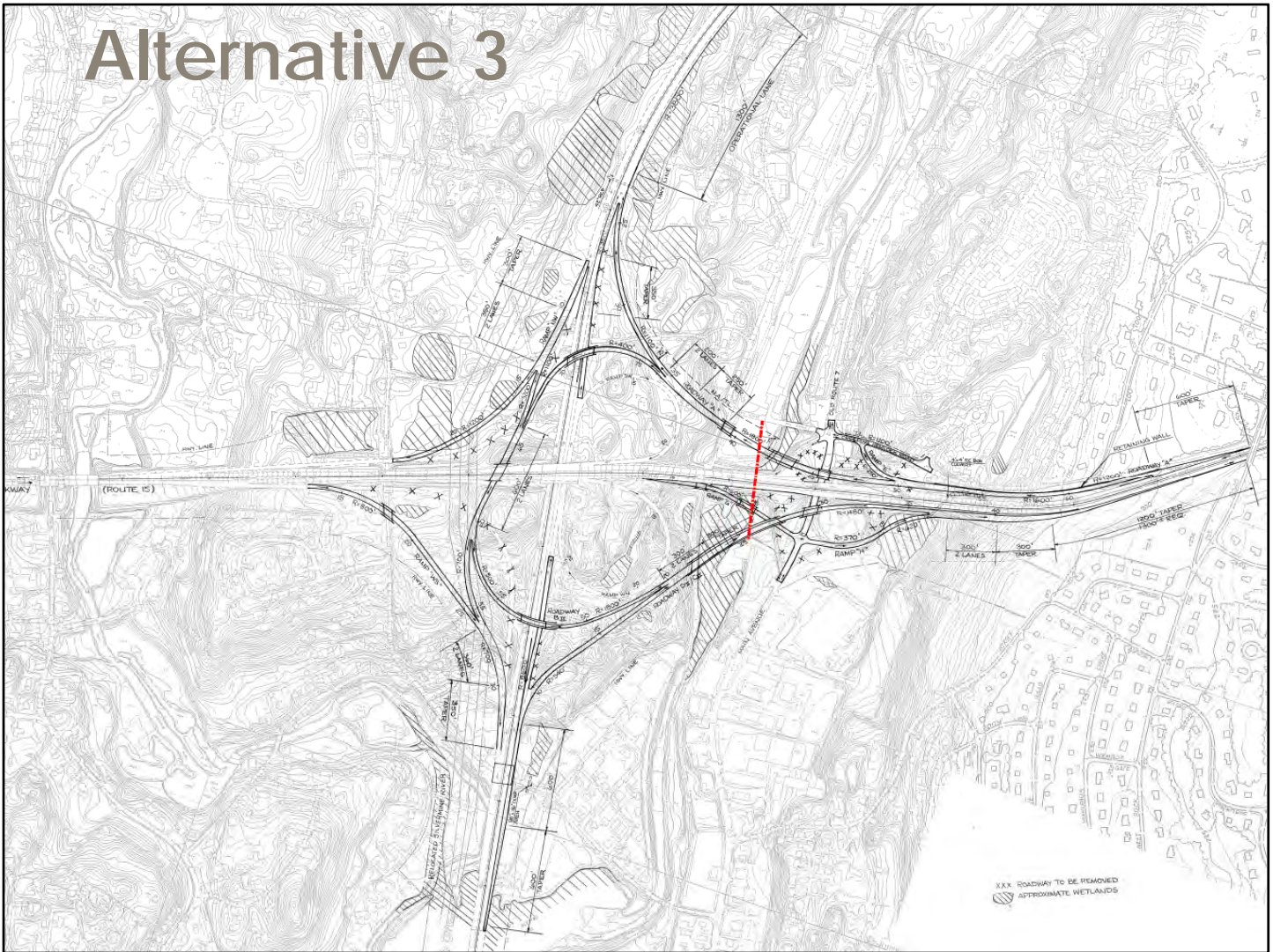


Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are not provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Some of the vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements are apparent.

Safety – No apparent geometric deficiencies.

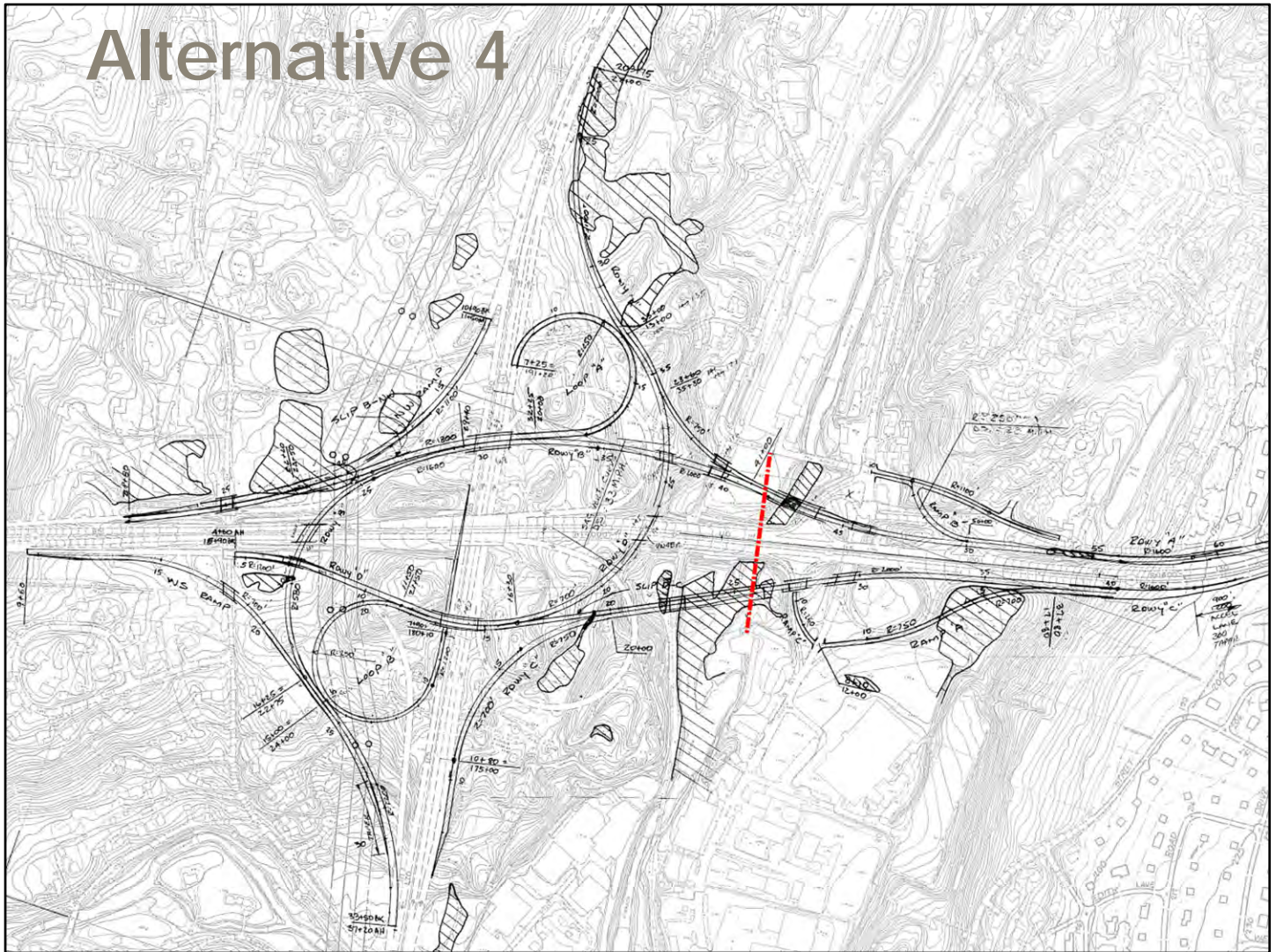


Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are not provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Some of the vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. The local road network is not improved.

Safety – Geometric deficiencies (weave distances of 600') are apparent.



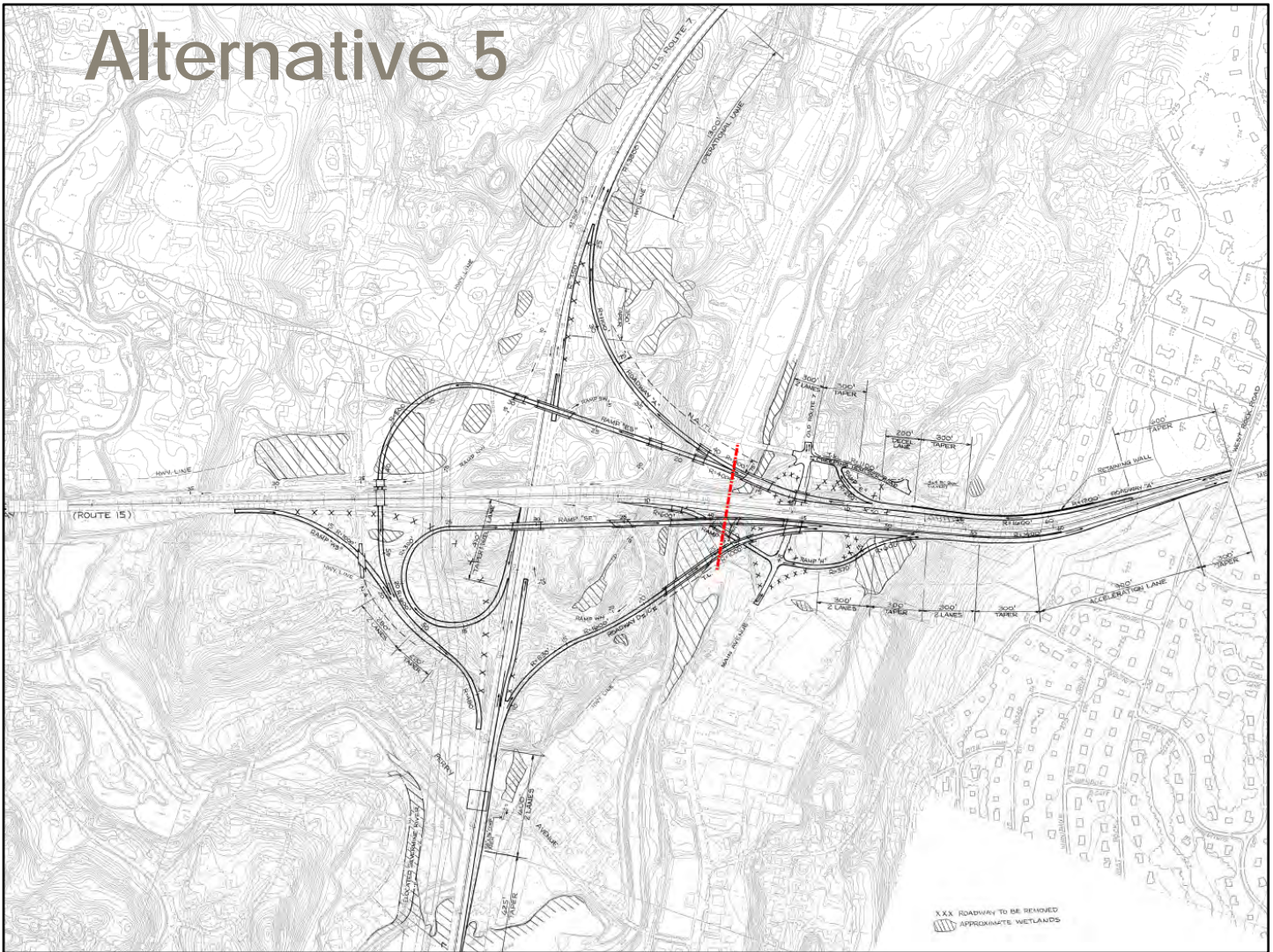
Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are not provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Some of the vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. The local road network is not improved.

Safety – No apparent geometric deficiencies.

Note: The evaluation of this Alternative assumes that the illustration depicts barriers along both overpasses crossing Route 7, separating the ramp movements.

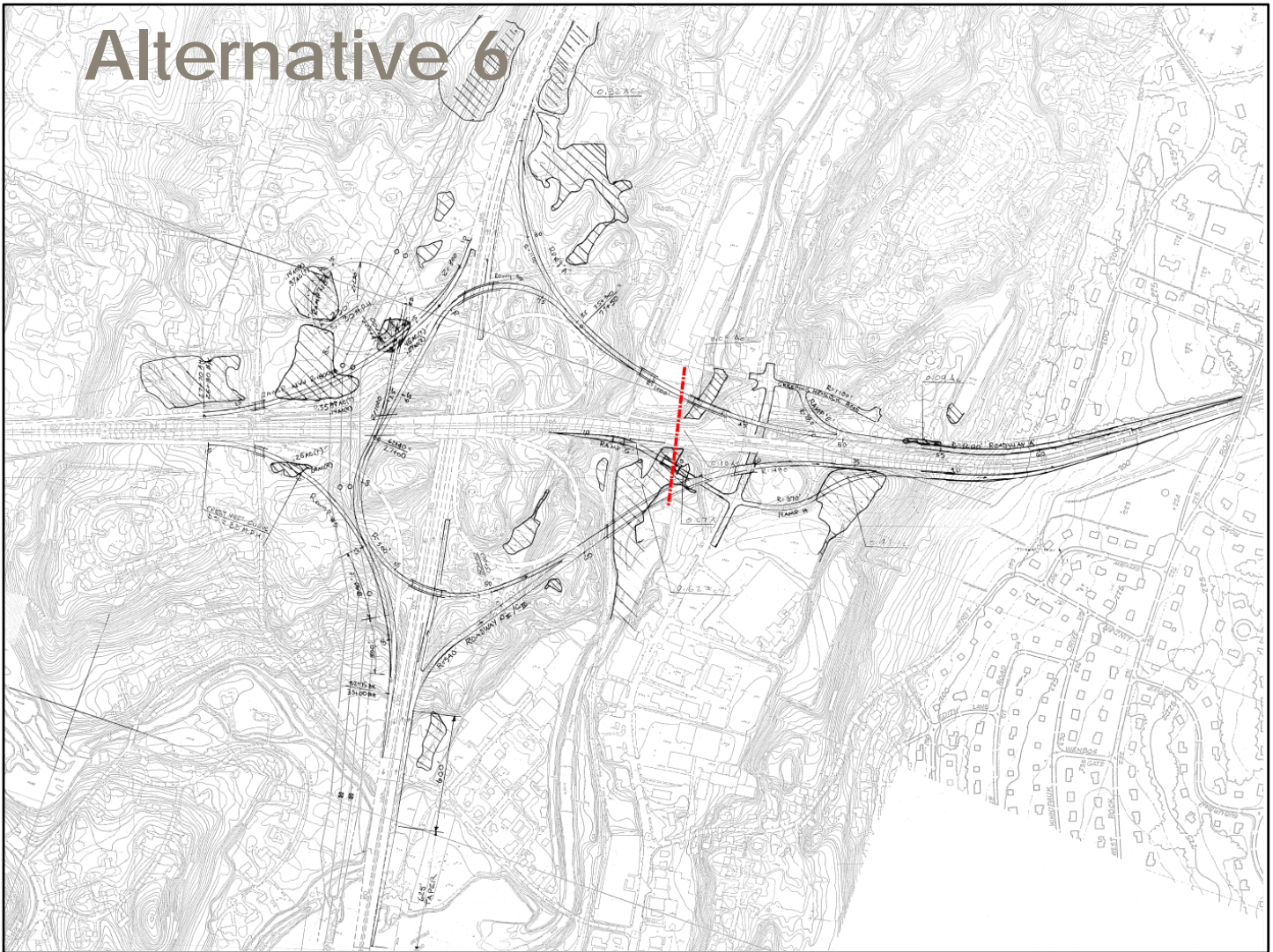


Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are not provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Some of the vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. The local road network is not improved.

Safety – No apparent geometric deficiencies.



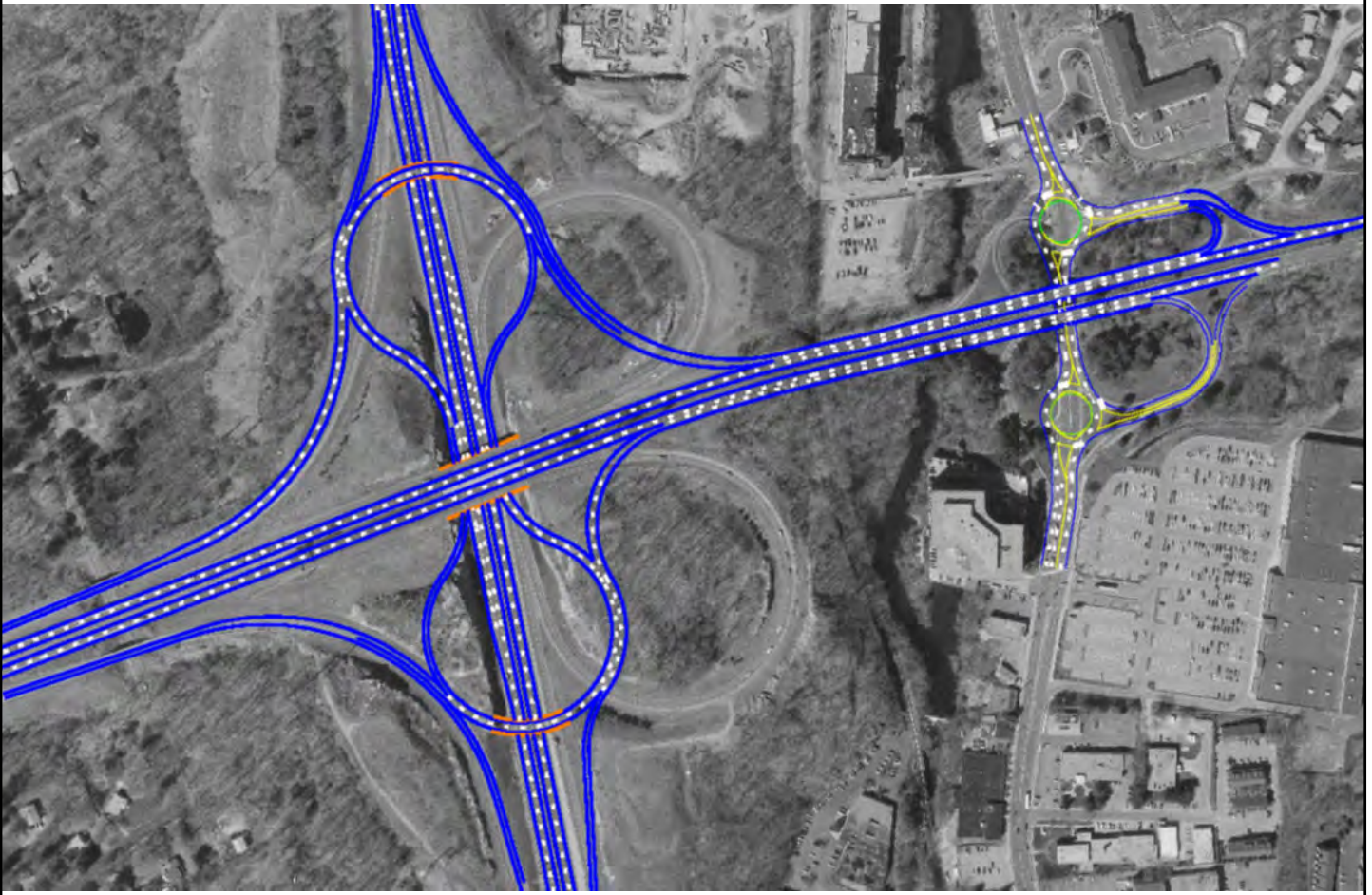
Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are not provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Some of the vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. The local road network is not improved.

Safety – Geometric deficiencies (short weave segments in southwest quadrant) are apparent.

Alternative 7A (High Speed Roundabouts)



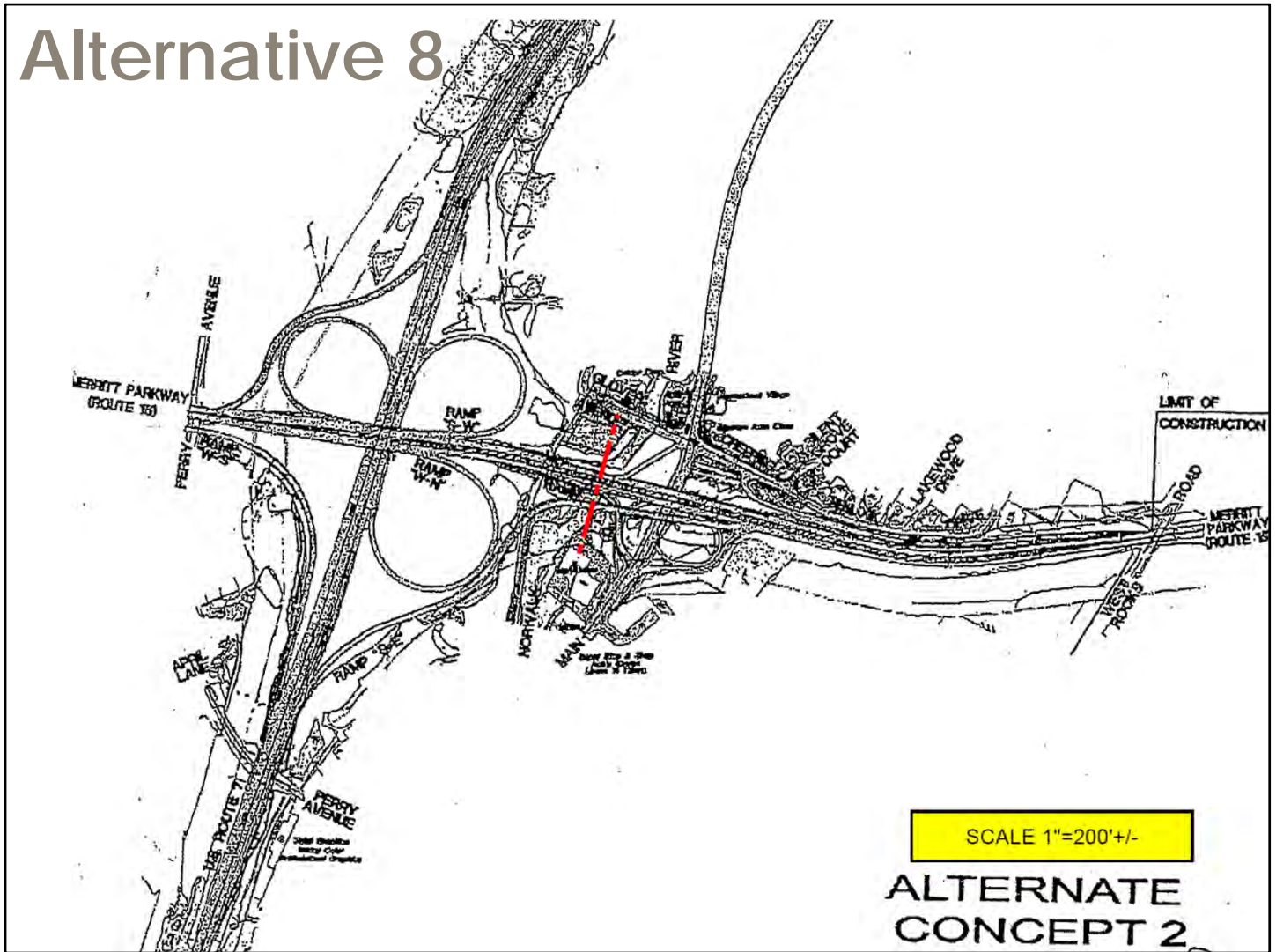
Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. The local road network is not maintained or improved.

Safety – Geometric deficiencies (short weave segments in southwest quadrant) are apparent.

Alternative 8



Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

Roadway System Linkage – Connections are not made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway. There is no connection from southbound Route 7 to northbound Route 15.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are not provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Some of the vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. The local road network is not improved.

Safety – Geometric deficiencies (short weave segments on SB Route 15 mainline) are apparent.

Alternative 9

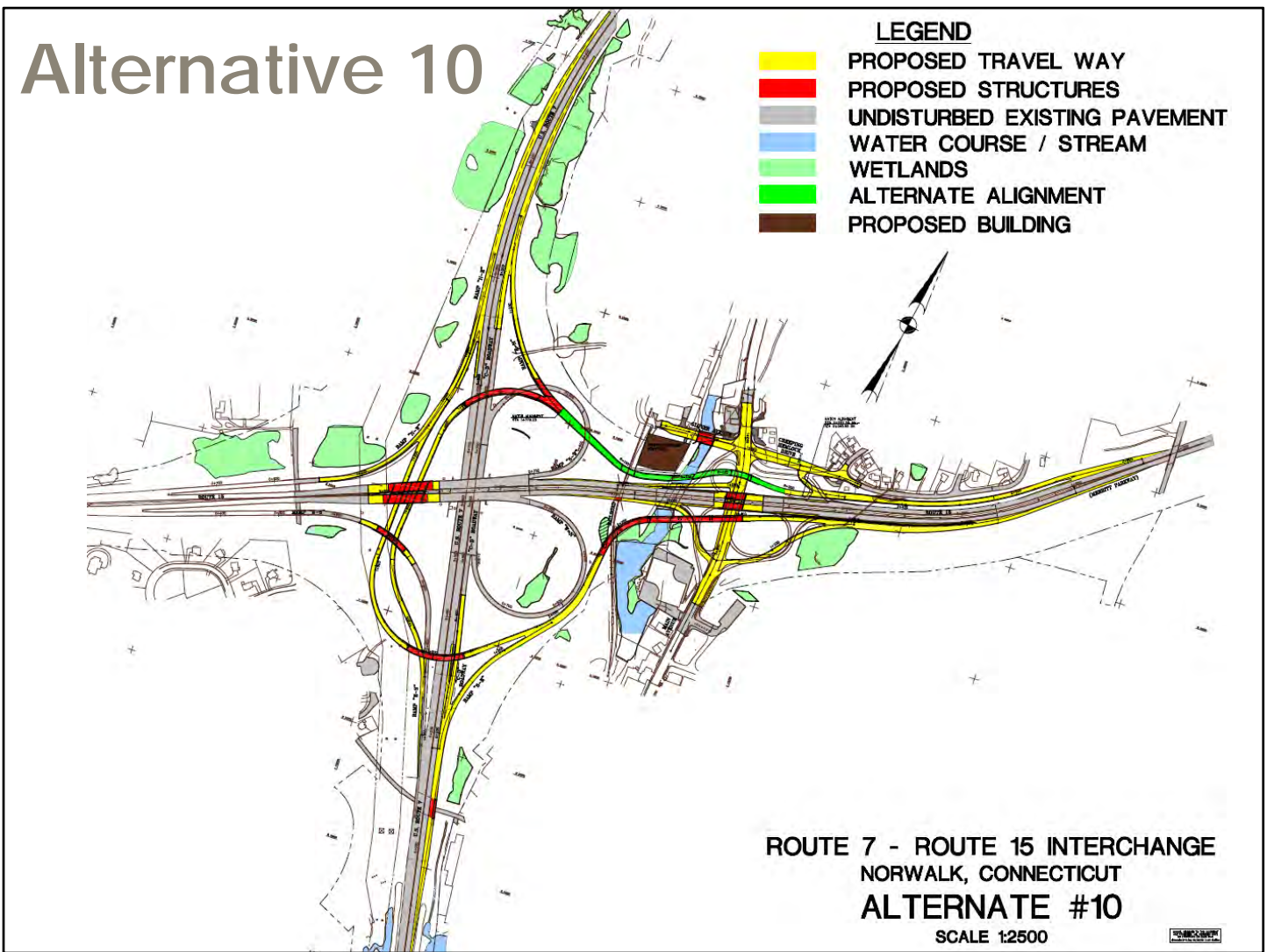


Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are not provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. None of the vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements are not provided as the Main Avenue/Merritt Parkway interchange is eliminated.

Safety – Geometric deficiencies (short weaves on NB/SB Route 15 mainline at the Route 7 interchange) are apparent.



Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are not provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Some of the vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements are apparent.

Safety – No apparent geometric deficiencies.

Alternative 11



Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

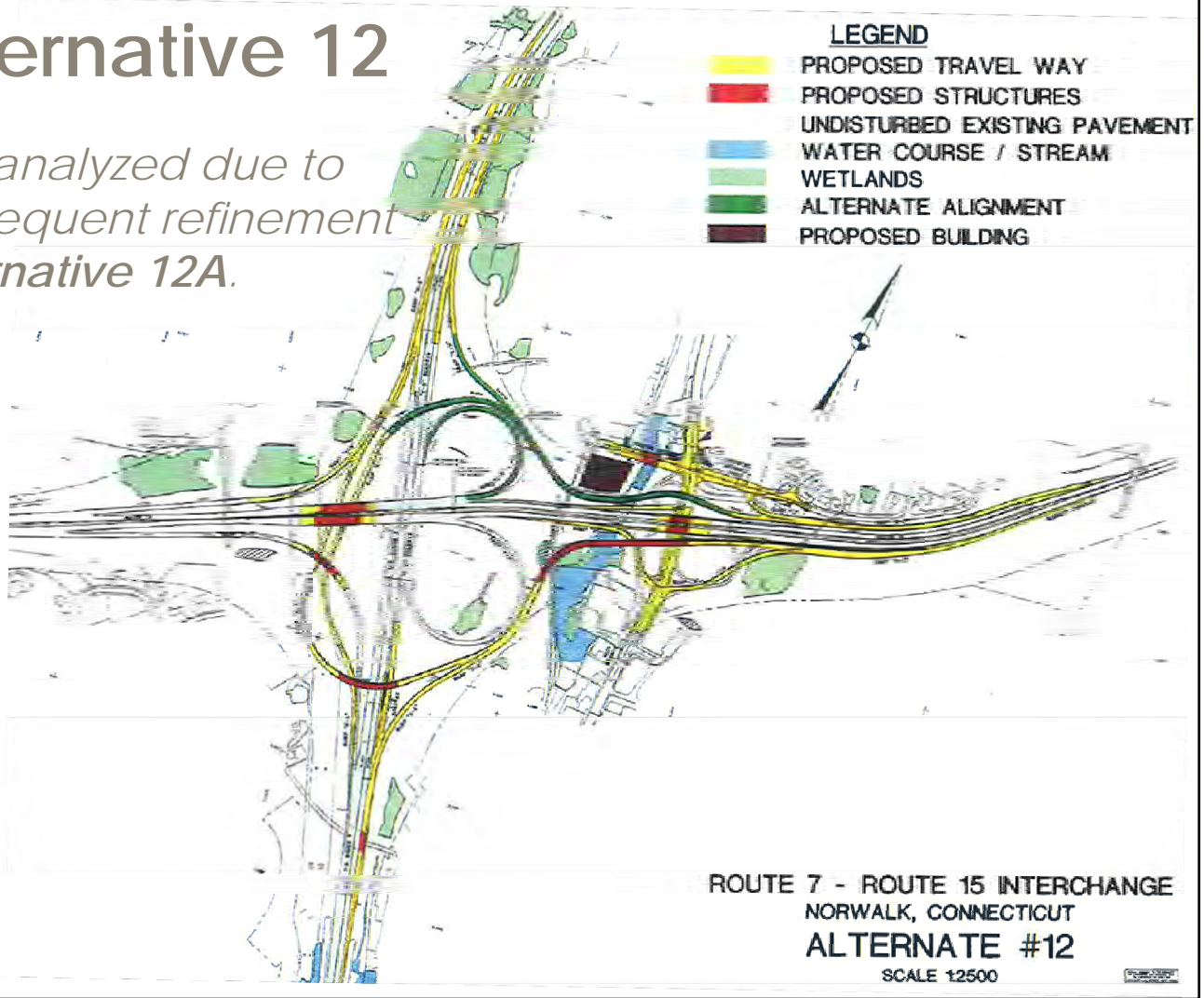
Roadway System Linkage – Connections are not made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway. There is no connection between southbound Route 15 and northbound Route 7.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are not provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Some of the vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements are apparent.

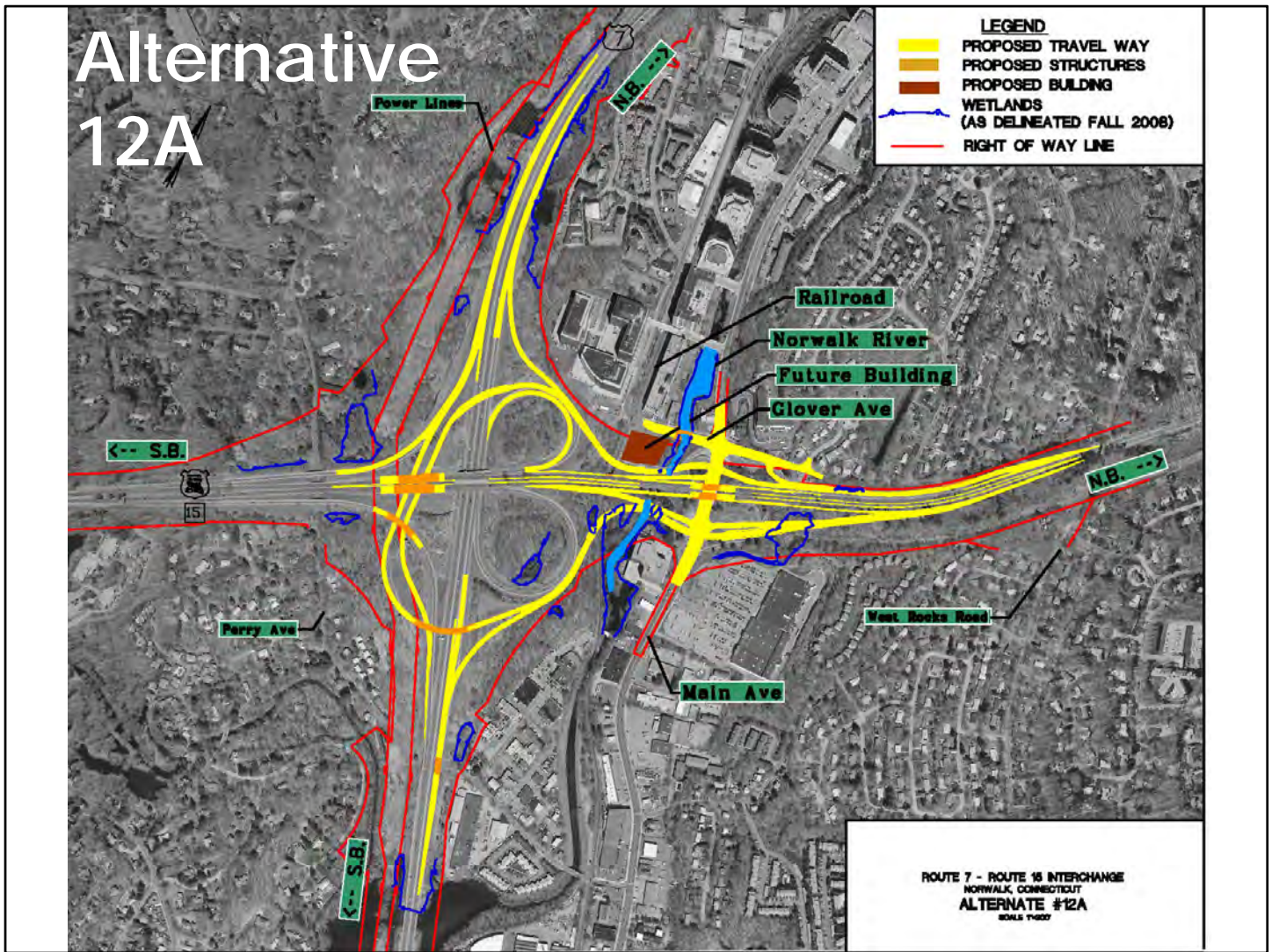
Safety – No apparent geometric deficiencies.

Alternative 12

Not analyzed due to subsequent refinement Alternative 12A.



NOT ANALYZED due to subsequent refinement Alternative 12A



Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Some of the vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements are apparent.

Safety – Geometric deficiencies (successive merge points along SB Route 15 within short distances) are apparent.

The Alternative meets Project Purpose and Need.

Alternative 13



Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are not provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Some of the vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. The local road network is not improved.

Safety – No apparent geometric deficiencies.

Alternative 14

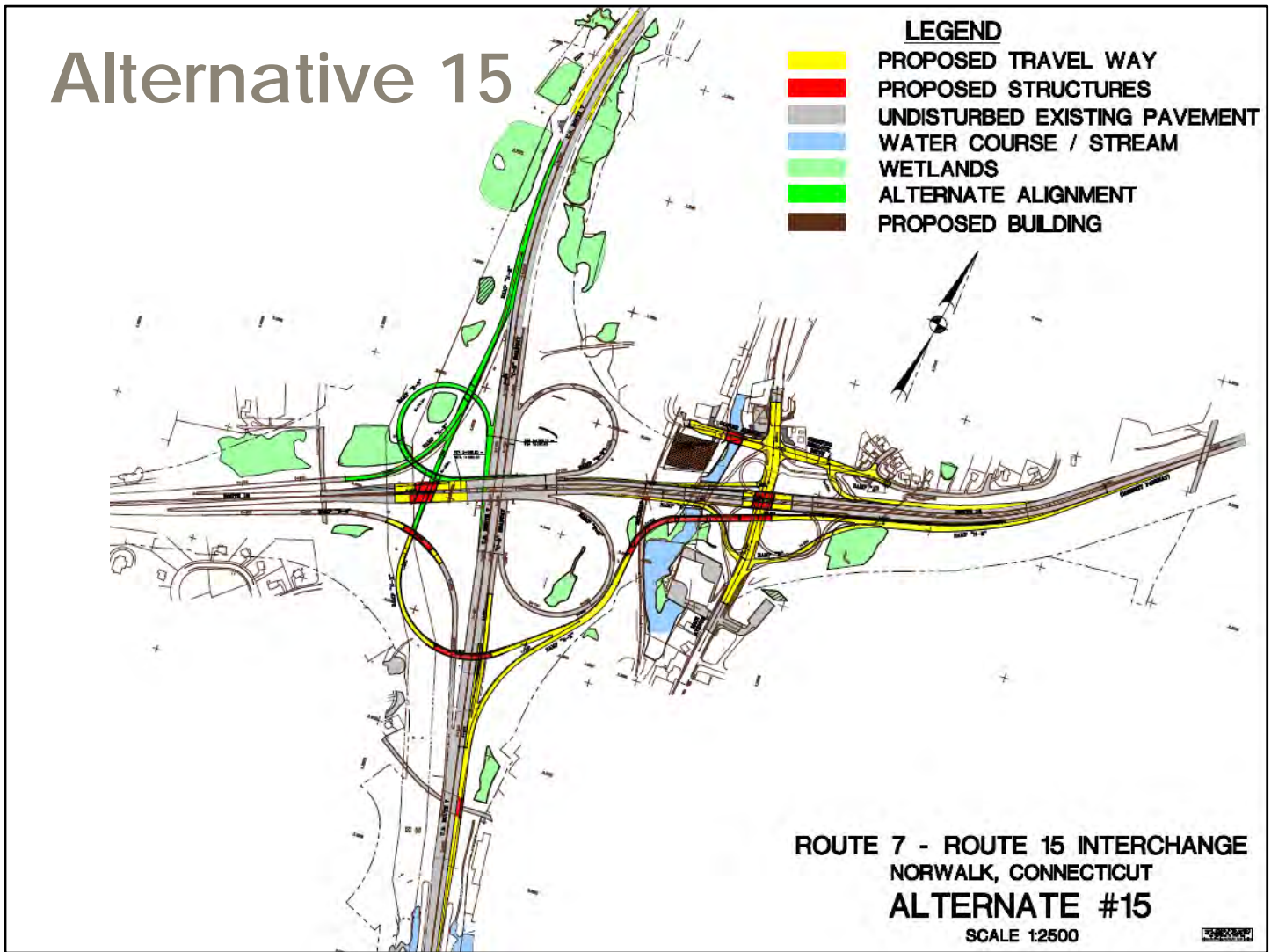


Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are not provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Some of the vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. The local road network is not improved.

Safety – No apparent geometric deficiencies.



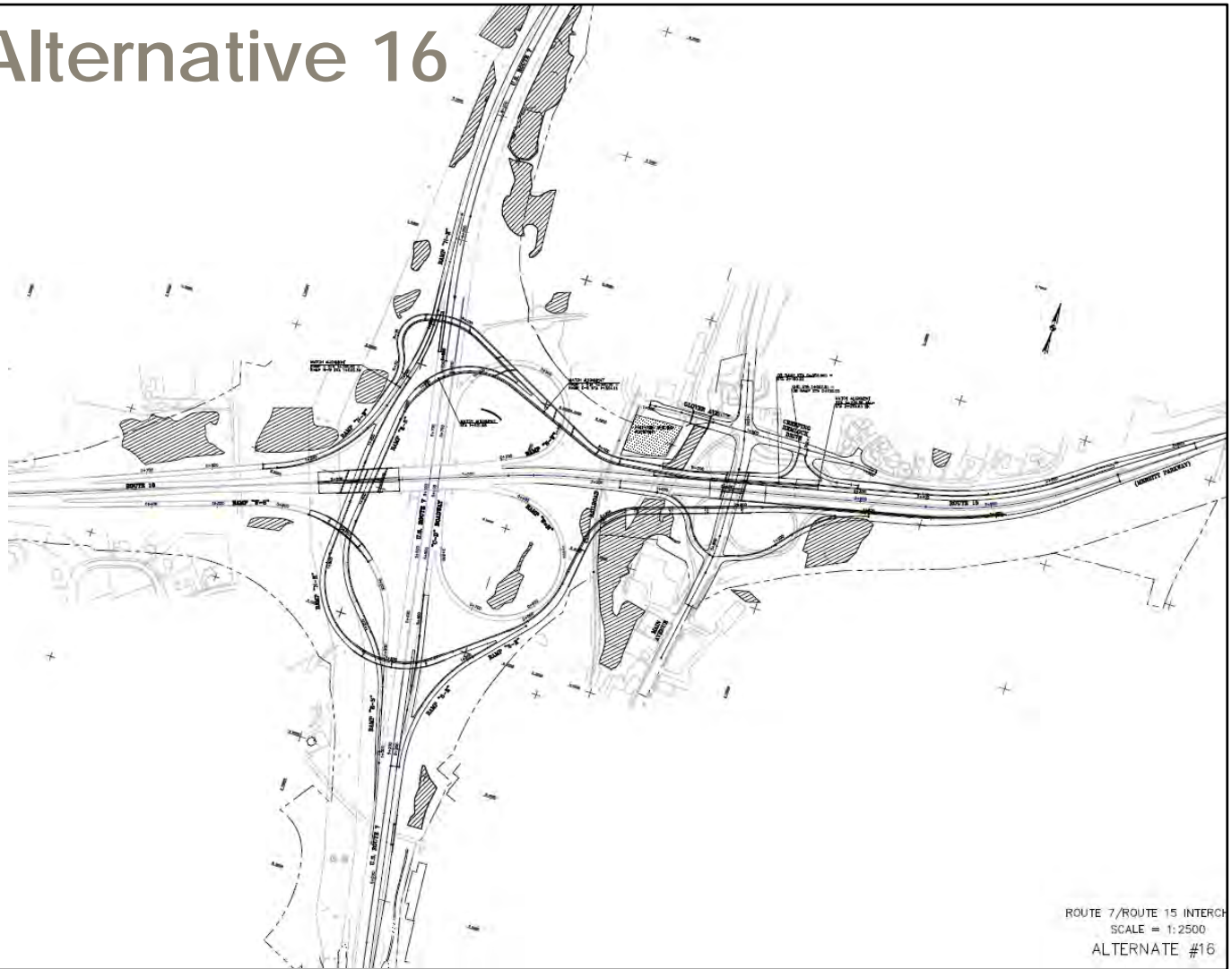
Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

Roadway System Linkage – Connections are not made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway. There is no connection between southbound Route 15 and northbound Route 7.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are not provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Some of the vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements are apparent.

Safety – Geometric deficiencies (weaving movements and distances along SB Route 15 within cloverleaf Route 7 interchange) are apparent.

Alternative 16



Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

Roadway System Linkage – Connections are not made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway. There is no connection between southbound Route 15 and northbound Route 7.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are not provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements are apparent.

Safety – Geometric deficiencies (Weaving movements along SB Route 15 from Main Ave on-ramp to SB Route 15 off-ramp to SB Route 7) are apparent.

Alternative 17

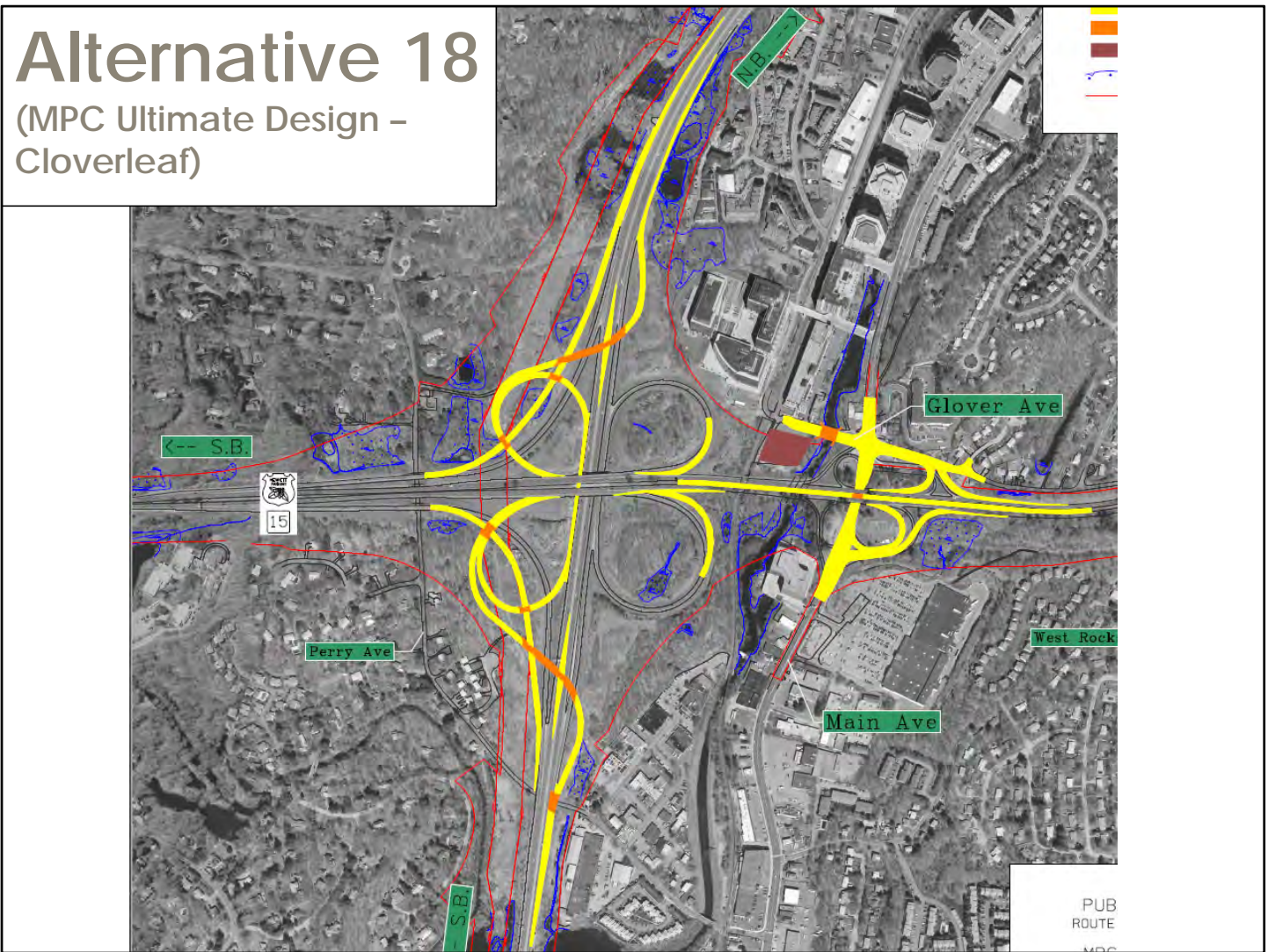


Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

Roadway System Linkage – Connections are not made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway. There is no connection between southbound Route 15 and northbound Route 7.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are not provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Some of the vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements are apparent.

Safety – Geometric deficiencies (Weaving movements along SB Route 15 within cloverleaf Route 7 interchange) are apparent.

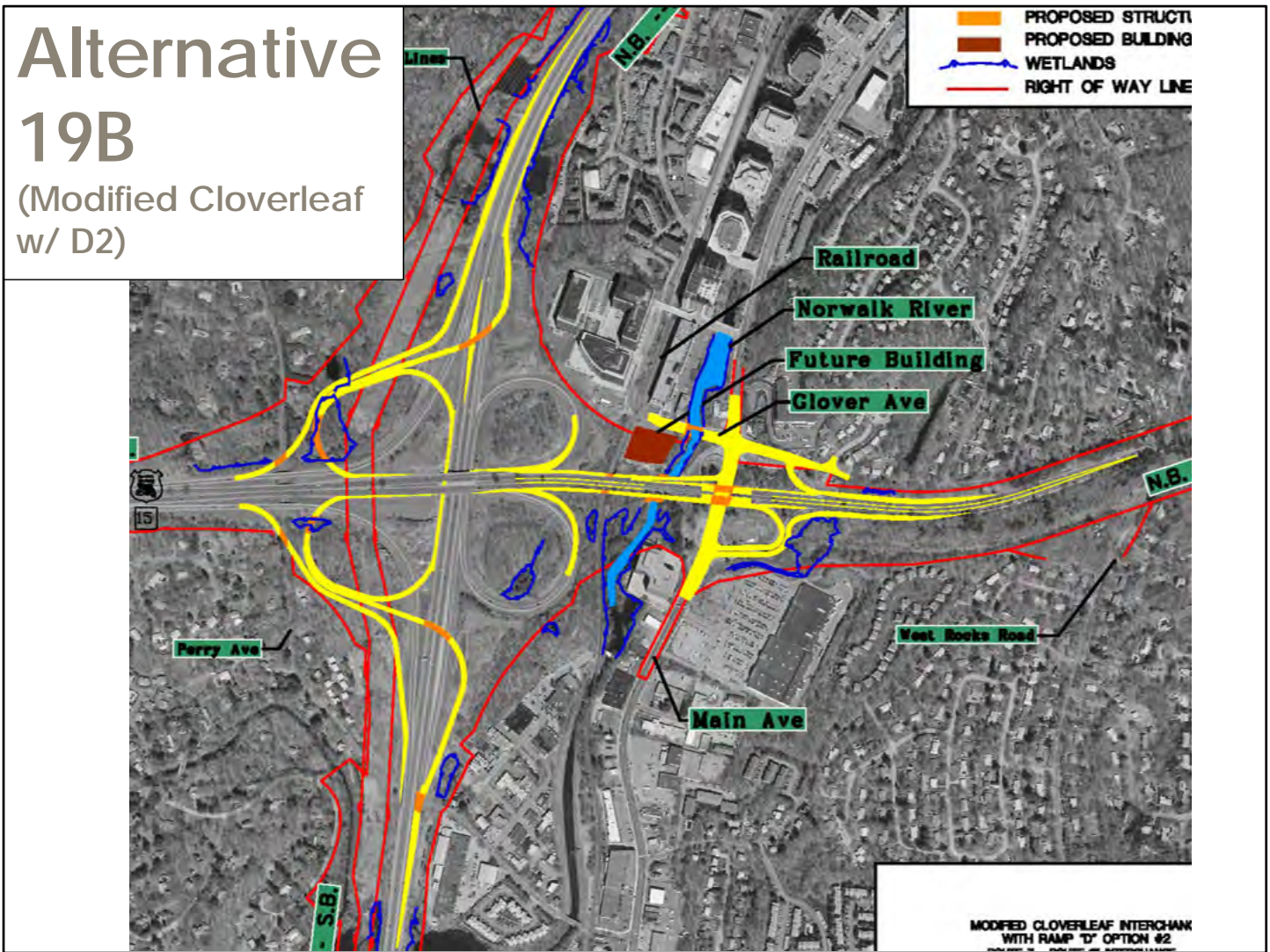


Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are not provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. The local road network is not maintained or improved.

Safety – Geometric deficiencies (multiple weaving movements along northbound and southbound Route 15 within cloverleaf Route 7 interchange with inadequate distances, inadequate distances between nose areas between on- and off-ramps) are apparent. Past assessments of this Alternative specifically denoted safety concerns.

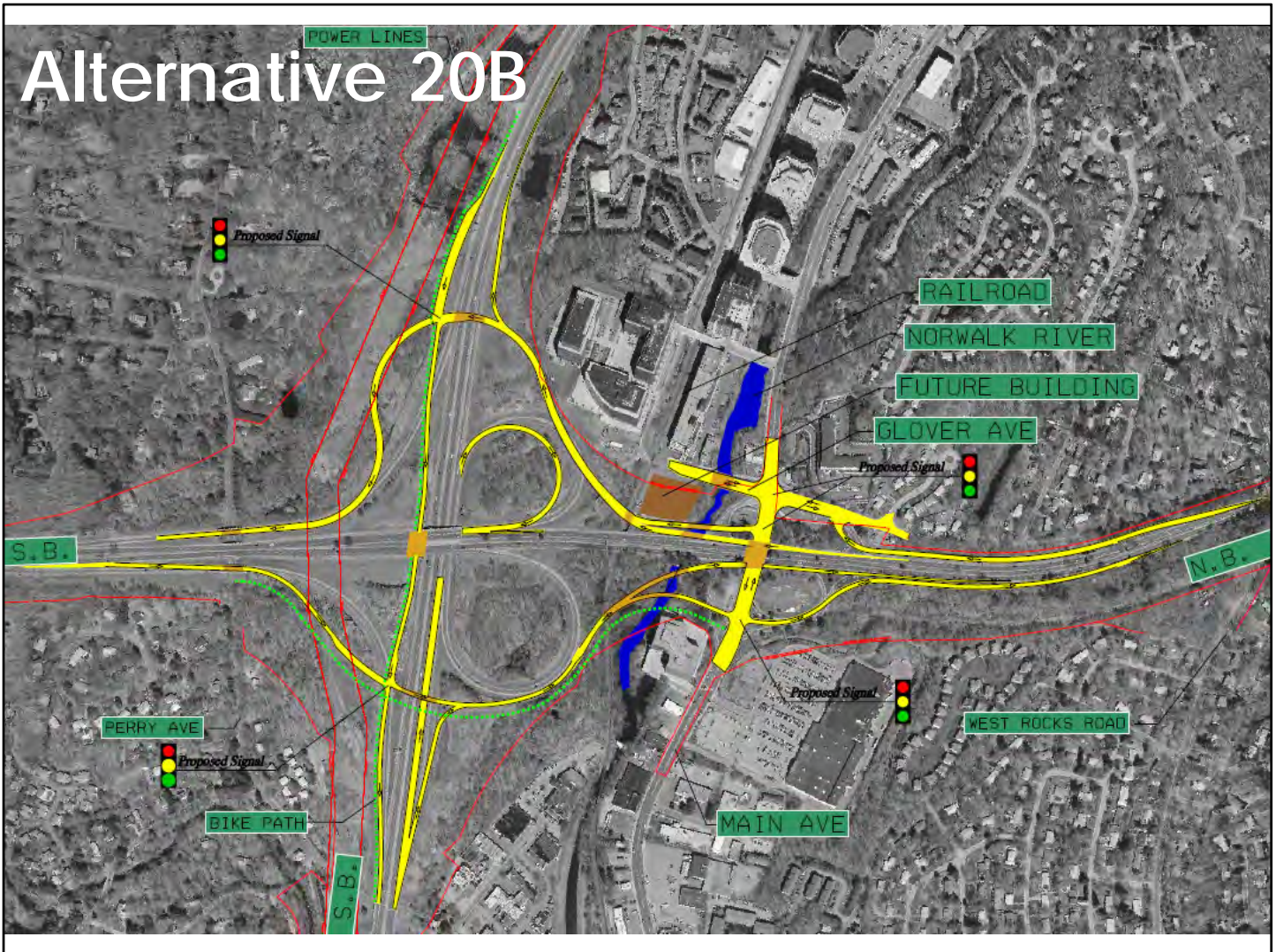


Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are not provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. The local road network is not maintained or improved.

Safety – Geometric deficiencies (successive weaves on SB Route 15, inadequate accel/decel lanes, inadequate distances between ramps, inadequate sight distances) are apparent. Past assessments of this Alternative specifically denoted safety concerns.



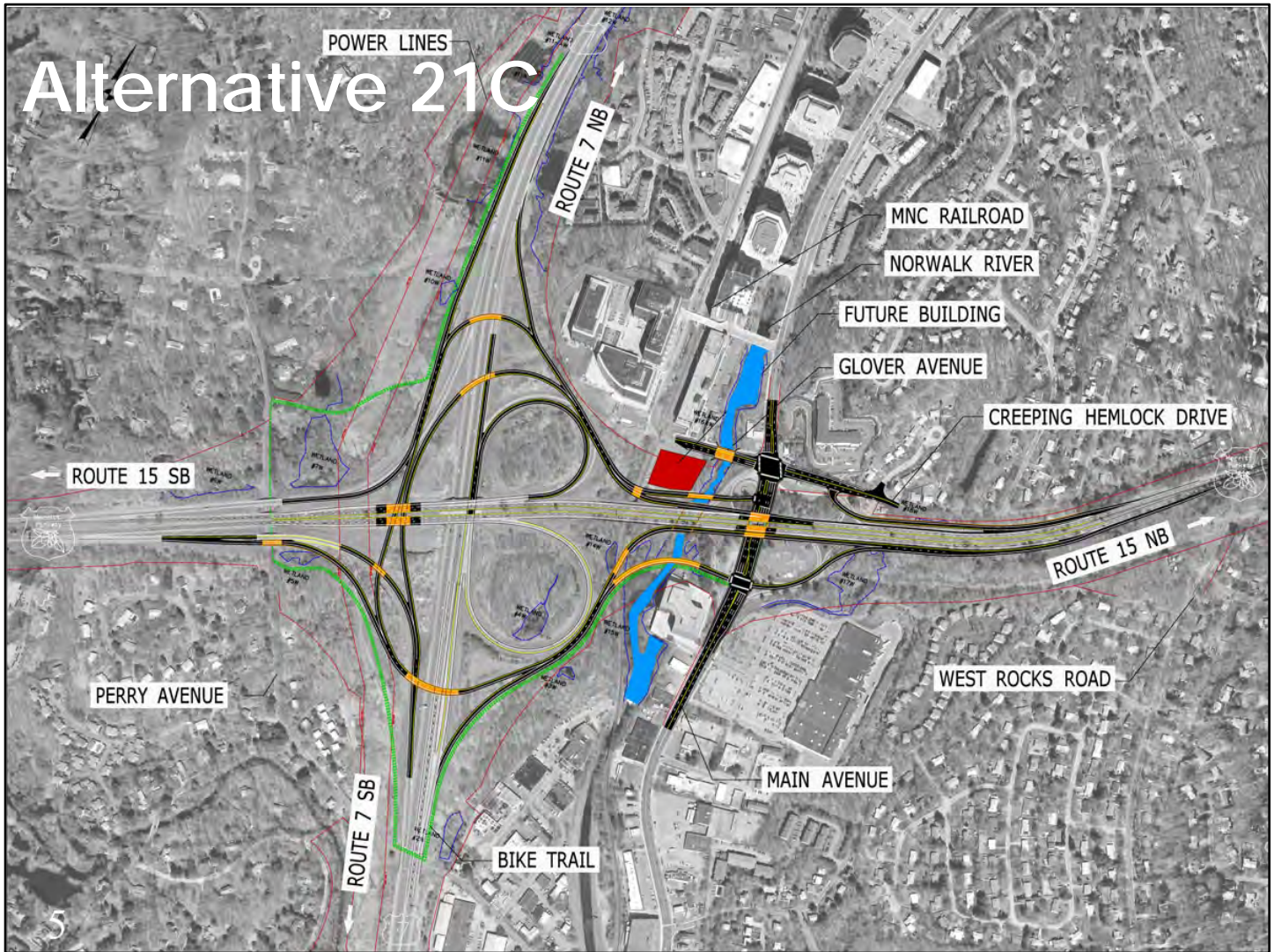
Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements are apparent.

Safety – No apparent geometric deficiencies.

The Alternative meets Project Purpose and Need.



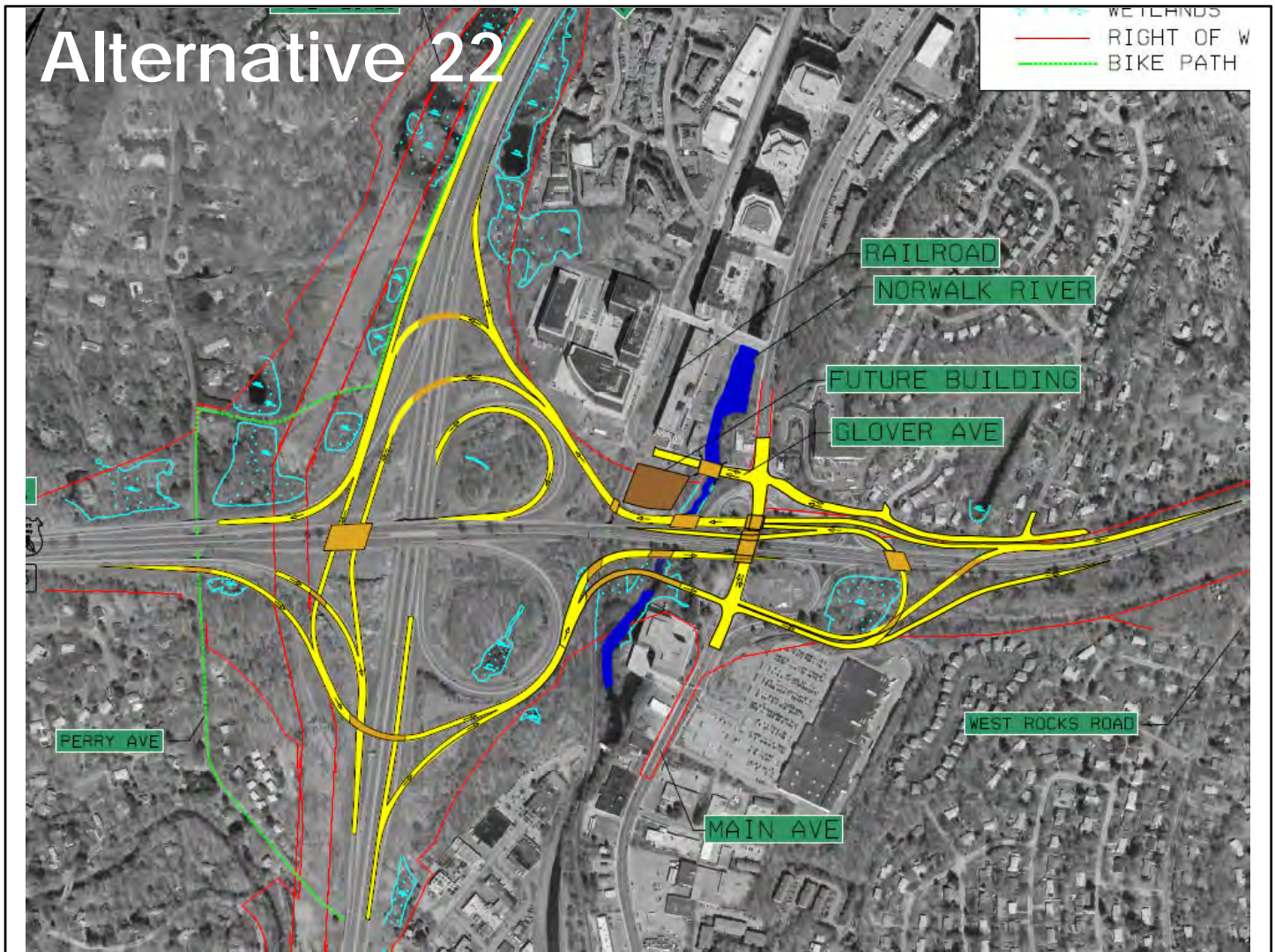
Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements are apparent.

Safety – Geometric deficiencies (Multiple weaves within Route 7/15 interchange (each quadrant)) are apparent.

The Alternative meets Project Purpose and Need.

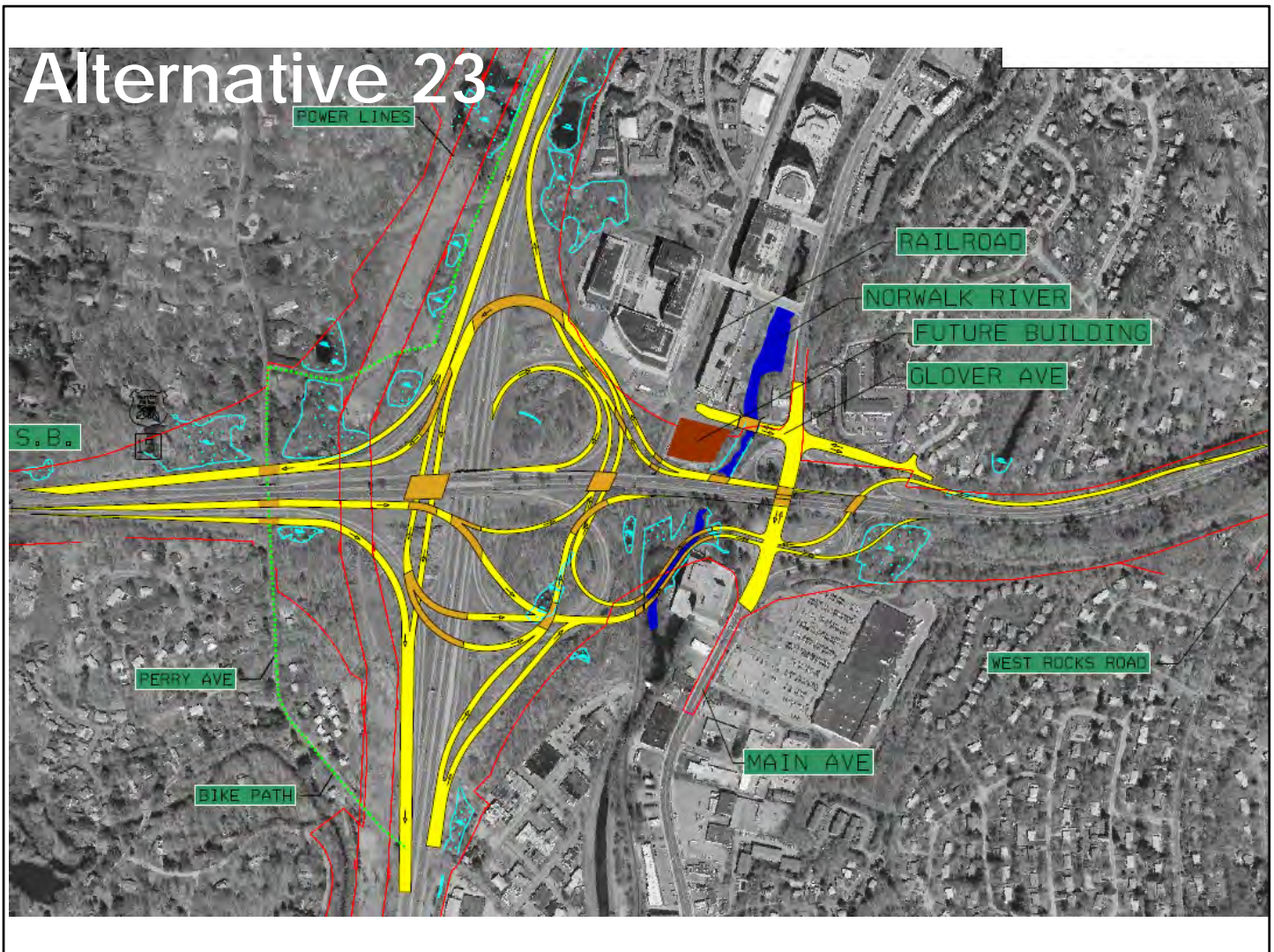


Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Vehicular connections are not maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. The local road network is not maintained or improved.

Safety – Geometric deficiencies (abundance of underpasses and overpasses at the Main Avenue/Route 15 interchange, significant amount of potential interchange signage potential for increased crashes) are apparent.



Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

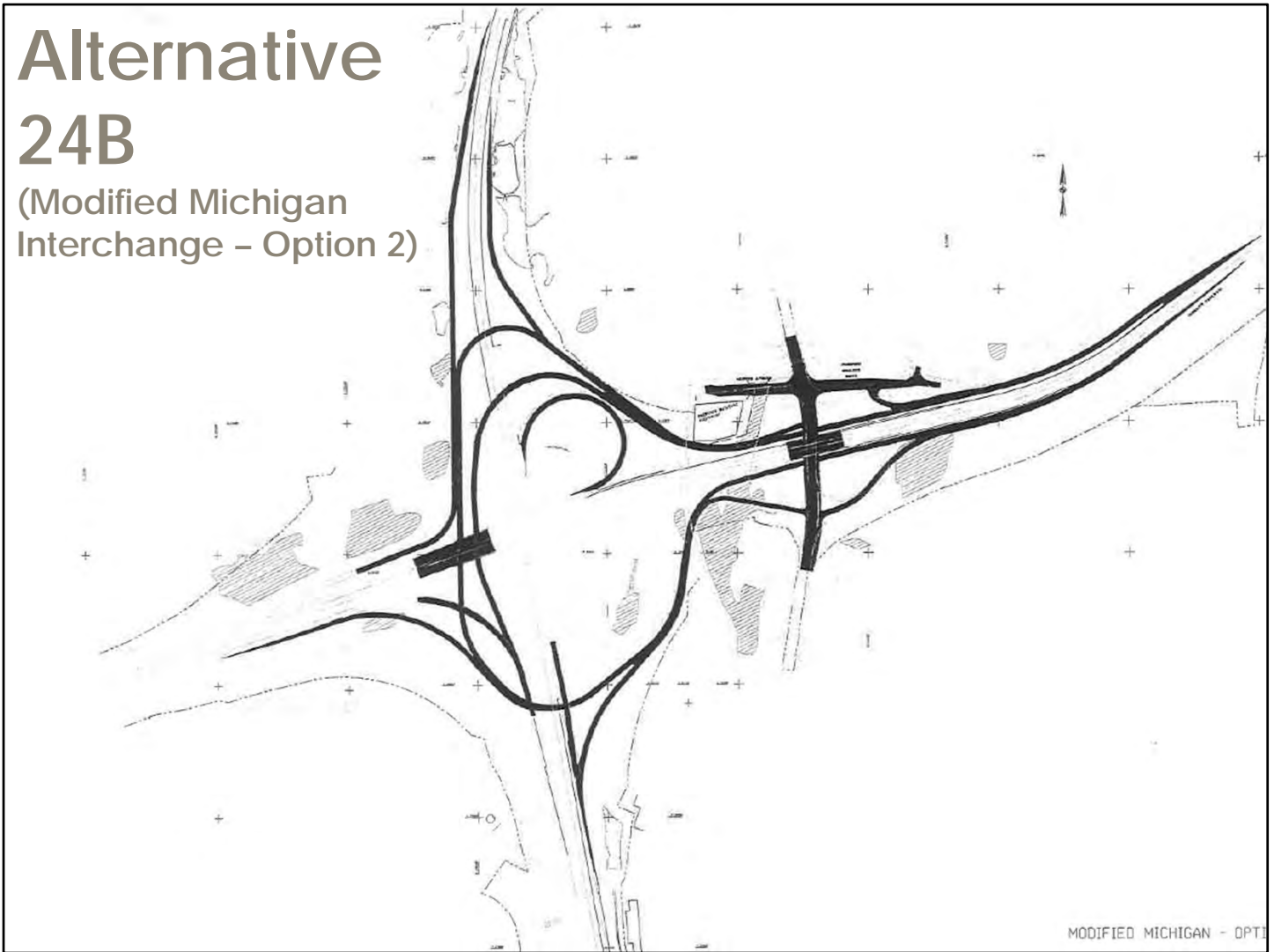
Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Vehicular connections are not maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. The local road network is not maintained or improved.

Safety – Geometric deficiencies (abundance of underpasses and overpasses at the Main Avenue/Route 15 interchange, significant amount of potential interchange signage potential for increased crashes) are apparent.

Alternative 24B

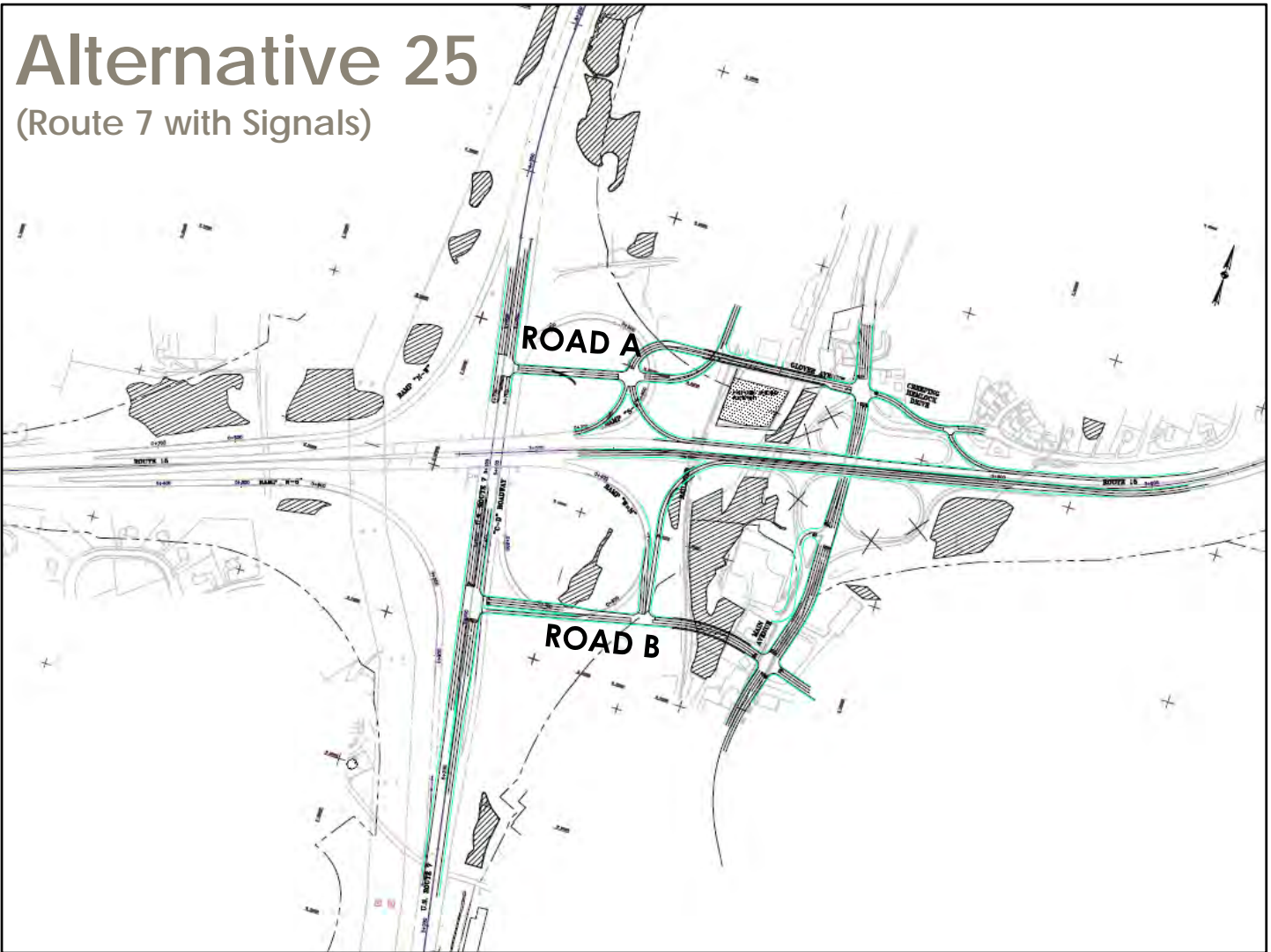
(Modified Michigan
Interchange - Option 2)



This concept was developed at the same time as Alternative 21C. At that time, it was determined that Alternative 21C to be the better version/variation of this Alternative. This Alternative is shown here for reference purposes only.

Alternative 25

(Route 7 with Signals)



Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. The Alternative would not provide local road network improvements to Main Avenue due to poor traffic operations at some of the proposed traffic signals.

Safety – No apparent geometric deficiencies.

Alternative 26



Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions are made to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.

Mobility – Vehicular connections are provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements are apparent.

Safety – No apparent geometric deficiencies.

The Alternative meets Project Purpose and Need.



**Routes 7/15 Interchange
Norwalk, Connecticut
State Project No. 102-358**

**Environmental Assessment,
Draft Section 4(F) Evaluation and
Environmental Impact Evaluation**

**Appendix A3
PAC Meeting Summaries and Presentations**

August 2022

Prepared for:
Connecticut Department of Transportation Federal
Highway Administration

PAC Meeting Summaries and Presentations

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Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #1

March 27, 2017

Meeting Summary



PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) MEETING #1

Meeting Summary

Date: March 27, 2017

Norwalk City Hall Community Room

Time: 6:30pm

1. Attendance

First Name	Last Name	Organization
PAC Members		
Elizabeth	Stocker	City of Norwalk
Mike	Yeosock	City of Norwalk
Christopher	Wigren	Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation
Jo-Anne	Horvath	Creeping Hemlock/Cranbury Neighborhood
Peter	Viteretto	CTASLA
David	Waters	Harbor Point/Building and Land Technology
JoAnn	McGrath	Marcus Partners/Merritt 7
Jill	Smyth	Merritt Parkway Conservancy
Alan	Kibbe	Norwalk Association of Homeowners (NASH)
David	Olson	Norwalk Association of Silvermine Homeowners (NASH)
Nancy	Rosett	Norwalk Bike Task Force/Merritt Parkway Trail Alliance
John	Moeling	Norwalk Land Trust
Britt	Liotta	Norwalk Transit District
Jim	Carter	Norwalk Valley River Trail
Joanne	Ferrera	Silvermine Community
Jon	Chew	Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG)
Connecticut Department of Transportation Staff		
Rich	Armstrong	CTDOT
Andy	Fesenmeyer	CTDOT
Jenn	Sweeney	CTDOT
Project Consultant Team		
Meg	Harper	Architectural and Historic Services (AHS)
Ross	Harper	Architectural and Historic Services (AHS)
Stacey	Vairo	Architectural and Historic Services (AHS)
Mike	Fisher	BL Companies
Kim	Lesay	BL Companies
Stephanie	Brooks	FHI
Ken	Livingston	FHI
John	Eberle	Stantec



Route 7-15 Norwalk

Chris	Mojica	Stantec
Brian	O'Donnell	Stantec
Gary	Sorge	Stantec
Mike	Dion	VN Engineers
Community Representatives		
Steve	Kleppin	Norwalk Planning & Zoning

2. Welcome

Rich Armstrong, of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), welcomed everyone to the 1st Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting for the Route 7/15 Norwalk Project. He welcomed the group and presented a basic overview of the project.

3. Meeting Overview

R. Armstrong reviewed the meeting's agenda items: introduction of project teams, overview of PAC role and process, review of CEPA/NEPA process, updates on work status, review of current alternates, and public outreach. He introduced John Eberle, of Stantec to begin the presentation.

4. Introductions

John E. presented an overview of the consultant team organization and staff from each firm introduced themselves. John E. then introduced Andy Fessenmeyer and Jen Sweeney of CTDOT.

5. Project Advisory Committee Process

Andy F. provided an overview of the PAC process. PAC members introduced themselves. Andy F. stressed the importance of the PAC to provide input and communicate with their constituencies on the project and bring comments/concerns back to the Committee.

6. Project Background

John E. provided a brief overview of the Project and purpose/principles of the project. He introduced a preliminary project workflow which includes documentation of environmental conditions, development of alternates, finalization of alternates, preliminary final engineering, permitting and construction. John E. stressed this is a preliminary schedule and will be adjusted based on number of alternates under consideration and overall public acceptance and support of alternates.



7. NEPA/CEPA Process

John E. provided an introduction to NEPA/CEPA including a review of topics that will be evaluated as part of the environmental documentation process. John E. stressed the need to develop a clear Purpose and Need statement for the project. He explained the project team is working through the development of a Purpose and Need statement and the PAC will review at the next meeting.

John E. then paused the presentation to solicit questions from the PAC.

Questions:

Q: Will 106 and 4(f) be a component of the project?

A: Yes, it will be a key component of the environmental documentation process. Stacey Vairo of AHS then provided a brief overview of the statutory language and requirements of Sections 106 and 4(f). Stacey V. stated the Section 4(f) requirement “raises the bar” for highway projects requiring all prudent and feasible alternatives be considered. It was agreed that a more detailed review of Section 4(f) will be a component of an upcoming PAC meeting.

Comment: Please include project team contact list in PAC binder.

8. Update on Work Status

John E. provided a brief update on the work status for the project. He noted most of the traffic data collection has been completed. A comprehensive Origin & Destination data collection effort was also completed. Fieldwork to document wetlands and critical habitats is also complete. There has also been screening of potential archeological sensitive areas.

9. Alternates

John E. presented an overview the alternate development process and the two existing build alternates that will be further evaluated. John E. discussed the potential for more alternates to be proposed as the project moves forward. John E. briefly walked the PAC through the Alternate 21C and Alternate 26 concepts. The project team will also review the prior considered alternates from 2008 working group and earlier environmental documentation process.

10. Public Outreach

Ken L. provided an update on the outreach process. He asked the PAC to suggest potential meetings/events/individuals for the project team to meet with in the coming months.



11. Next Steps

John E. presented an overview of the next six-months for the project. The next PAC meeting will be scheduled for late May. The public scoping meeting for the NEPA/CEPA process will then be scheduled for early June or early September.

12. PAC Questions and Comments

Q: What is overall acreage impact of the project and what landscaping components will be integrated into the project? There is a desired for more green space and ecological understanding of landscape treatment. Avoid detention basin hollows.

A: We do not have specific acreage impacts at this time as it will depend on alternates. We will work to both fully understand and incorporate recommended landscape treatments. We will work closely with the PAC and specifically the Merritt Parkway Conservancy on the landscape design components of the project. AHS will provide an overview/background of the Merritt Parkway character at the next PAC meeting.

Comment: The viewshed for this project should seek to replicate the original design intent of the Parkway.

Comment: Please present locations where the Alternate 26 signals have been implemented in a similar manner in Connecticut.

Comment: Please consider having meetings in the Norwalk City Hall Common Council Chambers where acoustics are better.

Q: How does Alternate 26 signals impact the "Super 7" concept?

A: The signals do not preclude the development of "Super 7". If such a project was re-evaluated the signals would have to be a consideration in the project.

Q: Could Alternate 26 traffic signals be flashing in off-peak times?

A: That is something we would consider.

Comment: So far this project is a vast improvement over past efforts. Need to approach landscape design through original intent of Merritt Parkway.

Comment: One of the goals should be to enhance the character of the Parkway. This should be blended into the purpose and need.

Q: How does the final decision making process occur?



Route 7-15 Norwalk

A: From a regulatory perspective the final decision is made by CTDOT and FHWA. The PAC will play a key role in providing guidance, developing recommendations and reviewing work efforts.

Comment: Please continue to focus on the aesthetics of the project.

Comment: The sooner the better for this project, it is crucial to economic vitality of the area.

Comment: Please incorporate topography and 3D simulation into future graphics.

Understanding the elevation changes is key to understanding alternates.

Comment: Need to consider how Norwalk Valley Trail (NRVT) and potential for Merritt Parkway trail converge in project area and need to consider routing of NRVT.

Comment: Need to consider bicycle and pedestrian improvements on Main Avenue.

Comment: Alternate 26 seems to have a fatal flaw with signals. Need to consider how Main Avenue would be impacted.

Q: As part of the NEPA/CEPA Environmental Assessment (EA)/Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE) will you have a preferred alternative?

A: Yes, within the EA/EIE a preferred alternative will be identified.

Q: Can you envision the no-build alternative could be decided upon?

A: Yes, for example if the alternates are not found to meet the purpose and need or do not improve connections and travel times in the area.

Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #1

March 27, 2017

Meeting Presentation



Route 7/15 Norwalk Project – Project Advisory Committee Meeting #1



Monday, March 27th, Norwalk City Hall



PAC Meeting #1– March 27, 2017
CTDOT State Project #102-358

Route 7/15 Norwalk - AGENDA

- Welcome
- Meeting Overview
- Introductions
- PAC Process
- Project Background
- NE PA/CE PA Process
- Update on Work Status
- Alternates
- Public Outreach
- Next Steps
- PAC Questions and Comments





Route 7/15 Norwalk - MEETING OVERVIEW

1. Get acquainted
2. Clarify the PAC's role and process
3. Clarify the project mission
4. Review the basics together



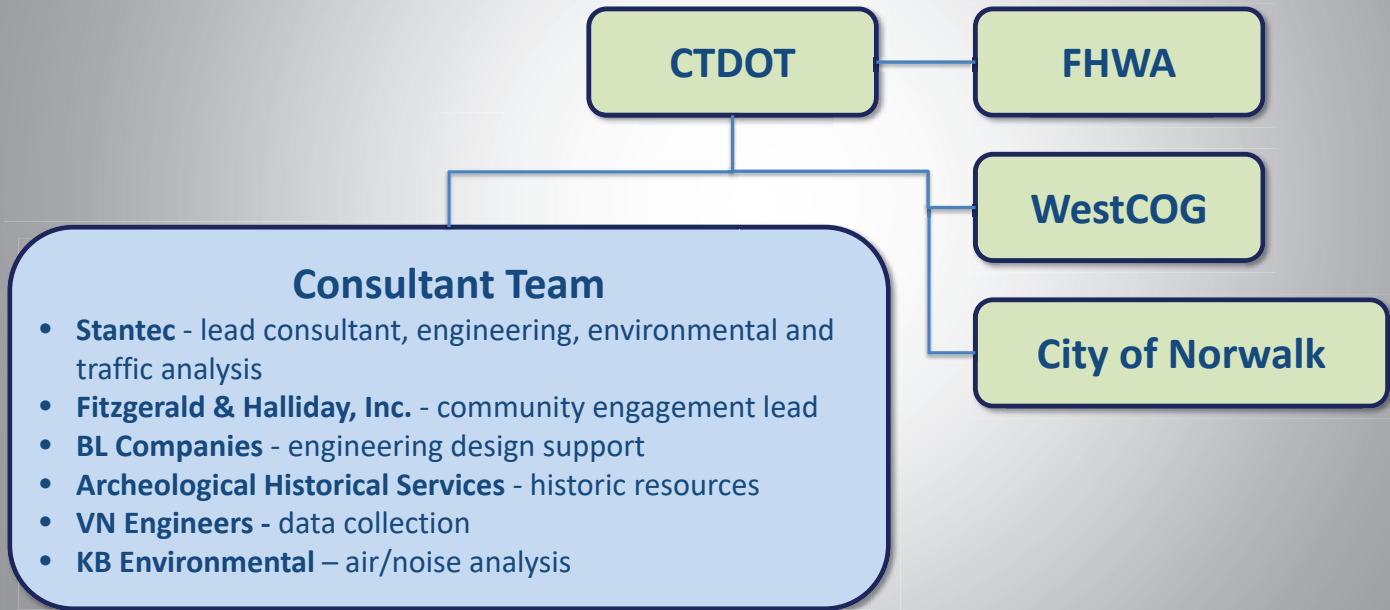
Route 7/15 Norwalk - PAC MISSION STATEMENT

To be instrumental in helping to craft a successful outcome, by:

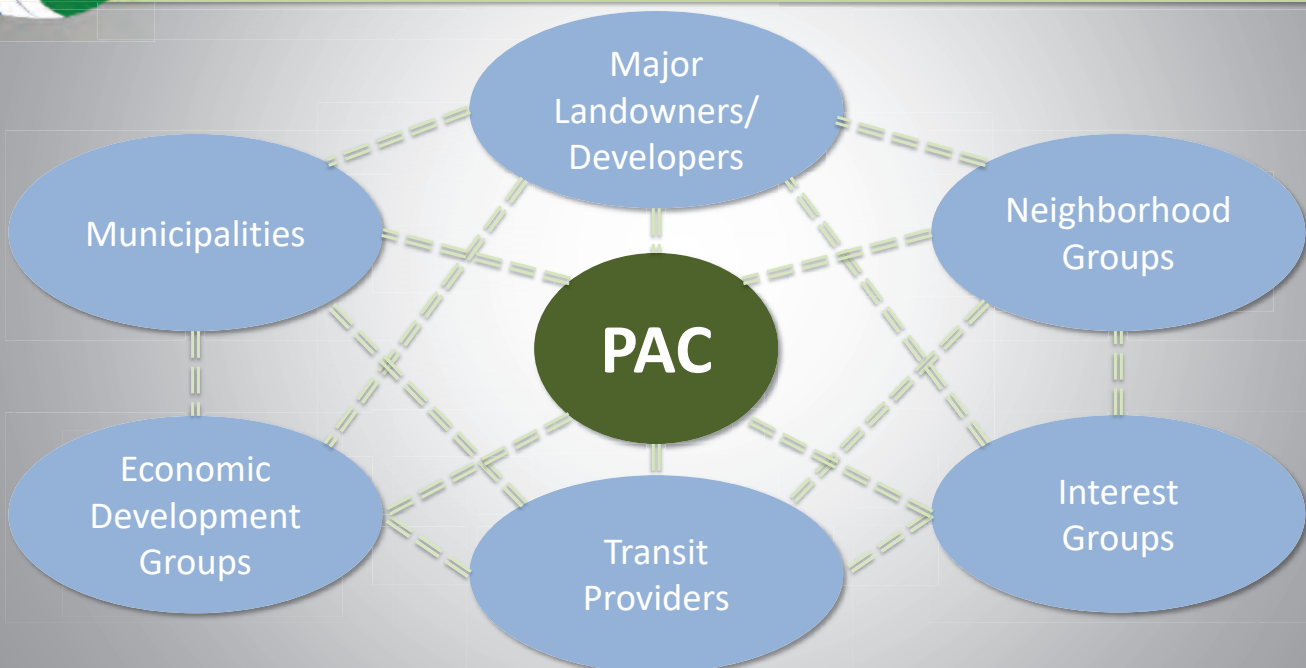
1. Attend meetings, review material and **educate yourself**
2. **Share viewpoints and ideas** in project dialog
3. Link between the study team and the community - **in both directions**
4. Help reach consensus on project issues and alternates - **honor differences in opinion and perspective**
5. **Support the consensus** of the PAC



Route 7/15 Norwalk - PROJECT TEAM



Route 7/15 Norwalk - PAC COMPOSITION



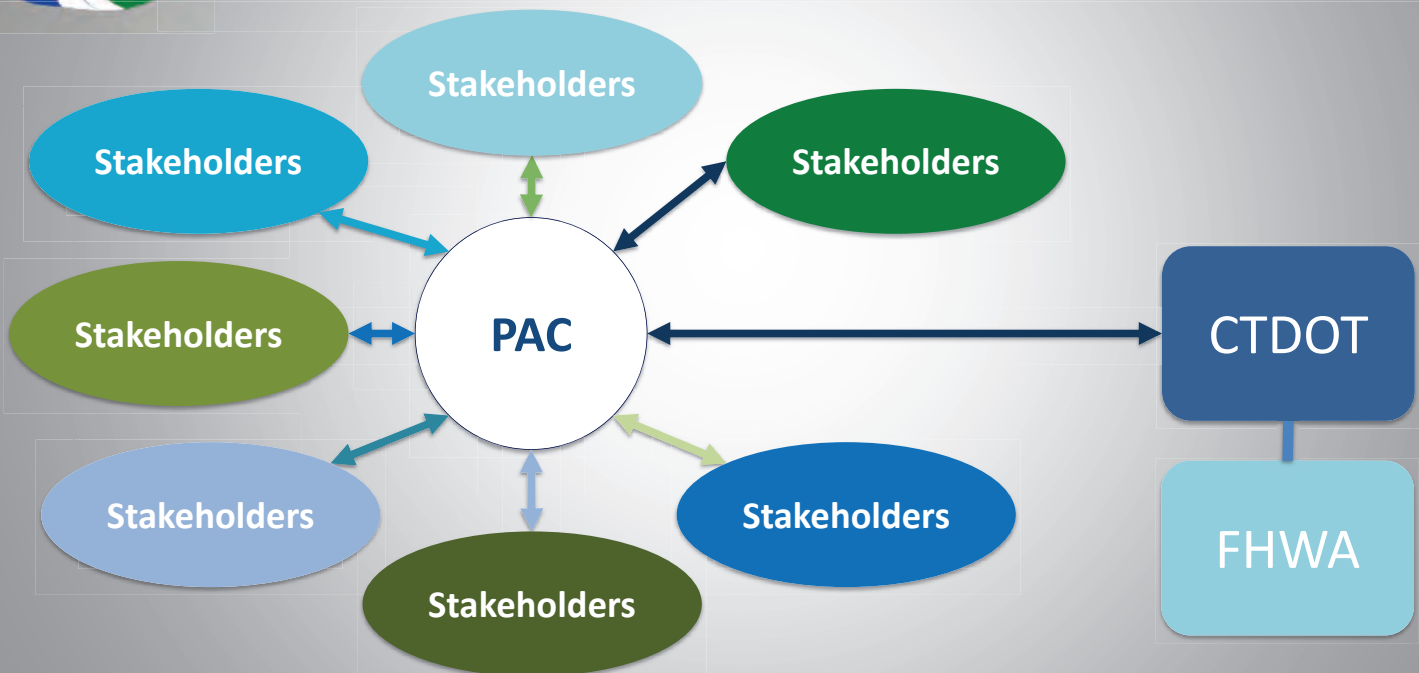


Route 7/15 Norwalk - PAC MEMBERSHIP

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| BikeWalkCT | Merritt Parkway Trail Alliance | Silvermine Community Association Board |
| CCTIA | Norwalk Association of Homeowners (NASH) | Sound Cyclists |
| City of Norwalk | Norwalk Bike Task Force | Town of Wilton |
| Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation | Norwalk Chamber of Commerce | Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG) |
| Creeping Hemlock/Cranbury Neighborhood | Norwalk Land Trust | |
| CT Trust for Historic Preservation | Norwalk Preservation Trust | |
| Greater Norwalk Hispanic Chamber of Commerce | Norwalk River Watershed/HarborWatch | |
| Harbor Point / Building and Land Technology | Norwalk Transit District | |
| Marcus Partners/Merritt 7 | Norwalk Valley River Trail | |
| Merritt Parkway Conservancy | Sierra Club | |
| | Silvermine Community | |



Route 7/15 Norwalk - PAC PROCESS



PROJECT BACKGROUND



Route 7/15 Norwalk

PAC Meeting #1– March 27, 2017
CTDOT State Project #102-358

Project Goals

- Provide connectivity
- Increase mobility
- Increase safety
- Improve mobility and safety for pedestrians and bicyclists

SET GOALS

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.





Route 7/15 Norwalk

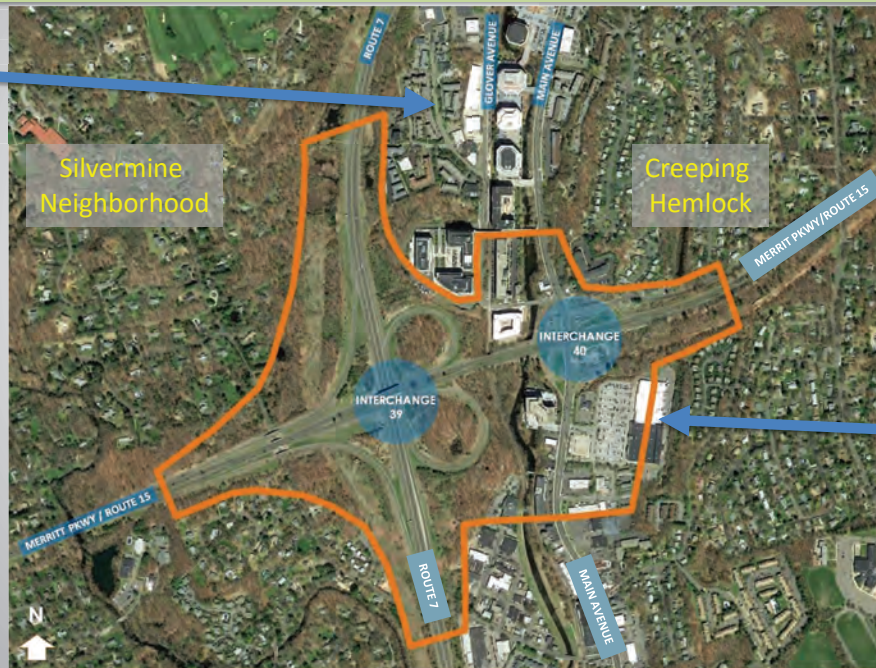
Guiding Principle for Solutions

Avoid, minimize, mitigate environmental and historic impacts



Route 7/15 Norwalk - PROJECT AREA

Merritt 7
Train Station

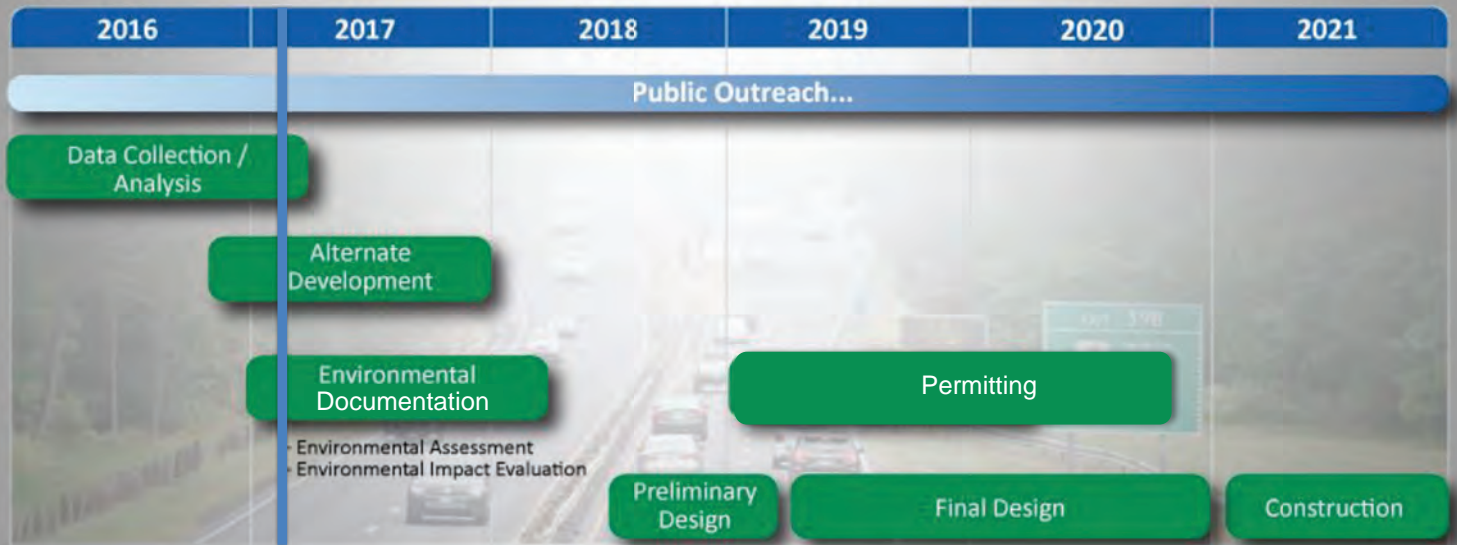


Stop & Shop



Route 7/15 Norwalk

PROJECT WORKFLOW (PRELIMINARY)



NEPA/CEPA PROCESS





Route 7/15 Norwalk - NEPA/CEPA FOCUS



Route 7/15 Norwalk - NEPA/CEPA PURPOSE

National E nvironmental P olicy Act (NE PA - 1969)

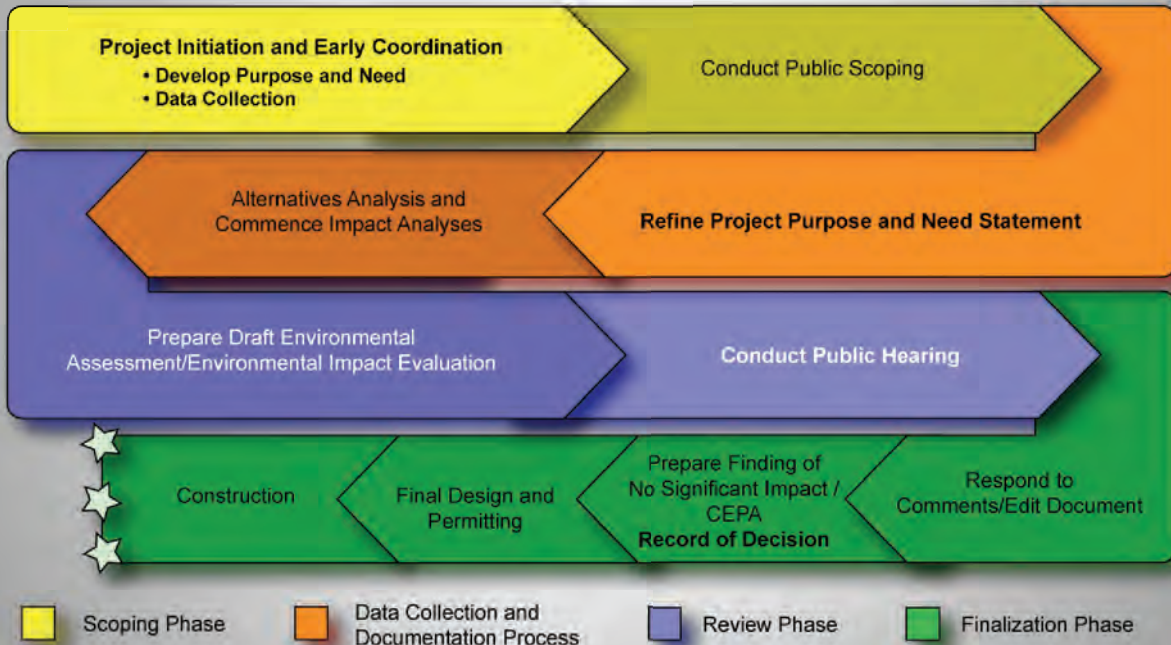
C onnecticut E nvironmental P olicy Act (CE PA - 1971)

Purpose: To promote better decision-making by ensuring:

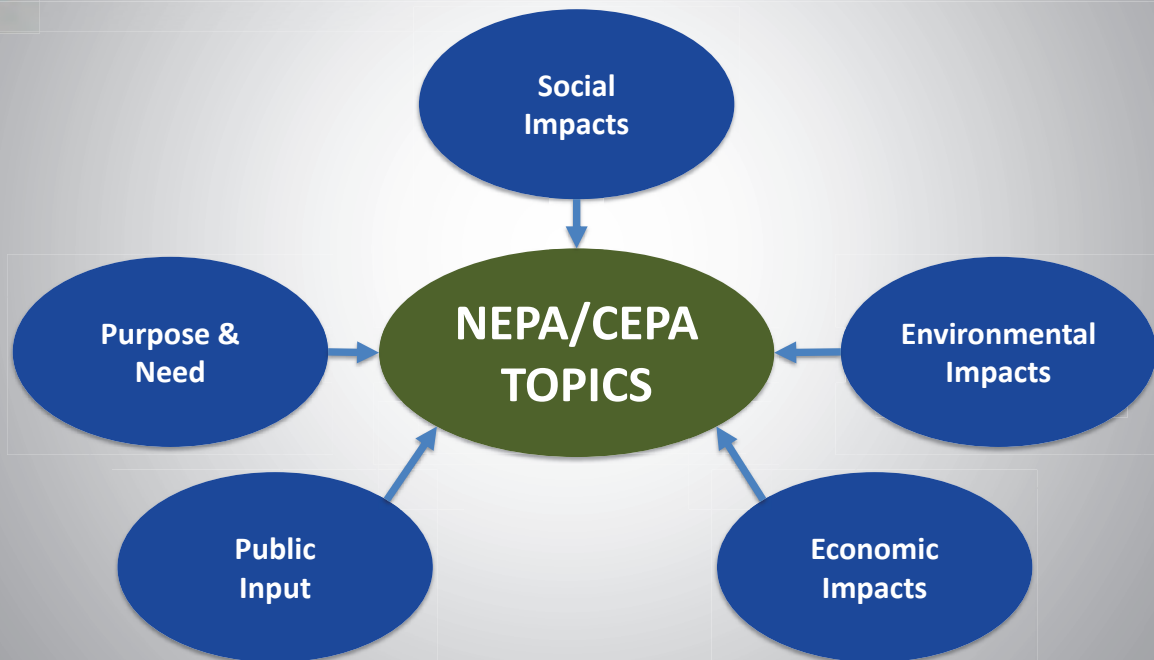
- A full set of reasonable alternatives is evaluated
- Impacts (and to whom they accrue) are understood before decisions are made
- Impacts are avoided, minimized or mitigated



Route 7/15 Norwalk - NEPA/CEPA PROCESS



Route 7/15 Norwalk - NEPA/CEPA TOPICS





Route 7/15 Norwalk - NEPA/CEPA TOPICS

Purpose and Need

- System Linkages
- Mobility
- Safety
- Bicycle and pedestrian accommodations

Social Impacts

- Air Quality
- Noise
- Historic and archeological sites
- Visual and scenic resources
- Public Health and Safety
- Consistency with State Environmental Equity Policy
- Consistency with Adopted Municipal and Regional Plans

Environmental

- Water resources
- Wetlands
- Water quality
- Groundwater
- Coastal resources
- Endangered, threatened and special concern species and critical habitats
- Fish and wildlife habitat
- Agricultural lands

Economic

- Energy use
- Cost
- Cost/Benefit Analysis (CEPA)
- Indirect and cumulative effect
- Support local and regional development initiatives

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT



Route 7/15 Norwalk- 2008 ALTERNATES REVIEW

- 2008 Stakeholder ranking evaluation matrix of stakeholder concerns
- Are there new issues to consider?

Issue Rank	Issue From Survey	Alternate #12A	Alternate Cloverleaf W/ D2	Alternate #21
1	Improve Safety and Reduce Accidents	++	+	+++
2	Impact to Neighborhoods	Some	Most	Least
3	Impact to Wetlands	Most	Least	Least
4	Tree Clearing	Some	Most	Least
5	Impact to Historic Character/Aesthetic Integrity of Parkway	Most	Least	Some
5a	Number of Historic Structures Impacted	4	4	3
6	Noise Impact to Neighborhood	Some	Most	Least
7	Impact to Historic character of Silvermine Area	Some	Most	Least
8	Ability to Maintain Natural Barriers Between Highways and Neighborhoods/Landscaping	Yes	No	Yes
9	Impact to Home Values	?	?	?
10	Introduce Weave on Parkway	No	Yes	No
11	Advance Project to Construction	++	+	+
12	Reduce Congestion	++	+	+++
13	Ability to Construct Glover Ave & Creeping Hemlock First	Yes	Yes	Yes
14	Reduce Project Scope	No	No	No
15	Flooding/Drainage Concerns Due to Less Trees	Some	Most	Least
16	Ability to Accommodate Bicycles/Pedestrians	Yes	Yes	Yes
17	Widening of Glover Ave	Yes	Yes	Yes
18	Keep Location of Ramps in the Commercial/Industrial area of Main Ave.	Yes	Yes	Yes
19	Impact to the Norwalk River	Most	Least	Some
20	Ability to Include Aesthetic Treatment To New Structures	Yes	Yes	Yes



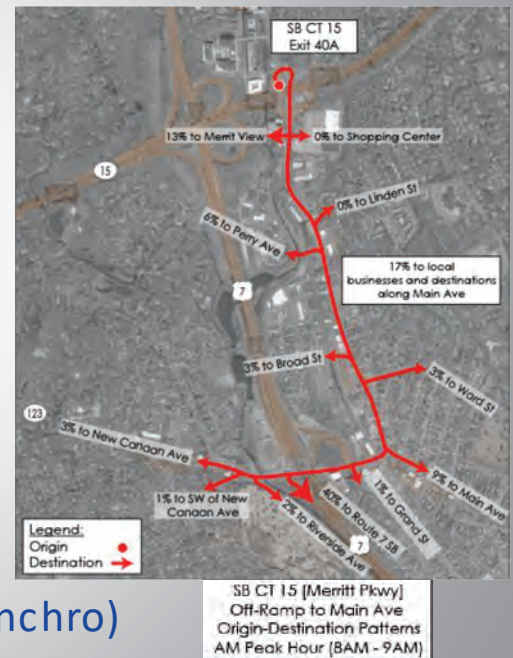
Route 7/15 Norwalk





Route 7/15 Norwalk- CURRENT WORK EFFORT

- Draft Purpose and Need
- Traffic and Safety
 - Traffic data collection program completed Fall 2016
 - Crash data
 - Origin & Destination Study
 - Travel time and delay data
 - Bicycle and pedestrian analysis
 - Developing traffic models (VISSIM and Synchro)



Route 7/15 Norwalk- CURRENT WORK EFFORT

- Review future land use and development
- Environmental and Cultural Resources
 - Initial Phase 1A/Archeological Preliminary Assessments Complete
 - Phase 1B Investigations Scheduled for Spring 2017
 - Wetland Delineations Complete
 - Habitat Assessments Complete
- Public outreach- ongoing meetings and promotion

ALTERNATES

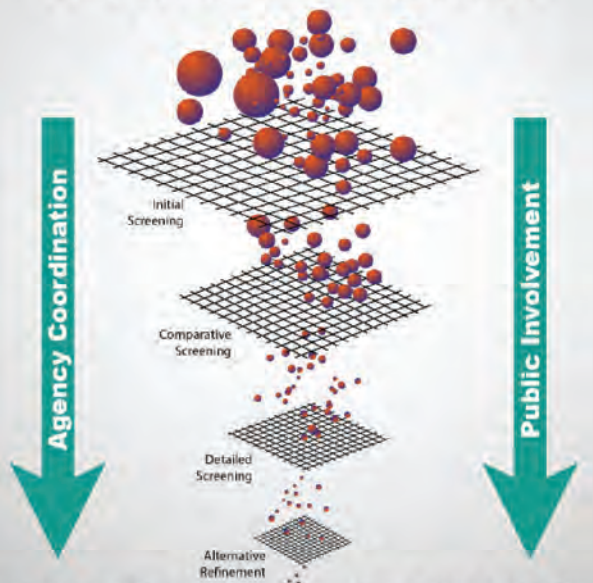


PAC Meeting #1- March 27, 2017
CTDOT State Project #102-358



Route 7/15 Norwalk- ALTERNATE SCREENING

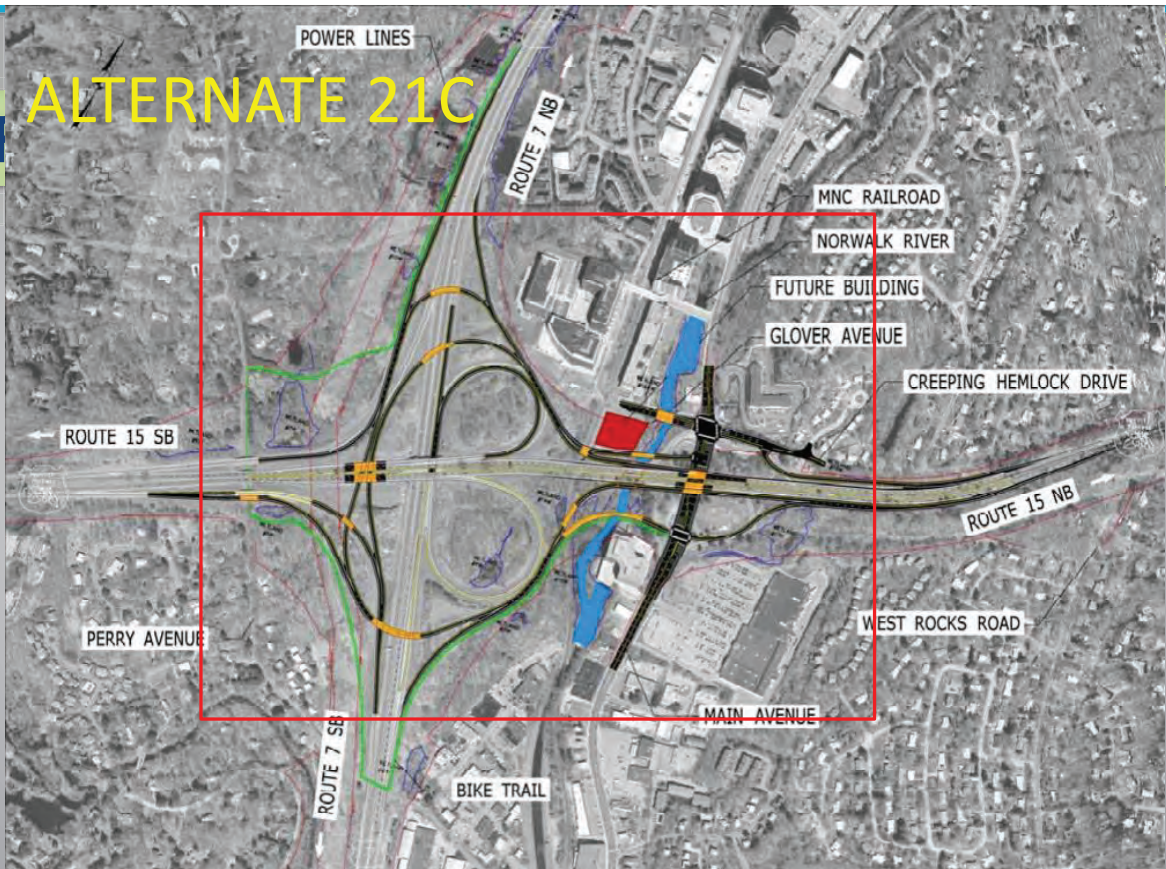
FULL RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES





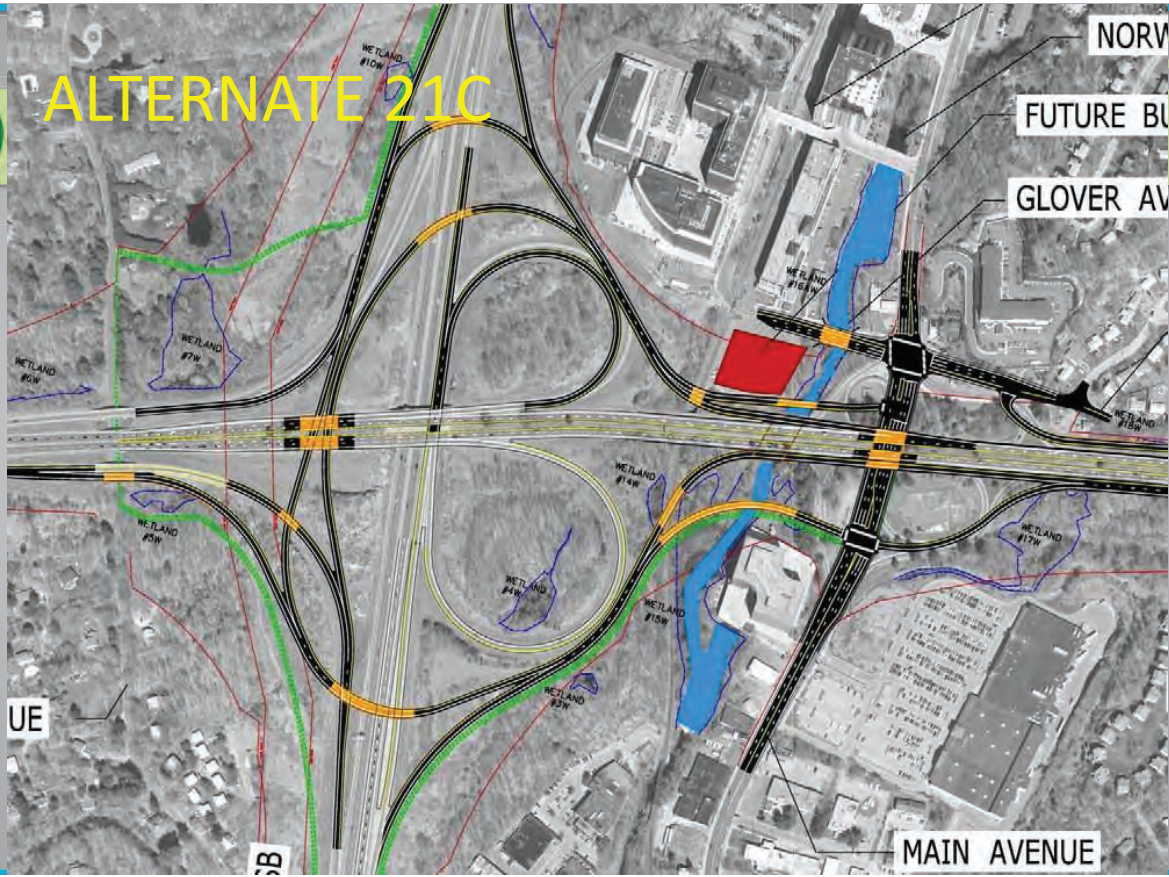
Route 7/15 Norwalk

- Refinement of 21C
- Alternate 26
- Consideration of additional alternates





ALTERNATE 21C



March 27, 2017
Project #102-358



Route 7/15 Norwalk

PAC Meeting #1- March 27, 2017
CTDOT State Project #102-358

“NEW”- Alternate 26 Design Concept



Route 7/15 Norwalk

Alternate 26 Interchange Configuration

- Make all connections (Route 7 / Main Ave)
- Number of lanes on Route 7
- Eliminate non-standard Main Ave ramps
- Eliminate weaves on Merritt Parkway



Route 7/15 Norwalk

Alternate 26 Review- Benefits and Drawbacks

Potential Benefits

- More compact (less footprint) and simpler interchange for Route 7/15
- Less structures required
- Significantly less expensive - Initial and long-term
- Potential to minimize environmental impacts - both natural resources and historic resources/parkway character



Route 7/15 Norwalk

Initial Alternate 26 Concept Analysis Benefits / Drawbacks

Potential Drawbacks

- Greater air quality and noise impacts on Route 7 (signals)
- Potential safety concerns at new Route 7 traffic signals
- Potential reductions in LOS from Alternate 21C
- Alternate 21C considered free flow (preferred)



Route 7/15 Norwalk

Initial Alternate 26 Concept Analysis Questions to be Answered / Unknowns

- ROW acquisition?
- Travel time benefits (over directional ramps)?
- Alternate 26 Access: Limited? Development opportunities?



Route 7/15 Norwalk - ALTERNATES

Are there other alternates to consider?

- In 2008 refined list of alternates to:
 - 12A
 - Cloverleaf
 - 21C (consensus as preferred alternate)
- Current effort:
 - Alternate 26
 - No-build
 - ??????



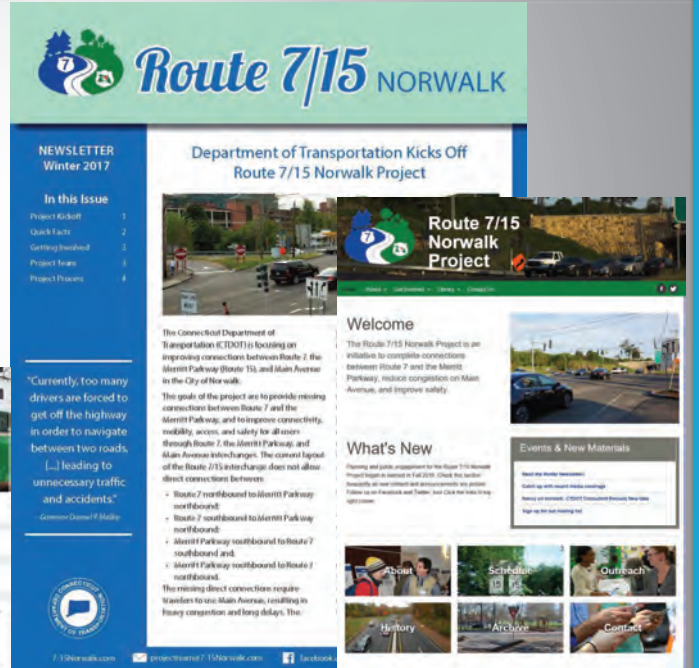
PUBLIC OUTREACH





Route 7/15 Norwalk- OUTREACH PATHWAYS

- Meetings
- Website
- Newsletters
- Social Media (Facebook and Twitter)
- Newspaper article



Route 7/15 Norwalk- Meetings

- ✓ City of Norwalk
- ✓ Town of Wilton
- ✓ WestCOG
- ✓ Merritt Parkway Conservancy
- ✓ MPAC
- ✓ NASH
- ✓ Merritt 7/Marcus Partners
- ✓ Building Land Technology
- ✓ Norwalk River Watershed
- ✓ Norwalk Preservation Trust
- ✓ Norwalk Transit District
- ✓ Cranbury/Creeping Hemlock Neighborhood
- ✓ Norwalk River Valley Trail
- ✓ Norwalk Bike/Ped Task Force





Route 7/15 Norwalk- NEWS COVERAGE

THE HOUR News Sports CT/US News Business Entertainment Living Lifestyle

More vetting ahead for plan that would add signals to Route 7 Connector

By Susan Kubit Published 12:06 pm Monday February 6, 2017



The Route 7 Connector looking north to the Merritt Parkway overpass and the exit rampbound to New York City on Thursday, Feb. 2, in Norwalk.

NORWALK — Motorists driving the Route 7 Connector will be hitting the brakes if the Connecticut Department of Transportation picks Alternative 26 to overhaul the Route 7-Merritt Parkway interchange.

Alternative 26, as the design is called, would add missing links, make the interchange fully directional and create three traffic lanes in each direction along the connector near the parkway.

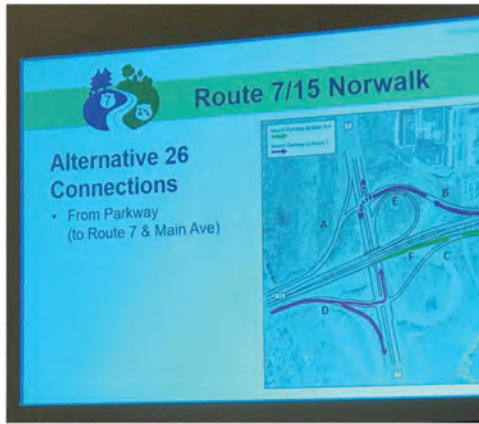
But it also would change the connector from a freeway to signalized boulevard by installing two traffic signals — one north and the other immediately south of the parkway.

And that would create a whole new commute for the thousands of motorists, many of whom use the connector to get to and from their jobs at nearby Merritt 7 Corporate Park.

NANCY ON NORWALK

ConnDOT consultant reveals new idea for Merritt Parkway/Route 7 interchange

Facebook Twitter LinkedIn



THE HOUR News Sports CT/US News Business Entertainment Living Lifestyle

DOT explains Route 7/15 interchange project

By Kathryn Kessler Updated 9:42 am Wednesday, January 11, 2017

IMAGE 11 OF 11

NORWALK — As public input always seems contentious in major construction projects, the state Department of Transportation is trying to stay ahead of the curve on its latest Norwalk plan.

The department held its 19th informal public meeting since early 2016 Wednesday night, regarding the U.S. Route 7 and Route 15 interchange, a project more than a decade in the making.

"We're really trying to reach out to as many small groups as possible to have these informal informational meetings," said DOT Project Manager Andy Focussomayer. "In the old days, we would have just had big public meetings, and that's not always the best way to have these conversations. We're doing the best we can to get public input, and it's important to come out early when we really have very little done. No one can say later that we did all this work without them."

The groups present at Wednesday's meeting included Horror Watch, Earthplace, the Connecticut Food for the Environment and Save the Sound, and others with environmental concerns. The environmental groups are concerned about the water quality of the Norwalk River and the protection of wetlands and natural habitats in the watershed.

The DOT brought members of its primary consulting team, Santeo, and Mark Alexander from the Office of Environmental Planning.

The largest concern, it seemed, was not necessarily the impact of the interchange project, but the combined effect of several projects along the Norwalk River set to take place over the next few years. Projects include the Walk Bridge replacement project, repairs to the Yankee Doodle Bridge and the interchange.

Overhaul of the Route 7/Merritt Parkway/Main Avenue interchange has been more than a decade in the making, receiving both support and opposition.

The purpose of the project hasn't changed — to create a full-directional interchange between U.S. Route 7 and Route 15, otherwise known as the Merritt Parkway, while maintaining access at Main Avenue to and from the parkway, according to the DOT.

As it is, motorists traveling west on the Merritt Parkway cannot exit to either the northbound or southbound Route 7 connector. Motorists driving either north or south on the connector cannot exit to the westbound parkway.

In May 2005, the Merritt Parkway Conservancy and other preservation groups filed a lawsuit against the Federal Highway Administration and the DOT to get the state to downgrade its original design, which the groups considered too large, too costly and destructive to the parkway.

The following year, U.S. District Court in New Haven found that the Federal Highway Administration had not met its legal obligation to ensure that all possible planning was done to minimize harm prior to approving the interchange project.



NEXT STEPS



Route 7/15 Norwalk- NEXT STEPS

- Upcoming meetings -
 - Schedule PAC Meeting number #2 - May
- Six-month lookahead
 - Public Scoping Meeting- June
 - Alternate Analysis
 - Fall PAC meeting to review alternates
- How to stay connected?
- Additional focus meetings?
- **Invitation to meet individually**



Route 7/15 Norwalk- CONTACT INFORMATION

- CTDOT
 - Andy Fesenmeyer - Project Manager Andy.Fesenmeyer@ct.gov
 - Jen Sweeney - Project Engineer Jennifer.Sweeney@ct.gov
 - Rich Armstrong - Principal Engineer Richard.Armstrong@ct.gov
- Stantec
 - John Eberle, - Project Manager john.eberle@stantec.com
- Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.
 - Ken Livingston - Community Engagement klivingston@fhiplan.com



Route 7/15 Norwalk- THANK YOU!

We deeply appreciate your time and your commitment to helping us reach the best possible solution for the State, the region and the City.

Your 7/15 Norwalk Project Team

Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #2

May 23, 2017

Meeting Summary



PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) MEETING #2

Meeting Summary

Date: May 23, 2017

Norwalk City Hall Community Room

Time: 6:30pm

1. Attendance

First Name	Last Name	Organization
PAC Members		
Mike	Yeosock	City of Norwalk
Christopher	Wigren	Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation
Jo-Anne	Horvath	Creeping Hemlock/Cranbury Neighborhood
Peter	Viteretto	Connecticut Chapter of American Society of Landscape Architects
Timothy	Densky	Empire Realty Trust
David	Waters	Harbor Point/Building and Land Technology
David	Fiore	Marcus Partners/Merritt 7
JoAnn	McGrath	Marcus Partners/Merritt 7
Jill	Smyth	Merritt Parkway Conservancy
Alan	Kibbe	Norwalk Association of Homeowners (NASH)
Nancy	Rosett	Norwalk Bike Task Force/Merritt Parkway Trail Alliance
Tod	Bryant	Norwalk Preservation Trust
Britt	Liotta	Norwalk Transit District
Charlie	Taney	Norwalk Valley River Trail
Joanne	Ferrera	Silvermine Community
Connecticut Department of Transportation Staff		
Rich	Armstrong	CTDOT
Andy	Fesenmeyer	CTDOT
Jenn	Sweeney	CTDOT
Project Consultant Team		
Meg	Harper	Architectural and Historic Services (AHS)
Ross	Harper	Architectural and Historic Services (AHS)
Stacey	Vairo	Architectural and Historic Services (AHS)
Mike	Fisher	BL Companies
Kim	Lesay	BL Companies
Stephanie	Brooks	FHI
Ken	Livingston	FHI
John	Eberle	Stantec
Chris	Mojica	Stantec
Brian	O'Donnell	Stantec
Gary	Sorge	Stantec
Mike	Dion	VN Engineers



Route 7-15 Norwalk

2. Welcome

Andy Fesenmeyer, of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), welcomed everyone to the 2nd Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting for the Route 7/15 Norwalk Project.

3. Meeting Overview

Andy Fesenmeyer reviewed the meeting's agenda items, which will be covered using PowerPoint presentation slides:

1. Review of PAC meeting #1
2. Overview of traffic conditions
3. Safety issues and review
4. Bicycle and pedestrian overview
5. Discussion of Draft Purpose and Need
6. Context/Visual Assessments
7. Review of initial design visualization
8. Next steps

4. Review of PAC Meeting #1

Andy F. presented a brief overview of the topics covered at the first PAC meeting.

5. Overview of traffic conditions

Andy F. introduced Chris Mojica who provided a brief overview of the Project's existing traffic conditions and initial traffic analysis.

Questions and discussion within the traffic presentation included:

Q: What about through traffic on Main Avenue? How many cars are using Main Avenue to connect between the Merritt Parkway and Route 7?

A: About 10 percent of vehicles in peak periods are making the connection between the Merritt Parkway and Route 7 using Main Avenue.

Q: As for the traffic that is getting off Route 7 at Exit 2, what percentage goes on Merritt Parkway or Main Avenue, if not getting off at Exit 2 on Route 7 where are they going from there?

A: They are going to office complexes via Grist Mill Road. More people are getting off at Exit 2, only about 5% using Grist Mill Road to double back to office complexes.

Suggestion: Would like to see how many people going to Grist Mill, how many going west, etc.

6. Safety issues

Chris M. continued to present on safety and crash data. Chris compared the project area crashes to other locations along the Parkway highlighting the significant amount of crashes at this location.



7. Bicycle and pedestrian overview

Ken L. provide an overview of bicycle and pedestrian conditions and existing usage within the project area. He highlighted both existing and proposed bicycle connections from the 2012 Norwalk Pedestrian and Bikeway Plan, and the limited existing pedestrian amenities along Main Avenue.

Q: When considering bike/ped counts, do you take potentials into your projections, such as how much higher counts would be if there were more infrastructure/facilities available?

A: Yes, and note that there are a lot more people out there than it seems. For potential or latent demand, the project team will assess existing and future land use, key employment areas and destinations, demographic changes and comparisons to other communities. Currently there are limited bicycle and pedestrian facilities in the project area which inevitably reduces the actual number of pedestrians and bicyclists in the area.

8. Discussion of Draft Purpose and Need

John E. introduced the process to develop the Draft Purpose and Need and the importance of having one that serves as the basis for evaluating project alternatives. The PAC was provided the Draft Purpose and Need for review in their meeting invitation.

John asked the PAC to review the Draft Purpose and Need and provide feedback in the coming weeks. In addition, he suggested that if there was interest in the group, a separate sub-committee could be formed to review and assist in formulating edits to the Purpose and Need statement. Interested representatives were directed to contact Andy Fesenmeyer.

9. Context/Visual Assessments

In response to discussions at the first PAC meeting, Gary S. provided an update on the Context/Visual Assessment work that is being undertaken. Gary presented a series of historical photographs that may help to guide the landscaping and design treatments for the project. There will be continued discussions and analysis as the project moves forward. The critical element will be to restore and enhance Parkway characteristics where feasible.

10. Review of initial design visualization

John E. presented an animation video of the existing conditions simulation (3-D digital model) of the project area. This is a work in progress. In the coming months, the simulations and ability for individuals to explore the simulations will be posted to the project website. PAC members will be notified when available.

11. Next Steps

Andy F. presented a brief overview of upcoming work tasks for the project team over the next few months, highlighting PAC meeting #3 in late September followed by a Public Scoping Meeting in October.



Route 7-15 Norwalk

The following discussion ensued:

Comments/Questions

Comment: Would like to address traffic and safety issues on Main Avenue; as an example: often works with Extended Stay America, and because the street outside feels so unsafe, visitors ask if a bus can be routed to pick up people at the hotel because there are no crosswalks to cross the street.

Comment: Would like to see bicycle/pedestrian issues addressed along Main Avenue; very dangerous conditions.

Comment: Interested in landscapes and aesthetics, improve the Parkway's 25-year-old master plan.

Q: Do the simulation models have the capacity to show at ground level?

A: Yes, a person will be able to view at any angle and view a variety of perspectives from locations throughout the project area. There will be a set of pre-developed simulations a person can watch directly from the project website and a link provided to a web service that will allow users to drive and "fly" around the project area.

- The team will coordinate a summer meeting focused on historic and cultural resources. We will work with Tod Bryant at Norwalk Preservation Trust

Q: Do any of the existing peak afternoon/evening traffic conditions take into account the police officers at Glover Avenue/Main Avenue that control the signal?

A: No, and any alternative should eliminate the need for manual signal operations at Glover Avenue. The traffic model assumes signals have been optimized and are synchronized throughout the project area to work in the best manner possible without the need for manual control or a police officer directing traffic.

Comment: Fascinating how the area is being used and where traffic is going; the presentation was well done and appreciate the amount that the committee can engage and work with the tools that the Project Team is presenting.

Comment: Would like to see more connectivity between various routes meeting up with the interchange. People coming from Silvermine and Perry Avenue: how much traffic comes from Grist Mill area to get to Merritt Parkway and what would help move traffic from Grist Mill to connector?

Response: Team noted that this additional data will be addressed in further information that will be part of a package that will be sent to PAC. The package, which will include more specific Origin & Destination tables and graphics, will be provided to the PAC in the upcoming month or two.

Comment: When comparing alternatives, it is important to look at adjusting the timing of traffic lights during off-peak hours to increase safety and reduce pollution; there will always be congestion during peak hours, but we can reduce delay/travel times during off-peak by adjusting signal timing.



Route 7-15 Norwalk

Comment: As geometry is developed, would like to ensure that landscape is maintained with as little disruption as possible. Focus on street trees on Main Avenue to soften scale.

Q: Is the scoping meeting in October for the public?

A: Yes, it is kicking-off a more formal public process. Please encourage neighborhoods, stakeholder groups and others that you represent attend this scoping meeting. Additionally, as PAC members please bring any feedback you hear to the next PAC meeting.

Comment: The Villages on Main Avenue has been approved. Trucks will not be allowed to make a left turn; will they have to go up to Grist Mill?

Response: This will need to be considered as alternative gets developed.

Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #2

May 23, 2017

Meeting Presentation



Route 7/15 Norwalk Project – Project Advisory Committee Meeting #2



Tuesday, May 23rd, Norwalk City Hall



Route 7/15 Norwalk - AGENDA

PAC Meeting #2 – May 23, 2017
CTDOT State Project #102-358

- Introductions
- PAC Meeting #1 Summary
- Overview of Traffic Conditions
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Update
- Draft Purpose and Need
- Context/Visual Assessments
- Design Visualization
- Next Steps/Questions





Route 7/15 Norwalk - FIRST MEETING RECAP

1. Reviewed PAC roles and responsibilities
2. Revisited project history and current status
3. Identified key important project issues
4. Viewed new interchange Alternative 26 (Signals)



Route 7/15 Norwalk - WHAT DID WE HEAR?

Parkway Character

- Landscape and aesthetics
- Understanding topography/visualization tools

Environmental/Cultural

- Separate Section 106/4(f) meeting

Network Linkages

- How will signalization impact roadways?
- Safety and access to NRVT
- Bicycle and pedestrian improvements needed

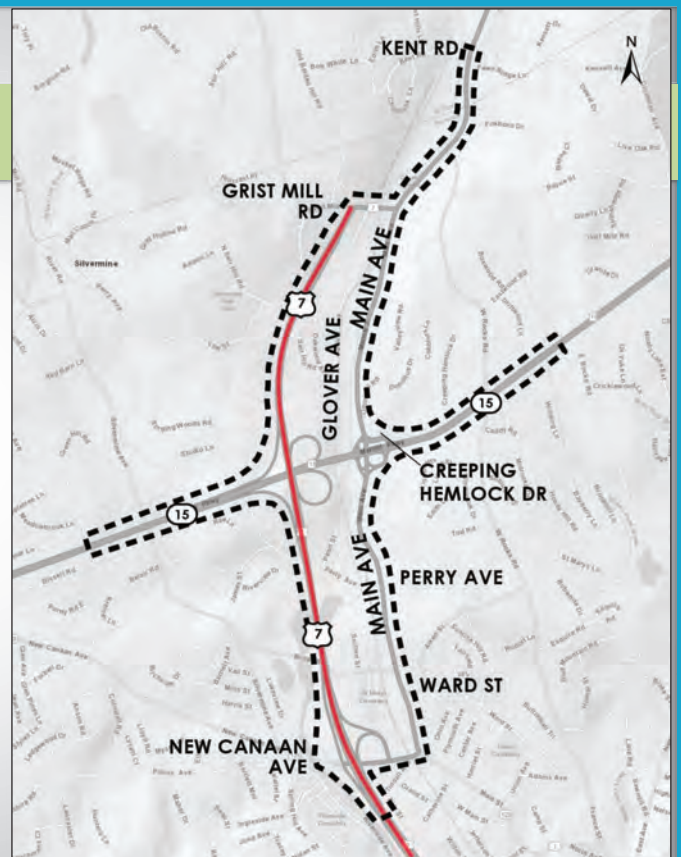
OVERVIEW OF TRAFFIC CONDITIONS



Route 7/15 Norwalk

Traffic Study Area

- Four corridors
 - US 7
 - CT 15
 - Main Avenue
 - New Canaan Avenue

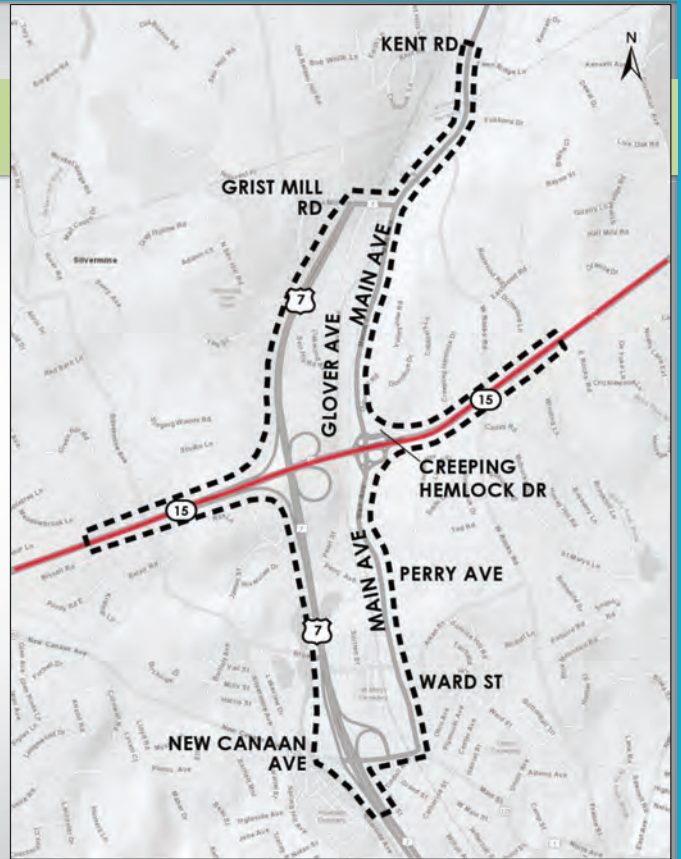




Route 7/15 Norwalk

Traffic Study Area

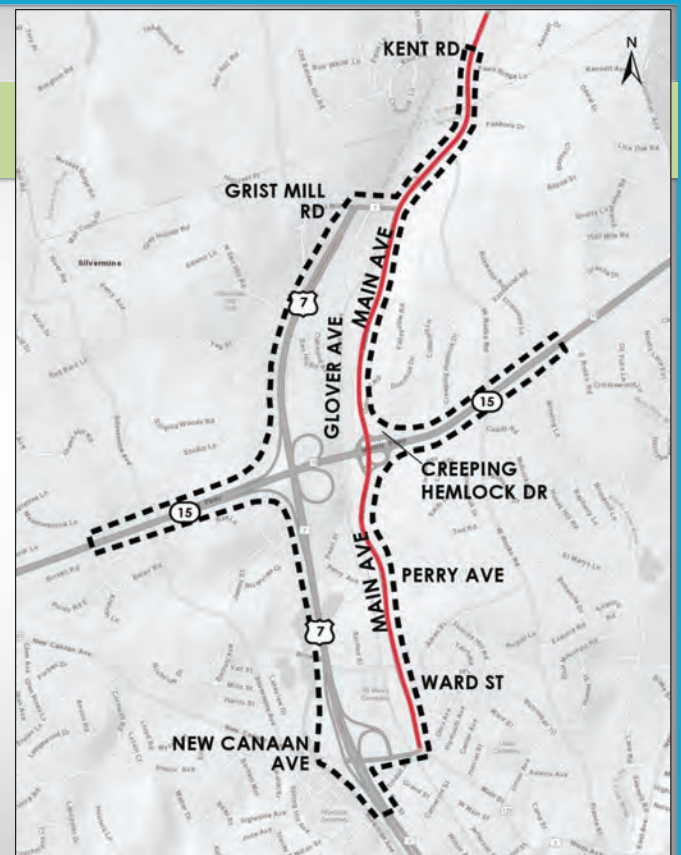
- Four corridors
 - US 7
 - **CT 15**
 - Main Avenue
 - New Canaan Avenue



Route 7/15 Norwalk

Traffic Study Area

- Four corridors
 - US 7
 - CT 15
 - **Main Avenue**
 - New Canaan Avenue

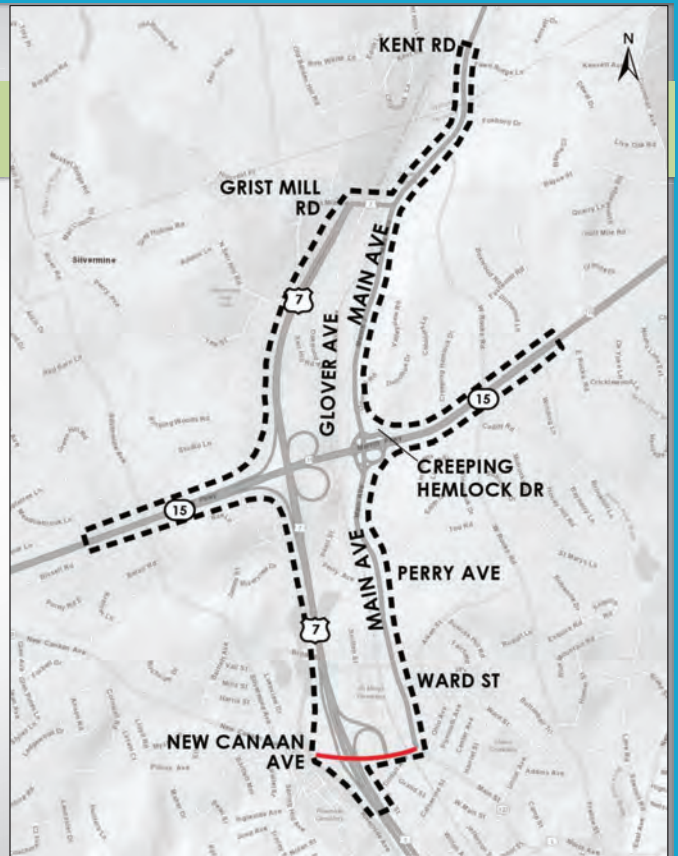




Route 7/15 Norwalk

Traffic Study Area

- Four corridors
 - US 7
 - CT 15
 - Main Avenue
 - **New Canaan Avenue**

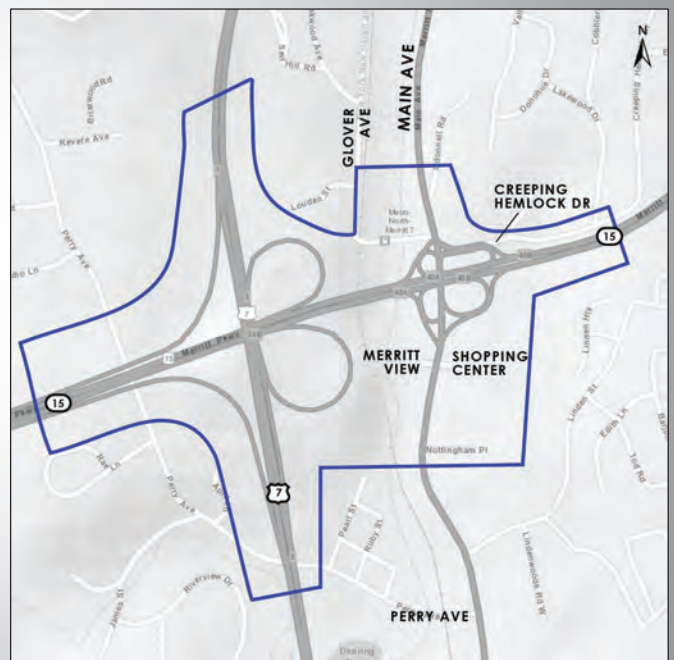


Route 7/15 Norwalk

Core Traffic Study Area

- CT 15 interchanges with Route 7 and Main Avenue

PAC Meeting #2- May 23, 2017
CTDOT State Project #102-358





Route 7/15 Norwalk - TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

Traffic Data Collection



Turning movement counts (Peak Period)
23 intersections



Route 7/15 Norwalk - TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

Traffic Data Collection

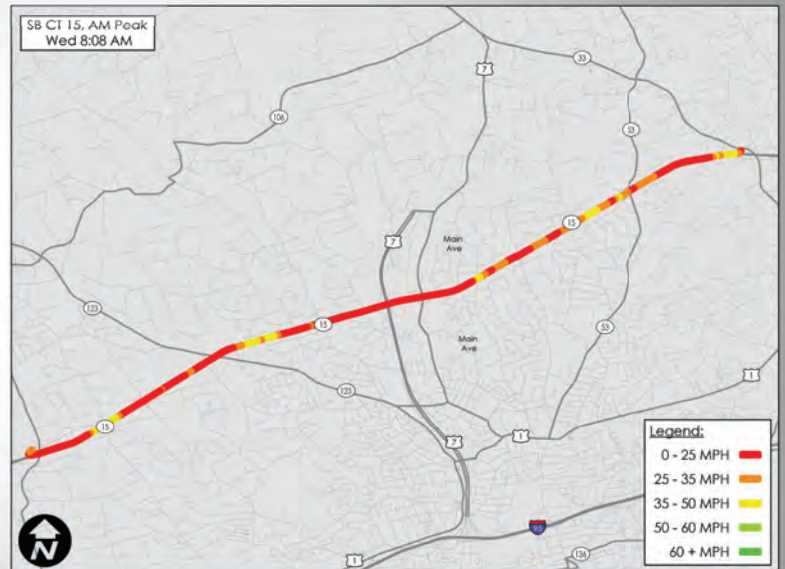


Automated traffic recorder counts (24 Hour)
29 locations



Route 7/15 Norwalk - TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

Traffic Data Collection



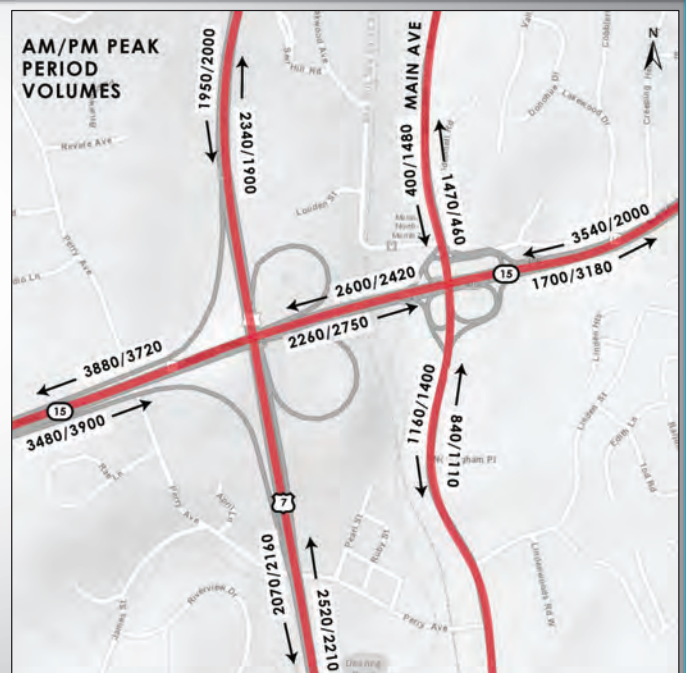
Travel time data collection (Peak Period)
Study area corridors



Route 7/15 Norwalk - TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

Peak Hour Traffic Volumes

- Main Ave: 2,000 vph
- Route 15: 5,000-7000 vph
- Route 7: 4,500 vph

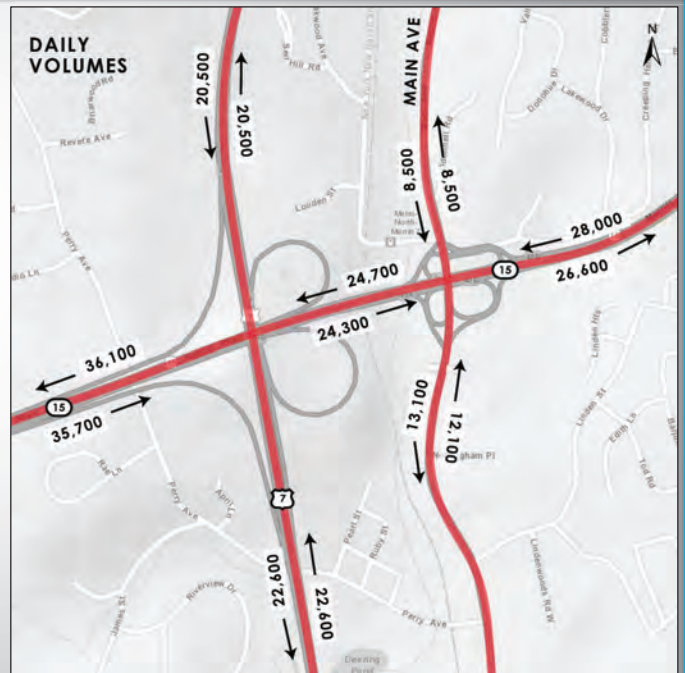




Route 7/15 Norwalk - TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

Average Daily Traffic Volumes (ADT)

- Main Ave (south): 25,000 vpd
- Main Ave (north): 17,000 vpd
- Route 15: 55,000-72,000 vpd
- Route 7: 41,000-45,000 vpd



Route 7/15 Norwalk - TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

Traffic Modeling and Analyses



- Three traffic models being used (Synchro, HCS, VISSIM)
- Evaluating conditions at 23 intersections, at 54 limited access highway segments along Route 7 and Route 15, and along study area corridors



Route 7/15 Norwalk - TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

Traffic Modeling and Analyses

How do we evaluate traffic operations?

- Travel Speed
- Travel Time
- Level of Service (LOS)



Route 7/15 Norwalk - TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

Level of Service Classifications



LOS A / LOS B
Best qualities of service

Traffic is at free flow with little to no restrictions on travel speed or overall mobility.

There are no delays.



LOS C / LOS D
Acceptable qualities of service

There are some restrictions in travel speed and mobility is a bit restricted.

Delays are minimal/acceptable.



LOS E / LOS F
Failing or deficient

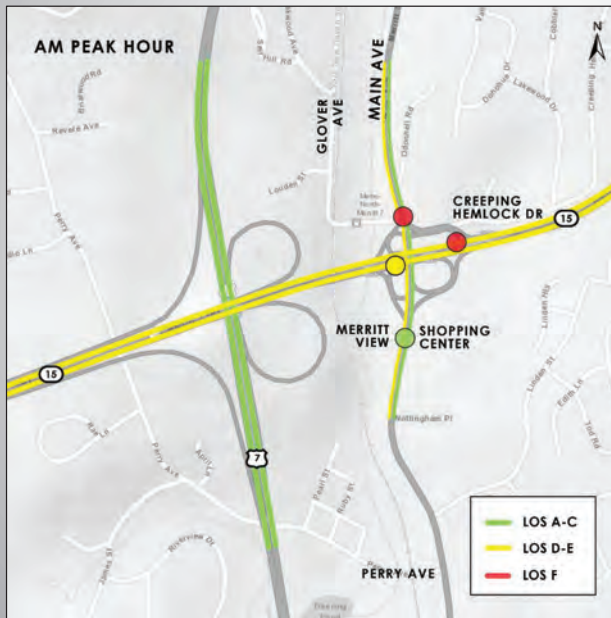
Travel speeds decline significantly and mobility is severely restricted. Demand is greater than capacity.

Delays are significant.



Route 7/15 Norwalk - TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

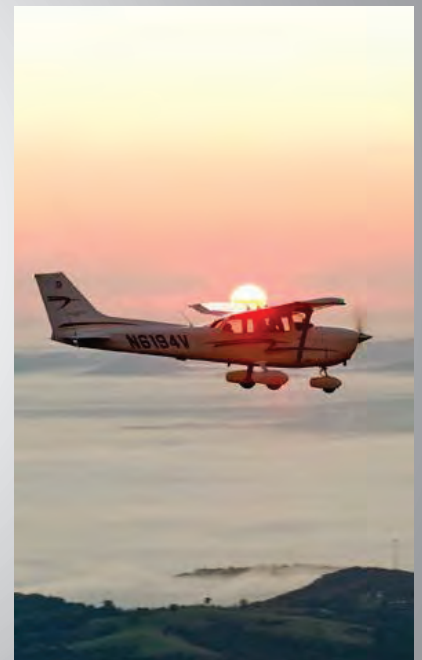
Existing
Level of
Service



Route 7/15 Norwalk - TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

Skycomp Aerial Origin-Destination
(O-D) Study

- Understanding how people travel in, around, and through the study area
- Wednesday, September 21, 2016
7AM-9AM, 11AM-1PM, 4PM-6PM

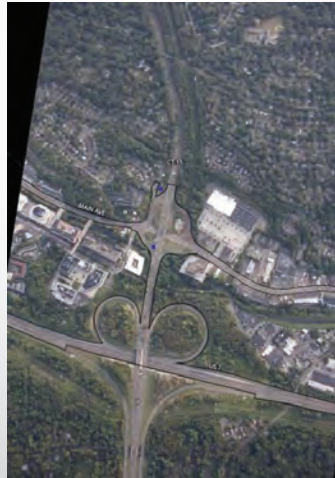




Route 7/15 Norwalk - TRAFFIC CONDITIONS

Skycomp Aerial O-D Study – Field of View

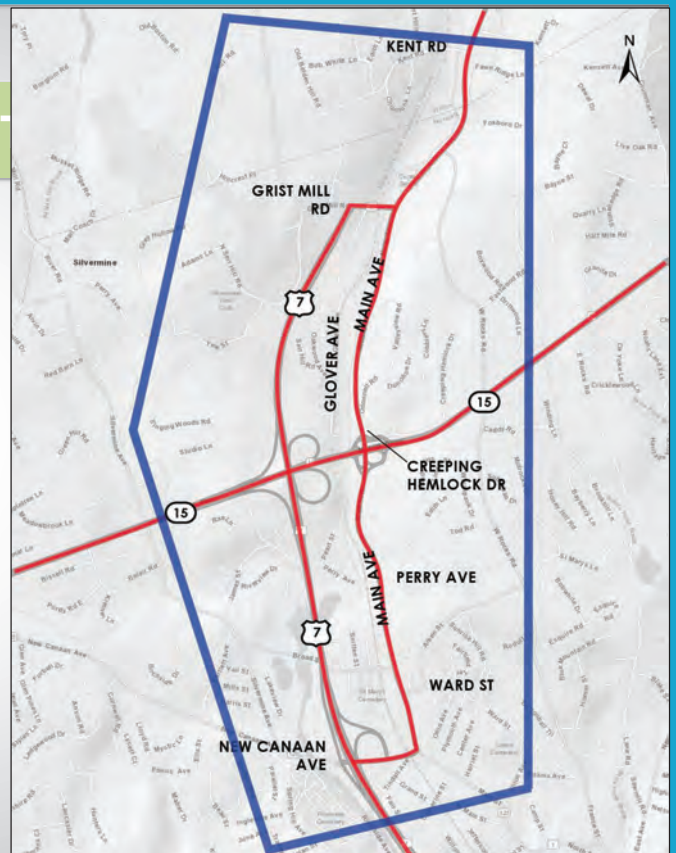
- +/- 21,000 photos analyzed over three peak periods



Route 7/15 Norwalk -

Skycomp Aerial O-D Study – Field of View

- +/- 21,000 photos analyzed over three peak periods





Route 7/15 Norwalk

Skycomp Aerial O-D Study – Conditions at Main Ave /Route 15 Interchange

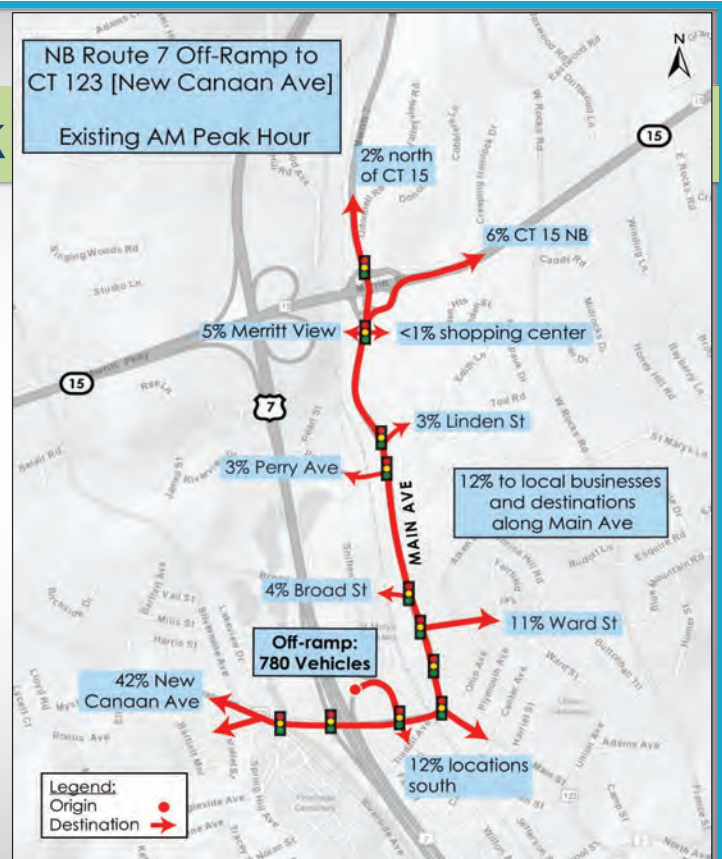
- Understanding mobility is just as important as understanding traffic demand



Route 7/15 Norwalk

NB US 7 Off-Ramp to New Canaan Ave (AM Peak Hour)

- Average travel time to NB CT 15: 5 minutes
- Almost 20% of vehicles have destinations within 1 mile of the Main Avenue/CT 15 interchange

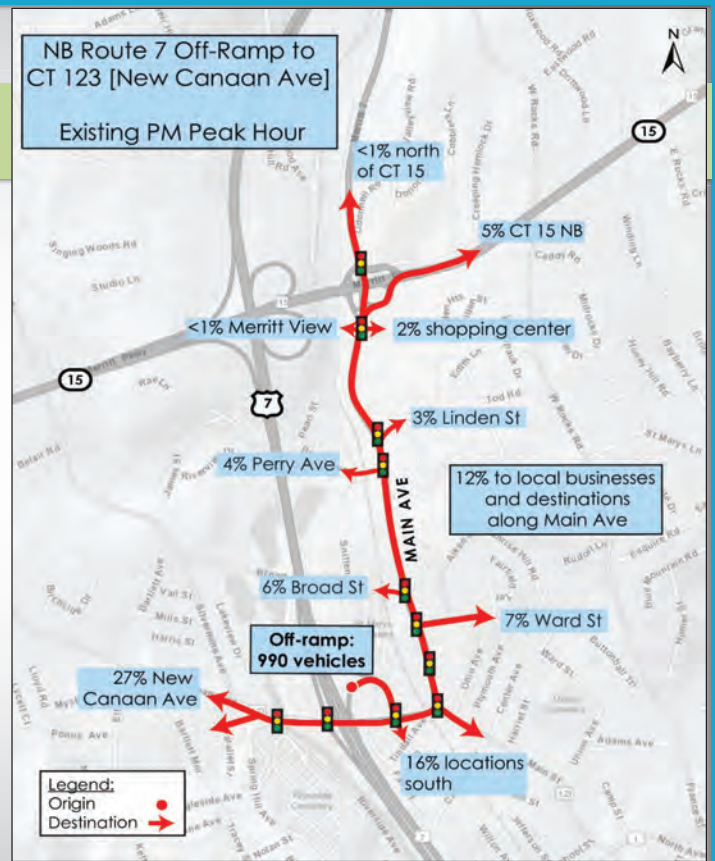




Route 7/15 Norwalk

NB US 7 Off-Ramp to New Canaan Ave (PM Peak Hour)

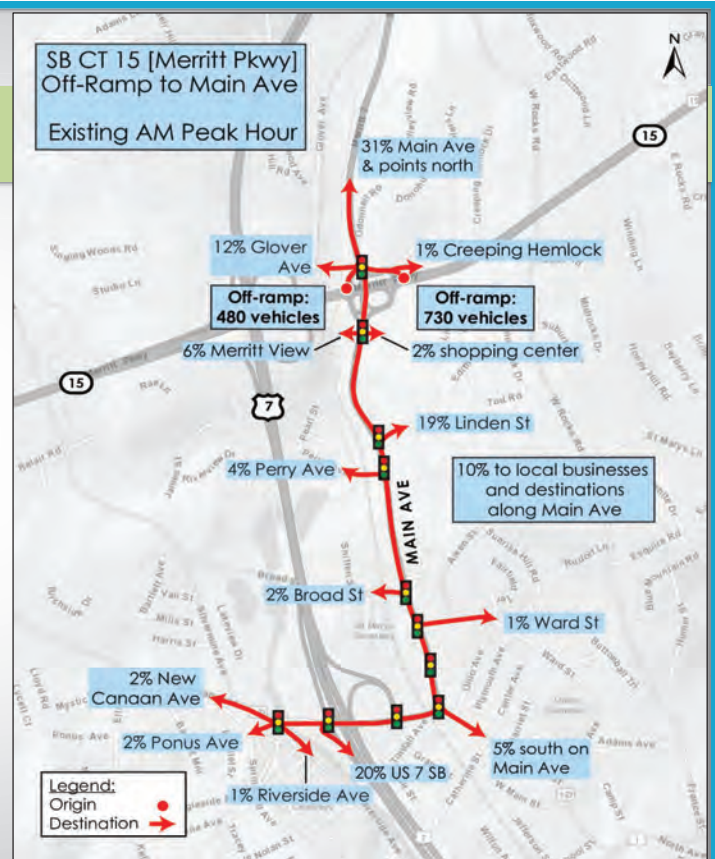
- Average travel time to NB CT 15: 8 minutes
- 14% of vehicles have destinations within 1 mile of the Main Avenue/CT 15 interchange



Route 7/15 Norwalk

SB CT 15 off-ramps to Main Avenue (AM Peak Hour)

- Average travel time to SB Route 7: 6 minutes
- 30% of vehicles destined to New Canaan Ave and points south

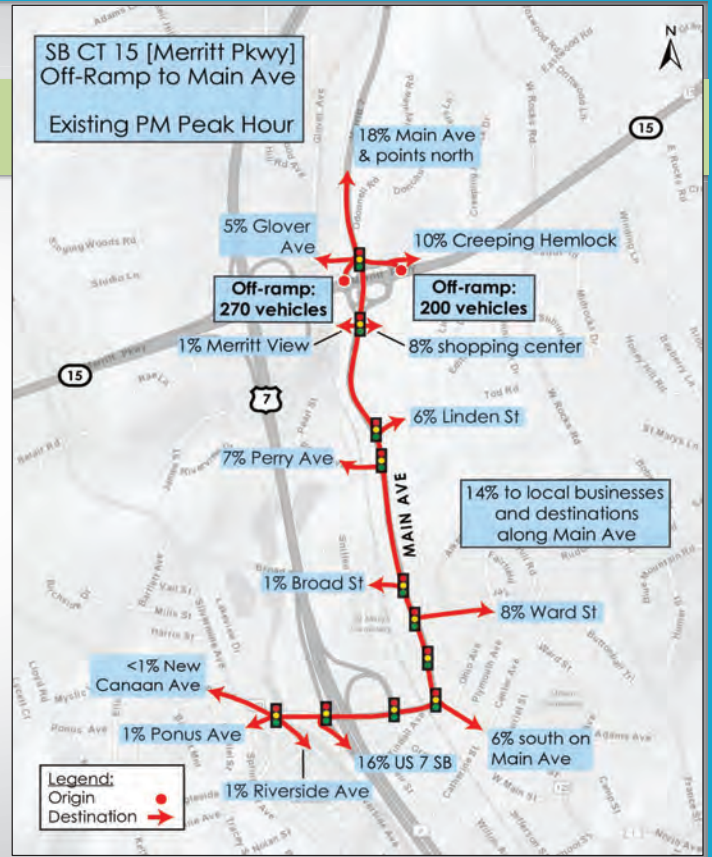




Route 7/15 Norwalk

SB CT 15 off-ramps to Main Avenue (PM Peak Hour)

- Average travel time to SB US 7: 7 minutes
- 18% of vehicles destined to New Canaan Ave and points south



Route 7/15 Norwalk - SAFETY ISSUES

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CTDOT State Project #102-358



STOP Controlled on-ramps



Short distances to enter/exit the Parkway



Route 7/15 Norwalk - SAFETY ISSUES



Steep grades along the Parkway



Main Ave / Creeping Hemlock Drive / Glover Ave intersection



Route 7/15 Norwalk - SAFETY ISSUES

Merritt
 Parkway
 Crashes
 (2010-2014)



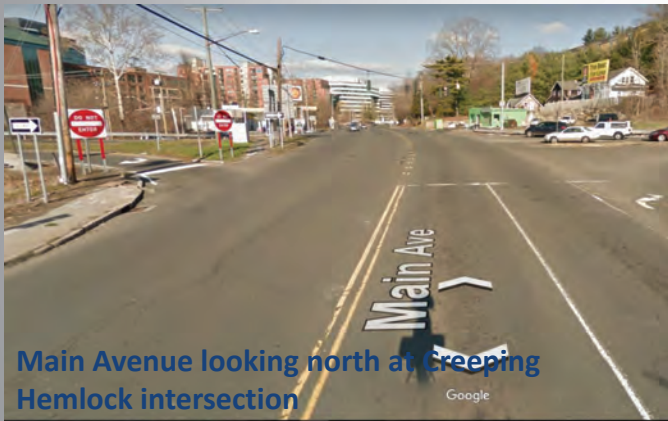
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN



PAC Meeting #2- May 23, 2017
CTDOT State Project #102-358



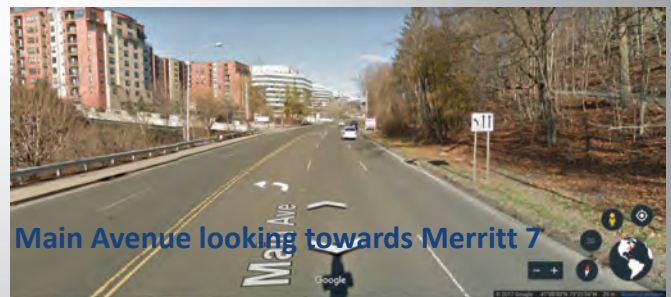
Route 7/15 Norwalk - BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN



Main Avenue looking north at Creeping Hemlock intersection



Main Avenue looking south from underneath Merritt Parkway



Main Avenue looking towards Merritt 7



Route 7/15 Norwalk - BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN

Assessing use and demand

- Coordination with NRVT and Norwalk Bike/Walk Task Force
- Pedestrian and bicyclist counts at intersections
- Strava - “opt-in” data recording focused more on recreation trips
- Journey to Work data
- Qualitative field observations



Route 7/15 Norwalk - BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN



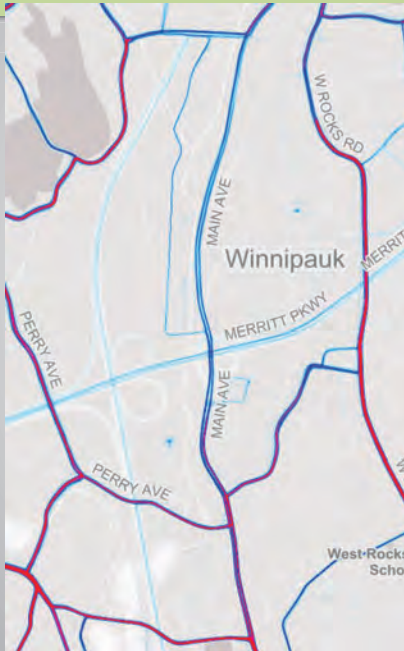
Bicycling (STRAVA)



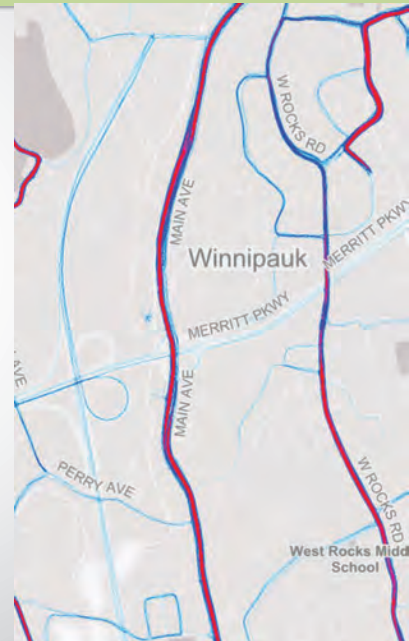
Running/Walking (STRAVA)



Route 7/15 Norwalk - BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN



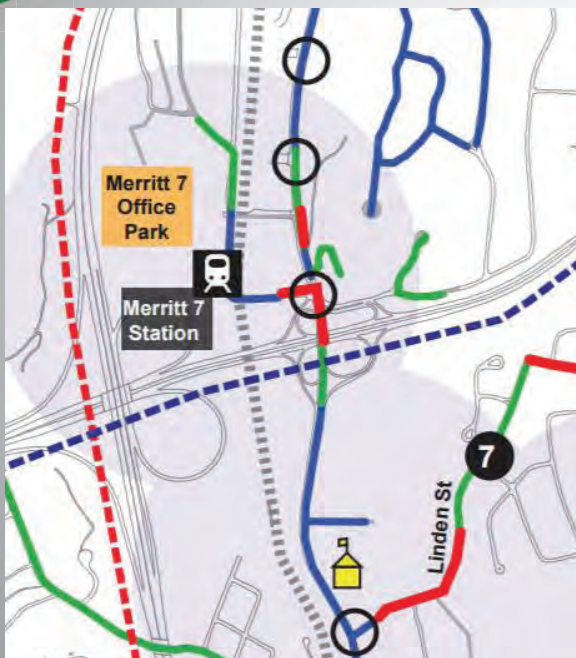
Bicycling (STRAVA)



Running/Walking (STRAVA)



Route 7/15 Norwalk - BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN



Legend

- Corridor Number
- Sidewalk/Footpath on two sides of street
- Sidewalk/Footpath on one side of street
- Sidewalk/Footpath Improvements
- Crosswalk Improvements
- Sidewalks & Footpaths (non-priority corridor)
- Existing Multi-Use Path
- Tier 1 Priority Path
- Tier 2 Priority Path
- School
- Train Station
- Bus Station
- 1/4 Mile Radius of School & Transit Center

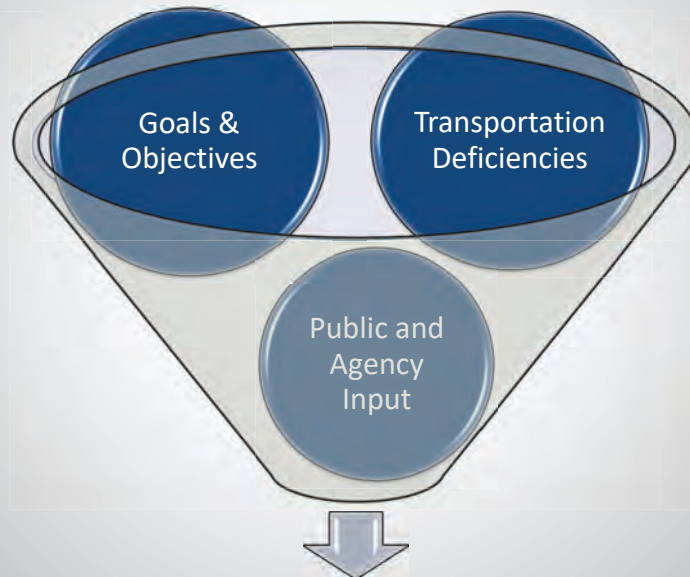
Norwalk Pedestrian and Bikeway Plan (2012)

DRAFT PURPOSE AND NEED



PAC Meeting #2- May 23, 2017
CTDOT State Project #102-358

Route 7/15 Norwalk - DRAFT PURPOSE AND NEED



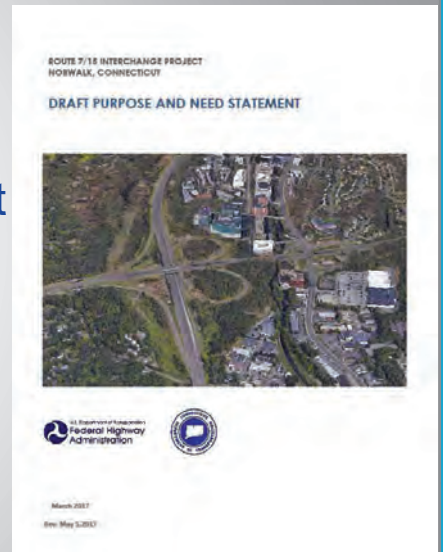
Purpose and Need Statement



Route 7/15 Norwalk - DRAFT PURPOSE AND NEED

What is Purpose & Need?

1. Defines the transportation problem
2. Limits range of alternatives- “reasonable, prudent and practicable”
3. Guides the alternatives analysis process
4. Clear, well-justified, specific and comprehensive

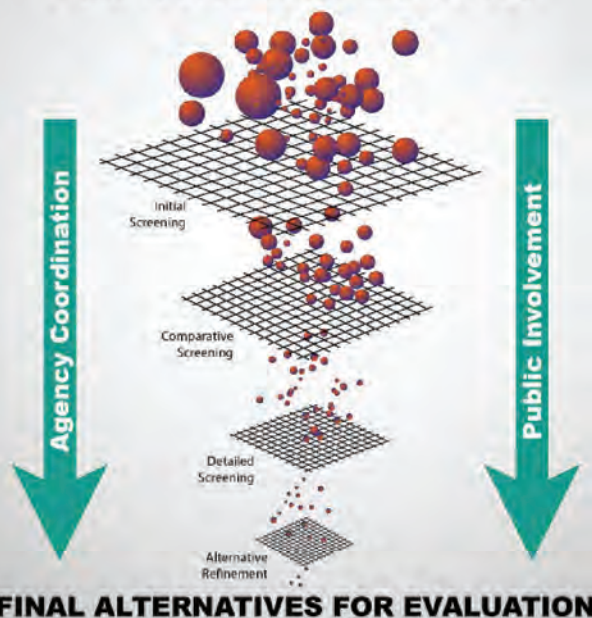


P&N is the foundation for the selection of a course of action



Route 7/15 Norwalk - ALTERNATE SCREENING

FULL RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES





Route 7/15 Norwalk - DRAFT PROJECT PURPOSE

- Improve **system linkage** between Route 7 and the Merritt Parkway
- Improve the **mobility** for all users at the Merritt Parkway's Main Avenue and Route 7 Interchanges
- Improve **safety** in the vicinity of these interchanges



Route 7/15 Norwalk - DRAFT GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- Ensure long-term serviceability of corridor
- Maximize public investment in corridor
- Ensure better interchange integration with environment and neighborhood context
- Provide for pedestrian and bicycle access





Route 7/15 Norwalk

Discussion with PAC on general questions

- Open discussion on DRAFT text
- Interest in sub-committee to further refine?
- Next steps

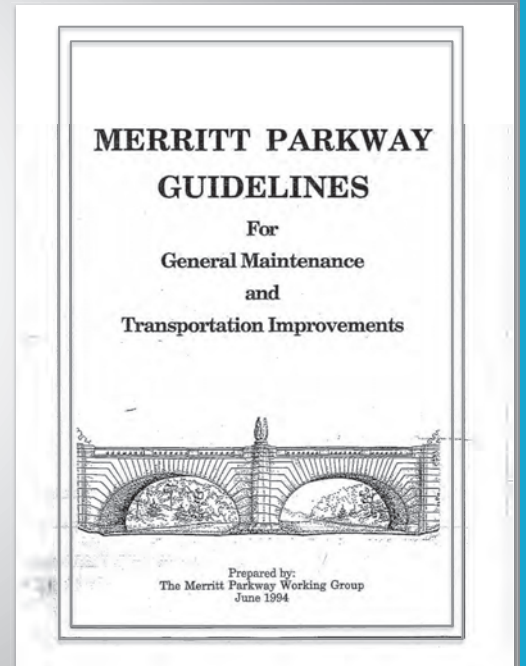
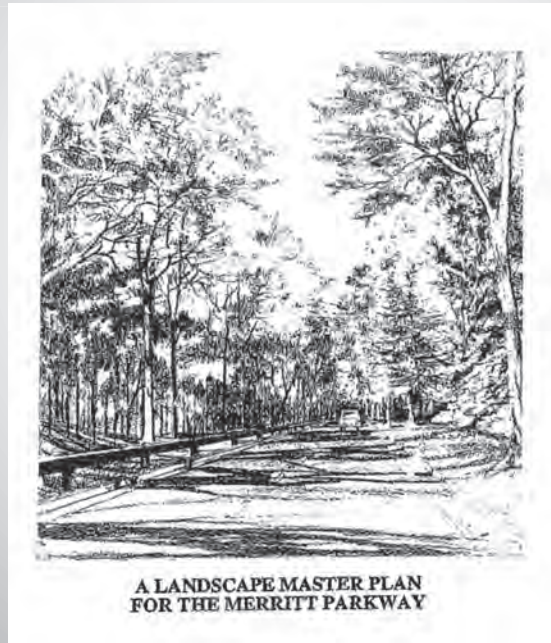


CONTEXT/VISUAL ASSESSMENTS



Route 7/15 Norwalk - VISUAL CONTEXT

- Merritt Parkway Guidelines
- Merritt Parkway Landscape Master Plan
- Merritt Parkway Conservation and Restoration Plan: Bridge Restoration Guide
- Existing tree assessment and inventory



Route 7/15 Norwalk - HISTORIC CONTEXT



Intersection of the Merritt Parkway and Main Avenue (Route 7) Downtown Winnipauk, 1938. View northwest. (Bepler, Route 7 the Road North – Norwalk to Canaan, p 18).



Merritt Parkway intersection with Main Avenue, 2017. Google Maps.



Route 7/15 Norwalk - HISTORIC CONTEXT



Merritt Parkway intersection with Route 7, 1940. (Merritt Parkway Construction, Connecticut State Library, State Archives)



Merritt Parkway intersection with Route 7, 2017. Google Maps.

DESIGN VISUALIZATION





Route 7/15 Norwalk - DESIGN VISUALIZATION

Model Introduction

NB Merritt
Parkway
Flyover
(P M Peak)



Route 7/15 Norwalk - DESIGN VISUALIZATION

Model Introduction

NB Route 7
Flyover
(P M Peak)



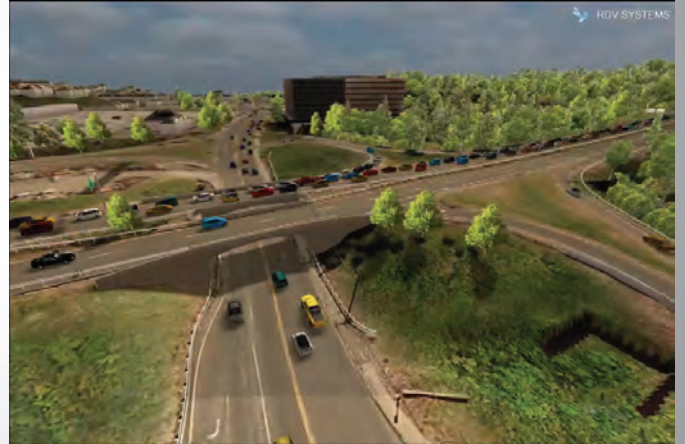


Route 7/15 Norwalk - DESIGN VISUALIZATION

Model Comparison



Main Avenue looking south from intersection with Creeping Hemlock Drive, 2016. Google Maps



Main Avenue looking south from intersection with Creeping Hemlock Drive, 2017. RDV Visual Simulation.

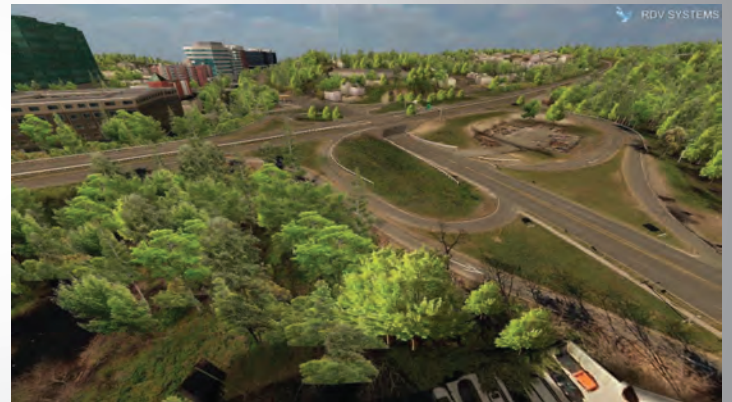


Route 7/15 Norwalk - DESIGN VISUALIZATION

Model Comparison



Main Avenue looking northeast from Merritt View Building, 2016. Google Maps



Main Avenue looking northeast from Merritt View Building, 2017. RDV Visual Simulation.



Route 7/15 Norwalk - DESIGN VISUALIZATION

Interactive
3D Model
Website



NEXT STEPS





Route 7/15 Norwalk - NEXT STEPS

- Continue development of existing conditions section of EA/EIE
- Continue to refine current alternates
- Refine visualization model
- Continue to meet with stakeholders
- Criteria prioritization exercise
- Historic working group (106 and 4(f))
- PAC meeting in September
- Early fall scoping meeting



Route 7/15 Norwalk - NEXT PAC Meeting

- Review of scoping meeting
- Update on existing conditions work
- Modeling/simulation update
- Criteria ranking
- Review of alternates
- Other suggestions?





Route 7/15 Norwalk



Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #3
September 19, 2017
Meeting Summary



PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) MEETING #3

Meeting Summary

Date: September 19, 2017

Norwalk City Hall Community Room

Time: 6:30pm

1. Attendance

First Name	Last Name	Organization
PAC Members		
Elizabeth	Stocker	City of Norwalk
Christopher	Wigren	Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation
Jo-Anne	Horvath	Creeping Hemlock/Cranbury Neighborhood
Peter	Viteretto	Connecticut Chapter of American Society of Landscape Architects
Timothy	Densky	Empire Realty Trust
David	Waters	Harbor Point/Building and Land Technology
Jill	Smyth	Merritt Parkway Conservancy
Nancy	Rosett	Norwalk Bike Walk Commission/Merritt Parkway Trail Alliance
Tod	Bryant	Norwalk Preservation Trust
Jim	Carter	Norwalk Valley River Trail
Joanne	Ferrera	Silvermine Community
Ray	Rauth	Sound Cyclists
Connecticut Department of Transportation Staff		
Yolanda	Antoniak	CTDOT
Rich	Armstrong	CTDOT
Andy	Fesenmeyer	CTDOT
Project Consultant Team		
Stephanie	Brooks	FHI
Ken	Livingston	FHI
Paul	Stanton	FHI
John	Eberle	Stantec
Chris	Mojica	Stantec
Gary	Sorge	Stantec
General Public		
Diane	Jellerette	Norwalk Historical Society

2. Welcome

Andy Fesenmeyer, of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), welcomed everyone to the 3rd Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting for the Route 7/15 Norwalk Project. He noted that CTDOT recently underwent some reorganization, and introduced Ms. Yolanda Antoniak as Jen Sweeney’s replacement in her role.



Route 7-15 Norwalk

3. Meeting Overview

Andy Fesenmeyer reviewed the meeting's agenda items, which will be covered using PowerPoint presentation slides:

1. PAC Meeting #2 Summary
2. Subcommittee Reporting
3. Review of Alternates
4. Public Scoping Meeting
5. Project Evaluation Matrix Conversation
6. Design Visualization Update
7. Next Steps/Questions

4. Review of PAC Meeting #2

Andy F. presented a brief overview of the topics covered at the second PAC meeting.

5. Subcommittee Reporting

The Purpose and Need Subcommittee meeting took place on September 12, 2017, and the Section 106 and 4f Subcommittee meeting took place on September 15, 2017. Andy F. recapped the Purpose and Need committee suggesting that they heard good comments with one of the main themes being the need to highlight the bike and pedestrian needs for the project. He suggested the team would be editing the Purpose and Need Statement and sending out to PAC members to continue the conversation. He also suggested that the statement will be continually updated as need be given input received as the project progresses.

For the Section 106 subcommittee, Andy F. noted that based on concerns and critical project elements suggested, the team is now developing additional committees including a Historical Design and Landscaping Subcommittee. One of the goals of this subcommittee will be to ensure that design plans meet objectives as to appropriate landscape features, with extensive review and consideration of historic context and guidelines. This subcommittee will meet during the daytime, most likely in a different location than the PAC meetings. Rich Armstrong noted that CTDOT would be open to adding other people within the community to be a part of this subcommittee. This includes individuals who are not a part of the PAC. Andy noted that the team will send out an email to the PAC with details about joining this subcommittee.

At least six PAC members expressed interest in joining this design working group. PAC members also suggested that they might include some consultants that have a history of working on the Parkway. PAC members stressed that new subcommittee members not in the PAC need to understand ground rules of what the PAC and project team are trying to do. This will help the subcommittee stay within the goals and objectives of this project.

6. Review of Alternates

John E. provided a brief review of current alternatives being considered. This included the extensive previous alternates developed prior to the consensus alternate in 2009, Alternate 21C as well as the new



Route 7-15 Norwalk

Alternate 26. He explained that this did not preclude additional alternates being looked at if they are proposed along the way. Public Scoping Meeting

John E., Andy F. and Ken L. provided details about the upcoming scoping meeting. The meeting will take place at the Main Norwalk City Hall building in the rotunda area on October 17, 2017 from 4:00 PM - 8:30 PM. Two identical presentations will be given at 5:30 and 7:30. Presentation topics will include the environmental review process, location and history, purpose and need, and the overall alternatives process. The public comment period will begin 30 days after the public scoping meeting, and will end on November 16, 2017.

Yolanda A. noted that scoping meeting information will be posted in local newspapers. It will be referred to as a “scoping/public information” meeting. Notifications will be placed in the Stamford Advocate, the Norwalk Hour, the project website, and the CTDOT website. Ken L. added that a Scoping Summary Report will be posted on project website.

The PAC requested that scoping meeting information also be posted to Nancy on Norwalk, Channel 12 and the City of Norwalk website.

7. Project evaluation matrix conversation

John E. provided a brief overview of how/why alternatives matrix is developed and used, and noted that the matrix is used as a tool for comparison of various alternatives. He detailed the alternatives screening process, with the first ‘sieve’ being whether an alternative met the basic purpose and need of the project. If so, then the alternatives can then be compared as to how *well* they meet purpose and need or how best they meet associated goals and objectives. He reviewed a number of sample matrices from a few projects and suggested the team would be drafting an initial matrix to identify the purpose and need elements and goals and objectives and other considerations. He suggested that CTDOT team would likely start with the previous matrix prepared for 7/15 (2008) and update possibly using one of the sample matrices presented.

John noted that the next PAC meeting, perhaps in November, would be dedicated to a review of project criteria matrix evaluations.

8. Design Visualization Update

John E. noted that the team will send updated design visualization link to the PAC on September 20, 2017. John and Chris M. explained that at this point in the project, the visualizations demonstrate only existing conditions, real time traffic, and a follow up of video of existing conditions would be developed and sent to PAC members as well.

The next round of visualizations will be developed subsequent to the scoping meeting in the coming months into next year, and will include Alternatives 21C and 26 as well as existing conditions. These visualizations will include comments received from PAC member review of links.

9. Next Steps

Andy F. noted that the main event coming up is the October 17 scoping meeting. Ken L. added that notifications will be provided via e-blast, newsletter, press releases and various publications listed above. Andy requested that PAC members join in notification efforts and promote this meeting among their constituents. After the scoping meeting, the project team will review all public comments received from and will begin doing some extensive engineering on the two alternatives (21C and 26).



Route 7-15 Norwalk

The next PAC meeting (meeting #4) will be in November 2017. This meeting will serve as a level one screening, with the original 2008 alternatives included as part of this initial screening. The PAC meeting will also be defining the evaluation matrix to be used.

John E. noted that the team is now updating the Purpose and Need document and will send to the PAC once completed.

The following discussion ensued:

Comments/Questions

Comment: Would like to see details on the older alternatives so the PAC can re-familiarize themselves.

Comment: Would also like to see the original evaluation matrix.

Comment: Requested that both the old alternatives and the original evaluation matrix be placed on the website so the PAC can review.

- Team responded that they would place the previous alternates and original matrix on the project website.

Comment: For cyclists, the exit ramps need to be looked at very carefully. The team needs to examine the interface and understand the priorities for cyclists – what are their preferred routes? Would also like to see some origin and destination (STRAVA) data on cycling.

- The team responded that they will provide STRAVA information. They also noted that they have been talking and will continue to talk with Norwalk Valley Trail and other bike/ped groups to coordinate with them on their needs.

Q: Where are the new signals and exits going to be on Route 7?

A: The project team noted new signalizations on Alternatives 21C and 26 using the maps on the slideshow screen. A PAC member had difficulty understanding where signals and new ramps would be using just the aerial maps. The project team noted that once the visualizations are up and running it will be easier to see and understand where the new signals and exit ramps will be located.

Q: Can we speak at the scoping meeting as well as other members of the public?

A: Definitely. You will be a private citizen and not a member of the PAC at that time, we would love to have you speak as a member of the public.

Q: Last time we worked with our communities to develop the evaluation matrix, will we be doing this again?

A: Yes, the PAC serving as liaison to the public will have input to the evaluation matrix and more importantly the issues and concerns that should be reflected. CTDOT/Consultant team expects PAC members to communicate and gather project perspectives from their communities.



Route 7-15 Norwalk

Comment: The PAC would like to know more about NEPA/CEPA environmental language, and requested that the project team ensures that these concepts and definitions be a part of the public scoping meeting.

- The team responded that they will be sure to include definitions and basic environmental analysis information.

Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #3
September 19, 2017
Meeting Presentation



Route 7/15 Norwalk Project – Project Advisory Committee Meeting #3



Tuesday, September 19th, Norwalk City Hall



PAC Meeting #3– September 19, 2017
CTDOT State Project #102-358

Route 7/15 Norwalk - AGENDA

- Introductions
- PAC Meeting #2 Summary
- Subcommittee Reporting
- Review of alternates
- Public Scoping Meeting
- Project evaluation matrix conversation
- Design Visualization Update
- Next Steps/Questions





Route 7/15 Norwalk Recap- WHAT DID WE HEAR?

Traffic and Safety

- Would like to know percentages of traffic going to Grist Mill

Bicycle and Pedestrian

- Consider increased activity if there were more bike/ped infrastructure available

Purpose and Need

- Specific PAC members have joined a P&N subcommittee

Historic Preservation/Parkway Character

- Take into account historic design guidelines in alternatives development

Design Visualization

- Shared initial model



SUBCOMMITTEES

- Purpose & Need (held 9/12)
- Section 106 and 4(f) (held 9/15)

ALTERNATIVES REVIEW

Alternative Route



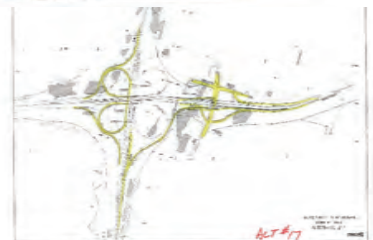
PAC Meeting #3 - September 18, 2013
CTDOT State Project #102-269

Route 7/15 Norwalk - ALTERNATIVES REVIEW

Interchange Alternatives

U.S. Route 7 / Route 15 Interchange
Norwalk, Connecticut
State Project No. 102-269

CONSULTING ENGINEER
PURCELL
INCORPORATED





Route 7/15 Norwalk - ALTERNATIVES REVIEW

No build alternate

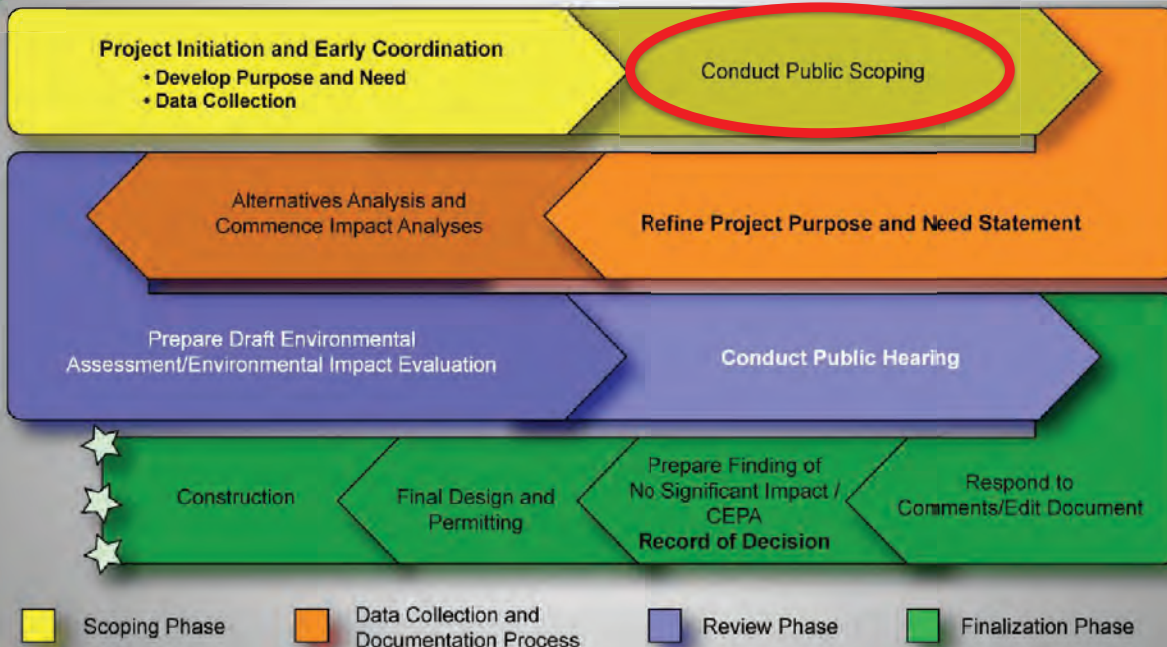


PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING





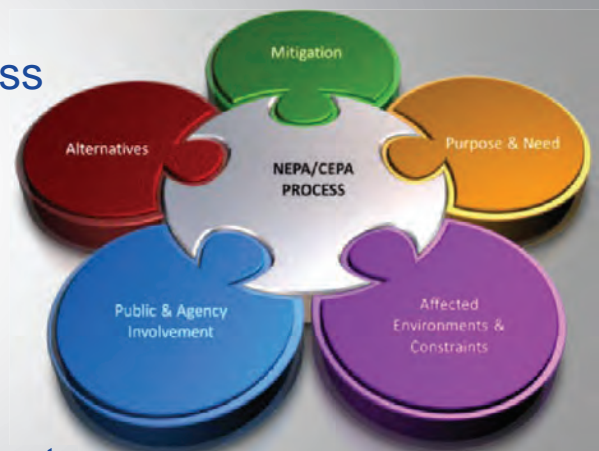
Route 7/15 Norwalk - NEPA/CEPA PROCESS



Route 7/15 Norwalk - SCOPING

What is Scoping?

- First “official” step in environmental process
- Obtain input and further define:
 - Purpose and Need
 - Goals and objectives
 - Study area
 - Alternatives
 - Environmental and socioeconomic impacts



...An opportunity for the public to help shape the study and its OUTCOMES



Route 7/15 Norwalk - SCOPING

Why Do We Need It?

- NEPA requirement for Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), recommended for Environmental Assessment (EA)
- CEPA requirement for Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE)

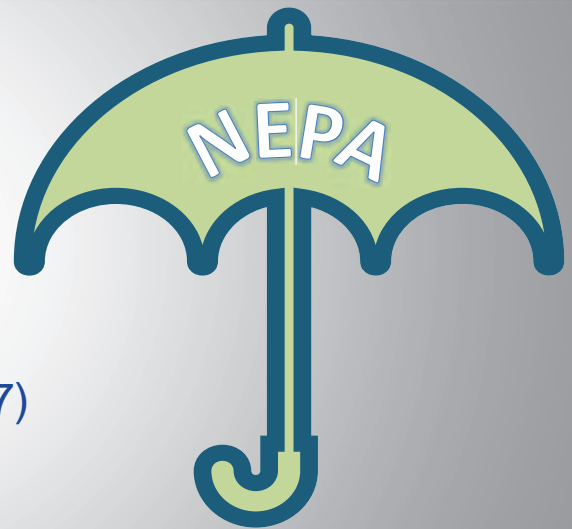
Scoping is a critical milestone in the environmental review process



Route 7/15 Norwalk - SCOPING

Scoping Process

- Scoping Notice
- Scoping package
- Public Scoping Meeting (10/17/17)
- Agency Scoping Meeting (TBD)
- Scoping Comment Period Ends (11/16/17)
- Scoping Summary Report





Route 7/15 Norwalk - SCOPING MEETING TOPICS

- Environmental Review Process
- Location and History
- Purpose & Need
- Alternatives Process



Route 7/15 Norwalk - Meeting Format

CEPA/NEPA Public Scoping Meeting

- “Open house”
- Presentations
- Public comment session
- Taking your comments:
 - Sign up and speak
 - Write comments on comment forms and put in comment box
 - Submit comments via email or in writing by (date)
 - Comment via project website and social media



PROJECT EVALUATION MATRIX



PAC Meeting #3- September 18, 2013
 CTDOT State Project #102-358



Route 7/15 Norwalk- 2008 ALTERNATES REVIEW

- 2008 Stakeholder ranking evaluation matrix of stakeholder concerns

Issue Rank	Issue From Survey	Alternate #12A	Alternate Cloverleaf W/ D2	Alternate #21
1	Improve Safety and Reduce Accidents	++	-	+++
2	Impact to Neighborhoods	Some	Most	Least
3	Impact to Wetlands	Most	Least	Least
4	Tree Clearing	Some	Most	Least
5	Impact to Historic Character/Aesthetic Integrity of Parkway	Most	Least	Some
5a	Number of Historic Structures Impacted	4	4	3
6	Noise Impact to Neighborhood	Some	Most	Least
7	Impact to Historic character of Silvermine Area	Some	Most	Least
8	Ability to Maintain Natural Barriers Between Highways and Neighborhoods/Landscaping	Yes	No	Yes
9	Impact to Home Values	?	?	?
10	Introduce Weave on Parkway	No	Yes	No
11	Advance Project to Construction	++	-	-
12	Reduce Congestion	++	-	+++
13	Ability to Construct Glover Ave & Creeping Hemlock First	Yes	Yes	Yes
14	Reduce Project Scope	No	No	No
15	Flooding/Drainage Concerns Due to Less Trees	Some	Most	Least
16	Ability to Accommodate Bicycles/Pedestrians	Yes	Yes	Yes
17	Widening of Glover Ave	Yes	Yes	Yes
18	Keep Location of Ramps in the Commercial/Industrial area of Main Ave.	Yes	Yes	Yes
19	Impact to the Norwalk River	Most	Least	Some
20	Ability to Include Aesthetic Treatment To New Structures	Yes	Yes	Yes



Route 7/15 Norwalk- 2008 ALTERNATES REVIEW

Issue Rank	Issue From Survey	Alternate #12A	Alternate Cloverleaf W/ D2	Alternate #21
1	Improve Safety and Reduce Accidents	++	+	+++
2	Impact to Neighborhoods	Some	Most	Least
3	Impact to Wetlands	Most	Least	Least
4	Tree Clearing	Some	Most	Least
5	Impact to Historic Character/Aesthetic Integrity of Parkway	Most	Least	Some
5a	Number of Historic Structures Impacted	4	4	3
6	Noise Impact to Neighborhood	Some	Most	Least



Route 7/15 Norwalk

Project:
 Columbia Pike
 Transit Initiative
 Alternatives
 Analysis/
 Environmental
 Assessment –
 Volume I

Date:
 May 2012

Table 5.4-1: Evaluation Synthesis: Project Needs

Project Needs	Measures	No Build	TSM 1	TSM 2	Streetcar Build
Increase transit capacity and improve transit mode share	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transit system capacity Person throughput (2016 and 2030) Transit ridership (2016, 2030) Transit mode share Regional VMT reduction 				
Invest in transit service that supports growth and economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel time savings Travel cost savings Premium property values (increase) Permanence of investment (ability to attract investment) 				
Improve connectivity and transit service to and from Skyline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intra-corridor trips: frequency of transit service that serves Skyline to Pentagon or Pentagon City Additional facilities to improve transit connectivity and access Corridor travel time (peak period, weekday ridership: to Skyline (trip production)) 				

Rating Legend:





Route 7/15 Norwalk

Project:
 Columbia Pike
 Transit Initiative
 Alternatives
 Analysis/
 Environmental
 Assessment –
 Volume I

Date:
 May 2012

Table 5.4-2: Evaluation Synthesis: Project Goals

Project Goals	Objectives	No Build	TSM 1	TSM 2	Streetcar Build
Improve mobility for corridor residents, employees, customers and visitors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide additional transportation capacity to meet current and future travel demand. Provide more transportation choices. Provide high-quality service for inter-and intra-corridor trips. Address the transportation needs of the transit-dependent populations in the corridor. 	◐	◑	●	●
Contribute to and serve as a catalyst for economic development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support continued population and employment growth in the corridor. Support county economic development initiatives. Maximize local economic impact of transportation investments. 	◐	◑	◑	●
Enhance livability and long-term economic and environmental sustainability of the corridor.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support lifestyle choices for environmentally sustainable communities. Support long-term private investment in transit-friendly development. Minimize adverse environmental impacts of transportation investments. Serve households at a range of income levels. Promote pedestrian and bicycle focused communities. 	◐	◑	◑	●
Support development of an integrated regional multimodal transportation system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide enhanced connections to intermodal centers. Provide improved service to regional activity centers. Increase transit ridership and mode share. 	◐	◑	●	●
Provide a safe environment for all modes of travel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhance personal security for travelers in the corridor. Provide safe operations for travelers in the corridor. Provide a safe environment for transportation operations staff and employees. 	●	●	●	●



Route 7/15

Project:
 Routes 55/42/676
 Transit Alternatives
 Analysis Study

Date:
 December 2012

Table 61: Overall Comparison of Alternatives' Performance

	Alternative 3	Alternative 5	Alternative 6	TSM
A) Provide attractive, competitive, and reliable bus transit alternatives to congested highway travel	●	●	◐	◐
B) Increase bus transit speeds in the corridor	●	●	●	◐
C) Improve the image, value and awareness of bus transit (via information technology and fare collection)	●	●	●	◐
D) Reduce the reliance on single-occupant-vehicle (SOV) travel	●	●	◐	◐
E) Seek cost-effective solutions that attract new riders to the bus transit system in addition to better serving current bus riders	◐	◐	●	◐
F) Improve access to the bus transit system	●	●	◐	◐
G) Provide improved access to jobs and other opportunities for transit dependent travelers	●	●	●	●
H) Increase accessibility to major activity centers for all users (residents, employees, students, visitors, and shoppers)	●	●	●	●
I) Mitigate the rate of growth in regional traffic congestion	●	●	◐	◐
J) Make accommodations for bus transit improvements in highway projects	●	●	●	●
MITIGATE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS				
A) Maximize the possible use of existing transportation right-of-way (ROW)	◐	◐	◐	●
B) Improve regional air quality	●	●	●	◐
C) Reduce energy consumption	●	●	●	◐
D) Avoid adverse effects to farmland, historic, archaeological and natural resources	◐	◐	◐	●
E) Minimize adverse impacts on existing neighborhoods and communities	◐	●	●	◐
SUPPORT GROWTH				
A) Support state, regional and community smart growth initiatives and policies including the New Jersey State Development and Redevelopment Plan	◐	◐	◐	●
B) Encourage sustainable development and land use patterns, including transit-oriented development	●	●	●	●
C) Plan development and redevelopment in concert with transportation investments	●	●	●	●
TOTAL SCORE (Maximum 72)	62	63	67	57



Route 7/15 Norwalk

Project:
 Deficiencies and Needs Final Report, I-84/Route 8 Waterbury Interchange Needs Study

Date:
 June 2010

Table 3-2: Decision Matrix for I-84/Route 8 Interchange Preliminary Alternatives

Grading Criteria	Criteria Relative Weighting (1-5)	No Build		Preliminary Alternative 1: TDM/TSM/Transit		Preliminary Alternative 2: Circulation/Operations/Safety		Preliminary Alternative 3: Partial Build 1 New Westbound		Preliminary Alternative 4: Partial Build 2 New Eastbound		Preliminary Alternative 5: Full Build	
		Rating (1-5)	Weighted Rating	Rating (1-5)	Weighted Rating	Rating (1-5)	Weighted Rating	Rating (1-5)	Weighted Rating	Rating (1-5)	Weighted Rating	Rating (1-5)	Weighted Rating
Construction Cost	3	5	15	5	15	4	12	2	6	2	6	1	3
Life Cycle Cost	4	1	4	1	4	1	4	3	12	2	8	5	20
Constructability	4	5	20	5	20	5	20	1	4	1	4	3	12
Environmental Impact	3.5	4	14	5	17.5	4	14	3	10.5	2	7	3	10.5
Safety/Meets Design Standards	5	1	5	1	5	2	10	3	15	3	15	5	25
Connectivity	4	1	4	1	4	5	20	4	16	4	16	4	16
Economic Development	3.5	1	3.5	2	7	5	17.5	3	10.5	3	10.5	4	14
Intermodal Connections	3	1	3	5	15	3	9	2	6	2	6	2	6
Traffic Operations / Capacity Accommodation	4.5	1	4.5	2	9	2	9	3	13.5	4	18	5	22.5
Total Scores			73		96.5		115.5		93.5		90.5		129
Ranking of Alternatives			6		3		2		4		5		1



Route 7/15

Project:
 DeIDOT West Dover Connector

Date:
 December 2011

WEST DOVER CONNECTOR STUDY: ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS SCORING SHEET

Preliminary Alternative/ Concept Number & Description	Map	Number of Displacements	Acreage of Right of Way Required	Impacts to Streams	Impacts to Wetlands	Impacts to Floodplains	Impacts to Agricultural Land	Ability to Achieve Park Connectivity*
Preliminary Alternative 1								
No-Build		●	●	●	●	●	●	○
Preliminary Alternative 2 - To New Burton Rd.								
Preliminary Alternative 2A		○	○	●	●	●	●	○
Preliminary Alternative 2B		○	○	●	●	●	●	○
Preliminary Alternative 2C		○	○	●	○	○	●	○
Preliminary Alternative 2D		●	○-	○	○-	○-	●	○
Preliminary Alternative 3								
Tie In to Wyoming Avenue to US 13		○	○	●	●	●	●	○
Preliminary Alternative 4								
Tie In to Webb Lane to US 13; Auxiliary Connection to Wyoming ME Road		○	○-	○	○-	○-	○	○
Prelim. Alt. 5- Tie In to (or in the vicinity of) Charles Polk Rd to US 13; Auxiliary Connection to Wyoming ME Road								
Preliminary Alternative 5A		○-	○-	○	○-	○-	○	●
Preliminary Alternative 5B		○	○-					
Preliminary Alternative 5C**		○	○-					



Route 7/15 Norwalk

Next steps for matrix evaluation

- Develop draft alternative comparison matrix
- PAC #4 review of criteria



DESIGN VISUALIZATION UPDATE



NEXT STEPS



PAC Meeting #3 - September 18, 2013
CTDOT State Project #102-358



Route 7/15 Norwalk - NEXT STEPS

- Public scoping meeting (October 17th)
- Review comments from scoping
- Review full suite of alternates
- Continue to meet with stakeholders
- PAC #4 meeting in November





Route 7/15 Norwalk



Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #4
September 17, 2018
Meeting Summary



PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) MEETING #4

Meeting Summary

Date: September 17, 2018

Norwalk Inn and Conference Center

Time: 6:30pm

Attendance

PAC Members	
David Waters	Building and Land Technology
Chris Wigren	Connecticut Historical Trust
Timothy Densky	Empire State Realty Trust, Inc
Wes Haynes	Merritt Parkway Conservancy
Jo-Anne Horvath	None
Alan Kibbe	None
Nancy Rosett	Norwalk Bike Walk Commission
Tod Bryant	Norwalk Preservation Trust
Jim Carter	Norwalk Valley River Trail
Peter Viteretto	Silvermine Community Association
Ray Rauth	Sound Cyclists
Connecticut Department of Transportation and FHWA Staff	
Yolanda Antoniak	CTDOT
Tom Doyle	CTDOT
Andy Fesenmeyer	CTDOT
Project Consultant Team	
Meghan Bard	Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.
Ken Livingston	Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.
Paul Stanton	Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.
Marguerite Carnell	Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc.
John Eberle	Stantec
Gary Sorge	Stantec
Emily Valentino	Stantec
General Public	
John Block	



Route 7-15 Norwalk

1. Welcome

Andy Fesenmeyer, of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), welcomed everyone to the fourth Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting for the Route 7/15 Norwalk Project. He introduced the team members in attendance and noted that this was the first meeting since last year.

Meeting Overview

Andy Fesenmeyer reviewed the meeting's agenda items, which were covered using PowerPoint presentation slides:

1. Project Team Introductions
2. Project Review and Update
 - Review of PAC Meeting #3
 - Schedule
 - Scoping Summary
 - Purpose & Need
3. Needs and Deficiency Report
4. Alternates Assessment Screening
5. Next Steps/Questions

2. Review of PAC Meeting #2

Andy F. presented a brief overview of the topics that were covered at the third PAC meeting on September 19, 2017.

3. Schedule

This PAC meeting was the first PAC meeting in 2018, as the Route 7/15 project was part of a list of projects identified by Governor Malloy in January 2018 for review. The project team is now moving forward with completing the existing condition analysis of the environmental documentation and looking to develop the alternatives analysis screening process over the 2018-19 winter. The environmental documentation would be completed in 2019 with the identification of a preferred alternative. Preliminary design would begin in 2020, the environmental permitting phase and final design would follow concluding in 2022 and construction begun in 2023.

4. Scoping Summary

Andy F. provided a brief update on the scoping period that was completed in November of 2017. The project team is developing a scoping summary report which includes comments received via the scoping meeting, other comments submitted from the public and formal comments from agencies. Andy F provided an overview of the key concerns received during the scoping process.

5. Purpose and Needs

Andy F. provided a brief overview of the Purpose & Need subcommittee meeting held just prior to the PAC meeting. He stated that the Purpose and Need subcommittee had requested that the reference to landscape design guidelines of the Merritt Parkway Conservancy be included directly with the Purpose and Need document and not simply included as a footnote within the document. They also asked that 'Landscape' be specifically referenced for integrating roadways into the neighborhood environment. Andy F. noted the project team would review this suggestion and look to address within the document.

6. Needs and Deficiency Report



Route 7-15 Norwalk

John E. provided a brief overview of the Needs and Deficiencies report, noting it had been distributed to the PAC for any questions and clarifications. He directed PAC to review past presentations (PAC #2) where Needs and Deficiencies were presented. He then briefly gave an overview of the basic needs and deficiencies including substandard geometric elements, insufficient capacity/congestion, a history of crashes, incomplete connections and a lack of bike/ped facilities on Main Avenue.

7. Alternatives Assessment Screening

John E. presented an overview of the upcoming work effort for the project team and the PAC to develop an alternatives assessment screening process. John E. reviewed the variety of screening options that had been presented at the second PAC meeting. John E. stated the project would look to use a tiered approach to review alternatives in the following process:

- Consistency with Purpose and Need
- Consistency with NEPA/CEPA topic areas
- Meets Goals & Objectives of the project
- Additional issues and concerns to be identified by PAC and others

The next PAC meeting will focus on the development of the screening matrix.

8. Next Steps

Andy F. presented the projects next steps including the distribution of the scoping summary report, refining criteria for the next work session and updating traffic counts. The next PAC Meeting will take place in late 2018 (November).

The following discussion ensued:

Comments/Questions:

Q: There is not a discussion of landscape issues in the Needs & Deficiency Report. Is it possible to include some discussion of Route 15 as a parkway in the report?

A: We will review the report and see if there is an opportunity to include a discussion of the road as a parkway from a landscape perspective.

Q: The Needs & Deficiency Report focuses north/south on Main Avenue for pedestrian and bicycle facilities but does not extend this review north to Grist Mill. There are no pedestrian amenities in the Grist Mill/Main Avenue/Route 7 area. Can this area be included in the analysis of bicycle and pedestrian amenities?

A: The project team will review and respond the next PAC meeting.

Q: Pedestrian signals at Grist Mill do not exist or are not working. Can you discuss?

A: The focus of this project is not the Grist Mill/Main Avenue intersection. We will let others at CTDOT know about this issue.

Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #4
September 17, 2018
Meeting Presentation



Route 7/15 Norwalk Project – Project Advisory Committee Meeting #4



Monday, September 17th, Norwalk Inn and Conference Center



PAC Meeting #4– September 17, 2018
CTDOT State Project #102-358

Route 7/15 Norwalk - AGENDA

- Introductions
- Project Review and Update
 - Summary of PAC #3
 - Schedule
 - Scoping Summary
 - Purpose & Need Subcommittee
- Needs and Deficiency Report
- Alternates Assessment Screening
- Next Steps/Questions



PROJECT REVIEW AND UPDATES



PAC Meeting #4 – September 17, 2018
CTDOT State Project #102-358



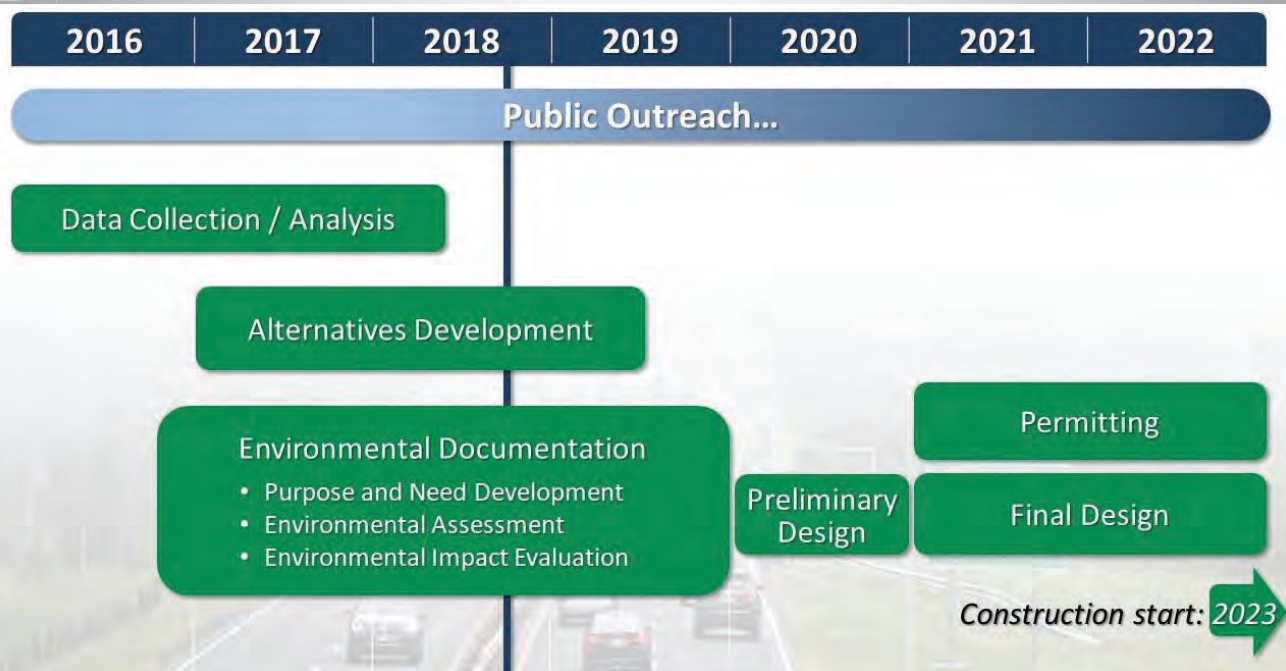
Route 7/15 Norwalk - Summary of PAC #3

- Reviewed current alternates
- Discussed the upcoming Public Scoping meeting
- Overview of sample alternative screening matrices





Route 7/15 Norwalk - SCHEDULE REVIEW



Route 7/15 Norwalk - SCOPING SUMMARY

- Scoping Meeting: October 17, 2017
 - Oral comments received
- Scoping Comment Period: Oct. 17 – Nov. 16, 2017
 - Written comments received
- Key concerns
 - Addition of traffic signals on Route 7; possible noise/congestion
 - Completing the Route 7/Merritt Parkway connections
 - Environmental, water resources, landscape/aesthetics
 - Funding





Route 7/15 Norwalk - PURPOSE AND NEED

- Purpose and Need has been updated based on comments and discussion
 - P&N subcommittee
 - Agency review
- Current version distributed to PAC with track changes



NEEDS AND DEFICIENCY REPORT

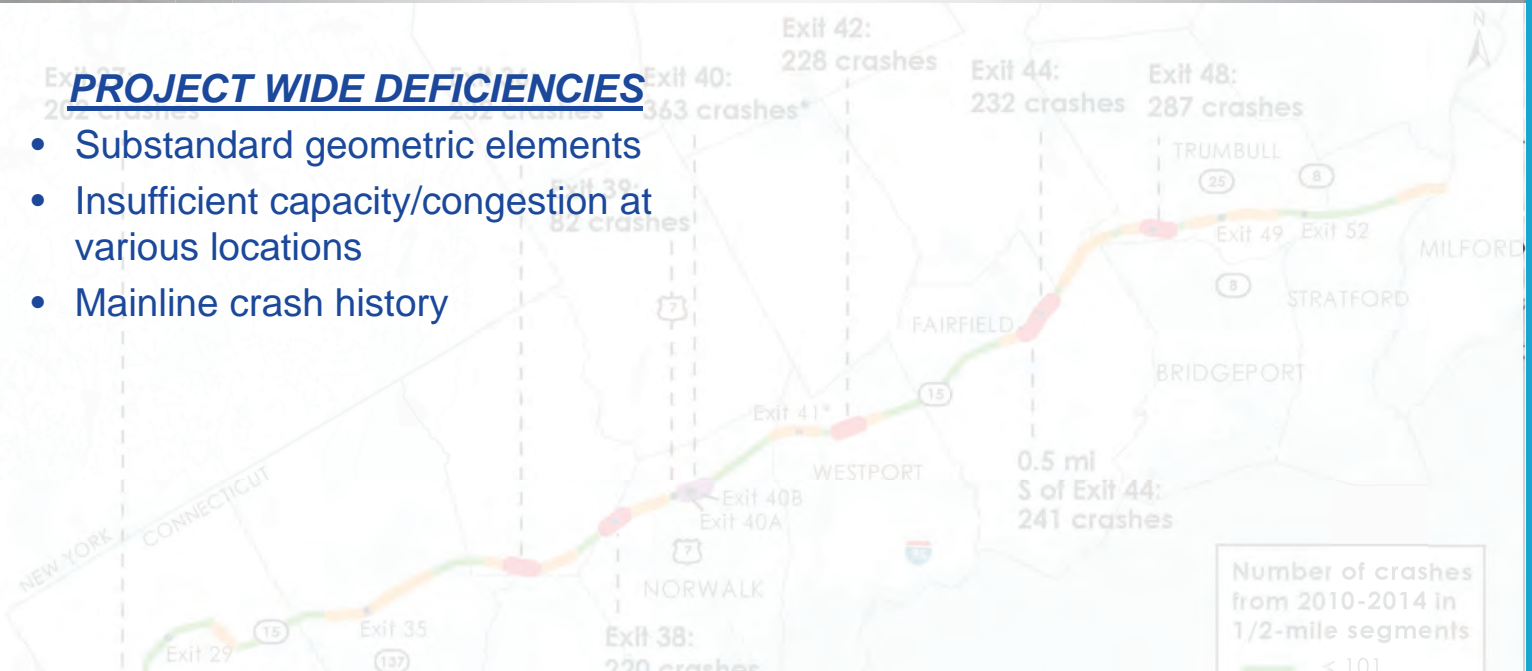




Route 7/15 Norwalk - NEEDS AND DEFICIENCY

PROJECT WIDE DEFICIENCIES

- Substandard geometric elements
- Insufficient capacity/congestion at various locations
- Mainline crash history



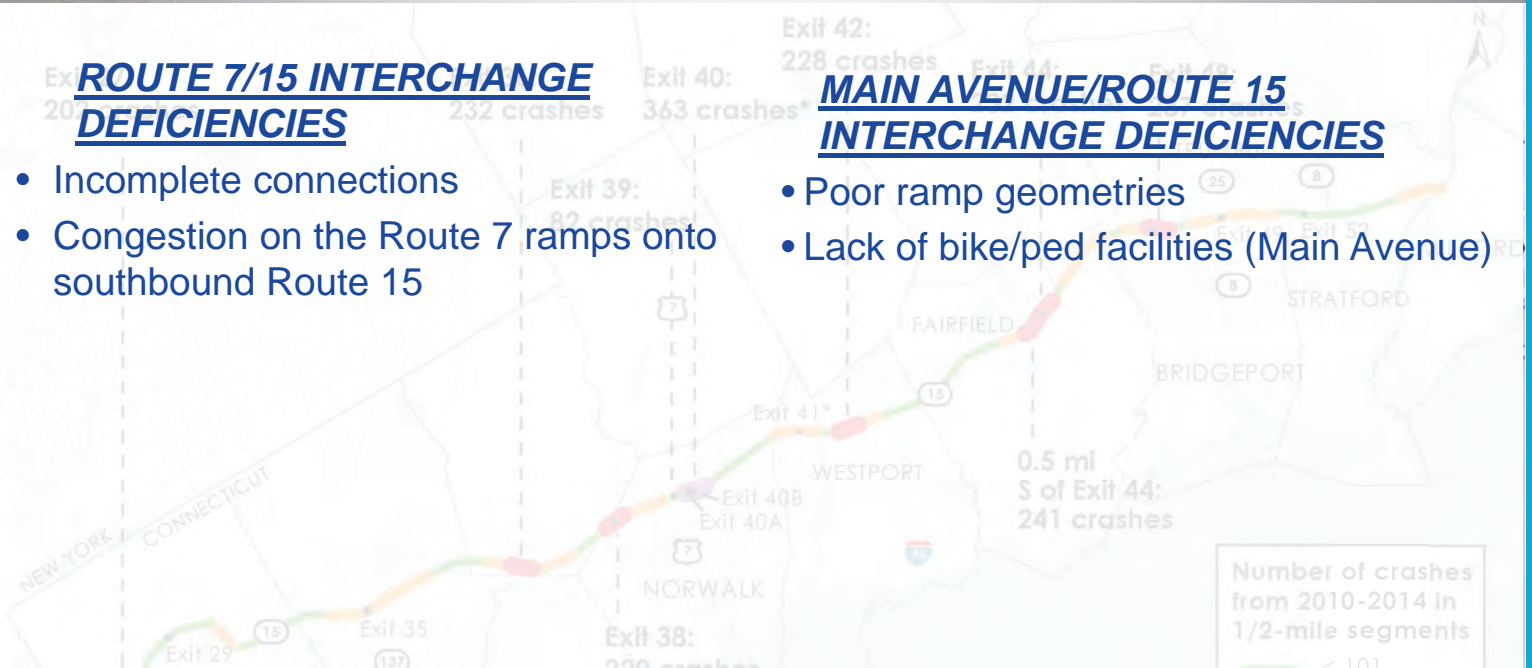
Route 7/15 Norwalk - NEEDS AND DEFICIENCY

ROUTE 7/15 INTERCHANGE DEFICIENCIES

- Incomplete connections
- Congestion on the Route 7 ramps onto southbound Route 15

MAIN AVENUE/ROUTE 15 INTERCHANGE DEFICIENCIES

- Poor ramp geometries
- Lack of bike/ped facilities (Main Avenue)



ALTERNATIVES ASSESSMENT PROCESS

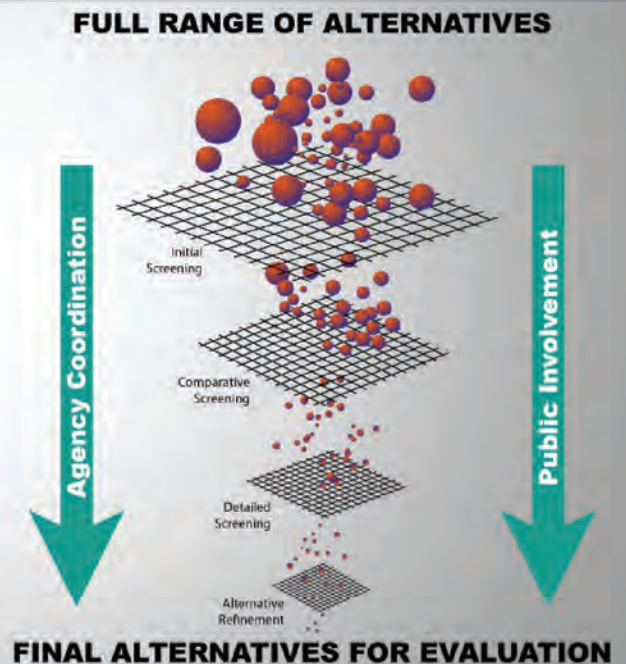


PAC Meeting #4 - September 17, 2018
CTDOT State Project #102-358



Route 7/15 Norwalk - ALTERNATIVE SCREENING

- Tiered approach to review alternates
 - Meet Purpose and Need
 - Alternatives Screening- pros and cons





Route 7/15 Norwalk

ALTERNATIVES SCREENING Level 2

NEPA/CEPA	
Land Use and Zoning	
Consistency with Local, Regional and State Conservation and Development Policies Plan	
Social and Economic Considerations	
Environmental Justice	
Traffic	
Bicycles and Pedestrians	
Right of Way/Land Acquisitions	
Air Quality	
Noise	
Community Services and Private Utilities	
Community Cohesion	
General Ecology and Endangered Species	
Navigable Waters	
Surface Waters	
Wetlands	
Floodplains	
Groundwater	
Cultural Resources	
Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) (Scenic Parkway)	
Farmland Protection	
Hazardous Materials	
Energy Analysis	
Construction Impacts	
Goals & Objectives	
Congestion Reduction	
Long-Term Serviceability	
Cost Effective Solutions	
Maintenance Costs	
Construction Impacts/Implementation	
Sustainable Practices	
Design Consistent with MP Character	
Historic Bridges Treatment/Preservation as Feasible	
Rehab/Restore Historic Landscape (Philosophy)	
Other Considerations (From 1008 Ranking)	

Other Considerations (From 1008 Ranking)	
Impact to Neighborhoods	
Impact to Wetlands (NEPA/CEPA)	
Tree Clearing	
Impact to Historic Character/Aesthetic Integrity of Parkway (NEPA/CEPA)	
Number of Historic Structures Impacted (NEPA/CEPA)	
Note Impact to Neighborhood (NEPA/CEPA)	
Impact to Historic Character of Silverline Area (NEPA/CEPA)	
Ability to Maintain Natural Barriers Between Highways and Neighborhoods/Landscaping	
Impact to Home Values	
Introduce Waste on Parkway (Purpose & Need)	

Relative NEPA/CEPA Element Impacts	
No Impact	Green
Moderate Impact	Yellow
Significant Impact	Red
More Analysis Needed	

Ability to Meet Goals and Objectives	
Meets G&O	Green
Moderately Meets G&O	Yellow
Does Not meet G&O	Red
More Analysis Needed	

Other Considerations	
Good	Green
Fair	Yellow
Poor	Red
More Analysis Needed	



NEXT STEPS



Route 7/15 Norwalk - NEXT STEPS

- Distribution of Scoping Summary Report
- Project Team
 - Refining screening criteria
 - Section 106 Coordination
 - Traffic count updates
- Next PAC Meeting (#5) late 2018 – Alternatives Assessment



Route 7/15 Norwalk



Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #5
November 14, 2018
Meeting Summary



PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) MEETING #5

Meeting Summary

Date: November 14, 2018

Norwalk City Hall Community Room

Time: 6:30pm

Attendance

PAC Members	
David Waters	Building and Land Technology
Drew Berndmaier	City of Norwalk
Dorothy Wilson	City of Norwalk
Mike Yeosock	City of Norwalk
Chris Wigren	Connecticut Historical Trust
JoAnn McGrath	Marcus Properties
Jo-Anne Horvath	None
Alan Kibbe	None
Nancy Rosett	Norwalk Bike Walk Commission
Tod Bryant	Norwalk Preservation Trust
Peter Viteretto	Silvermine Community Association
Francis Pickering	Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG)
Connecticut Department of Transportation and FHWA Staff	
Yolanda Antoniak	CTDOT
Tom Doyle	CTDOT
Andy Fesenmeyer	CTDOT
Kim Lesay	CTDOT
Kurt Salmoiraghi	FHWA
Project Consultant Team	
Ken Livingston	Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.
Marguerite Carnell	Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc.
John Eberle	Stantec
Gary Sorge	Stantec Consulting Services Inc.
General Public	
Erica Muniz	



Route 7-15 Norwalk

1. Welcome

Andy Fesenmeyer, of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), welcomed everyone to the 5th Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting for the Route 7/15 Norwalk Project. He noted that this meeting is going to focus on Alternatives Screening.

2. Meeting Overview

Andy F. reviewed the meeting's agenda items:

- Reviewing role of PAC
- Summary of 9/17/18 Meetings
 - Purpose & Need Comments
 - Summary of PAC #4
 - Landscape Workshop
- Alternatives Review
- Alternatives Assessment Screening
- Next Steps/Questions

3. Reviewing the role of PAC

Brief overview of the role of the Project Advisory Committee

The PAC serves as an advisory body to the agencies which are charged with making transportation decisions in the public interest (CTDOT and FHWA). PAC input will weigh strongly in decision-making but will not determine final alternatives.

4. Summary of 9/17/18 Meetings

Purpose & Need Subcommittee

Andy F. noted that the Purpose and Need Subcommittee meeting took place before the PAC meeting. Subcommittee input resulted in an updated integration goal that includes "landscape": "*Integrate the Project Roadways and Landscape with the Environment and Neighborhood context*".

The footnote on landscape guidelines was incorporated into the full goals & objectives text: "*as documented in the National Register of Historic Places nomination and State Scenic Road designation, following recommendations in the Merritt Parkway Guidelines for General Maintenance and Transportation Improvements, Merritt Parkway Landscape Master Plan, and Merritt Parkway Bridge Restoration Guide*".

PAC Meeting #4 Review Needs & Deficiencies Report

At PAC meeting #4, the PAC asked the following questions regarding the Needs & Deficiencies Report:

Question: Are you considering bicycle and pedestrian access at Grist Mill?

Answer: The areas of concern are outside the Route 7/15 project limits, but there are roadway improvements being proposed at Grist Mill that may provide opportunities to address bike/ped deficiencies. PAC member Nancy Rosett invited the project team for a walk along the Grist Mill area, and the team was able to see existing bike/ped deficiencies.

Question: Why was there little reference to "landscape" deficiencies?



Route 7-15 Norwalk

Answer: The team reviewed guidance posted by FHWA that reflects the expectation of needs and deficiencies as being solely transportation related. Team experience with past documents also confirms the general practice that 'needs' are transportation related and not peripherals (environment, landscape etc.). The report is focused on creating a safe and efficient transportation facility, and as landscaping doesn't usually play into traffic operations or safety, it is not considered an actual deficiency. However, landscape considerations are captured in the latest Purpose and Need Statement (Goals and Objectives).

Following PAC meeting #4 a landscape workshop took place, to which the general public was invited. Andy F. reviewed the key comments from the workshop.

5. Alternatives Review

John Eberle (Stantec) presented an overview of the alternative review process. The purpose of Level 1 Screening is to evaluate alternatives to see if they meet project Purpose and Need criteria. This step is followed by Level 2 Alternative Screening, which evaluates alternatives to see how they address project Goals and Objectives and possibly other considerations.

Level 1 Screening

John E. detailed that during this initial Level 1 screening process, the team has been re-examining previous alternatives to evaluate their merit, based on current Purpose and Need criteria. Level 1 screening examined whether an alternative met the project Purpose and Need, and if it did not, the alternative was eliminated.

The key criteria to meet the Purpose and Need:

- Roadway System Linkages: Does the alternative provide complete connections between Route 7 and the Merritt Parkway?
- Mobility Improvements: Does the alternative provide connections between Main Avenue and Route 7 and improve mobility for all users (motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists) at project interchange areas?
- Safety Considerations: Does the alternative improve safety in the vicinity of Interchange 39 and 40 on the Merritt Parkway?

PAC members were asked to review the Level 1 screening matrix provided at the beginning of the meeting, and John E. briefly explained color coding. In the screening matrix, green symbolized that the alternative fully meets purpose and need; yellow indicates moderately meeting purpose and need; and black notes that the alternative does not meet purpose and need and is therefore eliminated. John E. also explained that those alternatives that were labeled as gray have been refined to a slightly different alternative and have been renamed (for example, Alternative 2 is grayed out because it has been refined to Alternative 2A).

In order to show the process and methodology used, an example alternative was presented, Alternative 15, which was unable to meet purpose and need due to its inability to provide effective linkages and mobility. This alternative has been eliminated. Alternative 12A, which is an older alternative, meets purpose and need. John E. noted that the remaining older alternatives were eliminated because they did not meet purpose and need. Along with Alternative 12A, the additional three alternatives that meet purpose and need are Alternative 20B, Alternative 21C, and Alternative 26 summarized as follows:

- Alternative 12A: an older alternative (developed after the previous project). Ramps were lowered from the height of the original design but remain higher than the Merritt Parkway. 12A makes road linkages, has good mobility, but has some apparent geometric deficiencies.
- Alternative 20B: an older alternative found in project archives that features traffic signals on elevated ramps (unlike 26, which has signals on Route 7). 20B passed a basic traffic evaluation and meets all three Purpose and Need criteria.
- Alternative 21 C: a "consensus" alternative that makes road linkages and has good mobility but has some geometric deficiencies.



Route 7-15 Norwalk

- Alternative 26: a compact design making various connections between Route 7, Merritt Parkway and Main Avenue via proposed signals on Route 7. It meets all three Purpose and Need criteria.

The following questions/comments were made regarding the alternatives and the Level 1 screening process.

Alternative 20B

The PAC had questions about Alternative 20B and its signalized ramps:

Question: Are the ramps elevated?

Answer: They are elevated, and do not stop traffic on Route 7.

Question: How do you get from Super 7 from Main Avenue?

Answer: John E. provided a detailed review of ramp coordination.

Question: Would this alternative cause traffic backup on these elevated ramps?

Answer: There will be traffic queues, but not beyond normal levels. These queues will be part of the extended Level 2 screening analysis or formal assessments if the alternative progressed far enough in process. Initial Level 1 traffic evaluation showed that the level of service was acceptable.

Regarding Alternative 20B, John E. also noted that the team has not yet determined the ramp profile, heights, structures, cost or any other details. The next phase may include a workshop that will present all these elements.

Alternative 21C Refinements

John E. then described in detail the Level 1 screening of Alternative 21C. The team refined some elements, and it is now renamed Alternative 21D. Alternative 21D has the following updated elements:

- Improved or eliminated ramp weaving
- Additional lanes to accommodate traffic
- Tighter ramp geometry
- Reduced number of bridges
- Additional southbound Route 7 ramps to the Merritt Parkway and Main Avenue

7. Alternatives Assessment Screening (Level 2)

John E. noted that the team is now working on a draft Level 2 screening criteria that examines how each alternative may address the project Goals and Objectives as identified in the project's Purpose and Need statement and other considerations.

He added that a PAC meeting will occur, most likely in early 2019, to present this Level 2 criteria and matrix evaluation. A public meeting may also occur after the PAC presentation. This Level 2 screening will likely include landscape, historic, cultural, and cost considerations, among other considerations. The project team will send the Level 2 screening criteria to PAC members before the workshop so that they have time to review and comment.

John E. noted that when the project team completes the Level 2 screening, the number of alternatives may be reduced to one or two alternatives and those can be carried into the EA document for assessment..

8. Next Steps



Route 7-15 Norwalk

Andy F. noted that the next round of meetings will include a Section 106/historic and landscape subcommittee meeting, which will likely be combined, as both groups have similar concerns and interests. This meeting will likely be in January 2019.

The Level 2 screening workshop will most likely occur in February 2019.

Andy F. requested that the PAC review the project Goals and Objectives described in the latest Purpose and Need Statement, so that they can be familiar with the screening content when presented with Level 2 findings.

The following discussion ensued:

Comments/Questions

Comment: Regarding the footprint of the project, we need to see a diagram that shows where impacts will be on the landscape, even using the color green could help, as the public does not understand these impacts just by looking at a plan design.

Comment: The elevated ramp concept of Route 7 is hard to think about it in scale and how it will function.

Comment: Need to consider trucks and truck traffic on these new ramps.

Question: Will these alternatives be available on the website?

- Team responded that the presentation will be on the website.

PAC members had differing opinions about the role Route 7 should play in each of these prospective alternatives. One PAC member suggested that Route 7 should remain unsignalized and act as a major connector between the Merritt Parkway and I-95, and that each alternative should prioritize traffic flow along Route 7. Another PAC member suggested that perhaps it is time to rethink the function of Route 7 entirely and restructure it as a slower speed road that allows for signals. A lower speed, signalized Route 7 therefore would not be a fatal flaw in the alternative analysis.

In general, PAC members would like to see these maps larger format. The project team will develop more scalable maps and provide them at the workshop and online.

The project team noted that they will be developing 3D perspectives for landscaping, as 3D is critical to assessing a deeper level of detail and clearly identify impacts. For alternatives 26 and 21D, the team already has some profiles and cross sections available. Alternative 20B still needs to be reviewed at a profile/cross section level.

Andy F. suggested that if PAC members had any questions or feedback on the alternatives posted to the website, they can email him directly. The team will be sending an email to the PAC within the next two weeks to let them know when materials are available online.

Note, the PAC presentation is now on the project website: http://7-15norwalk.com/documents/2018-11-14-Route_7-15-PACMeeting5.pdf

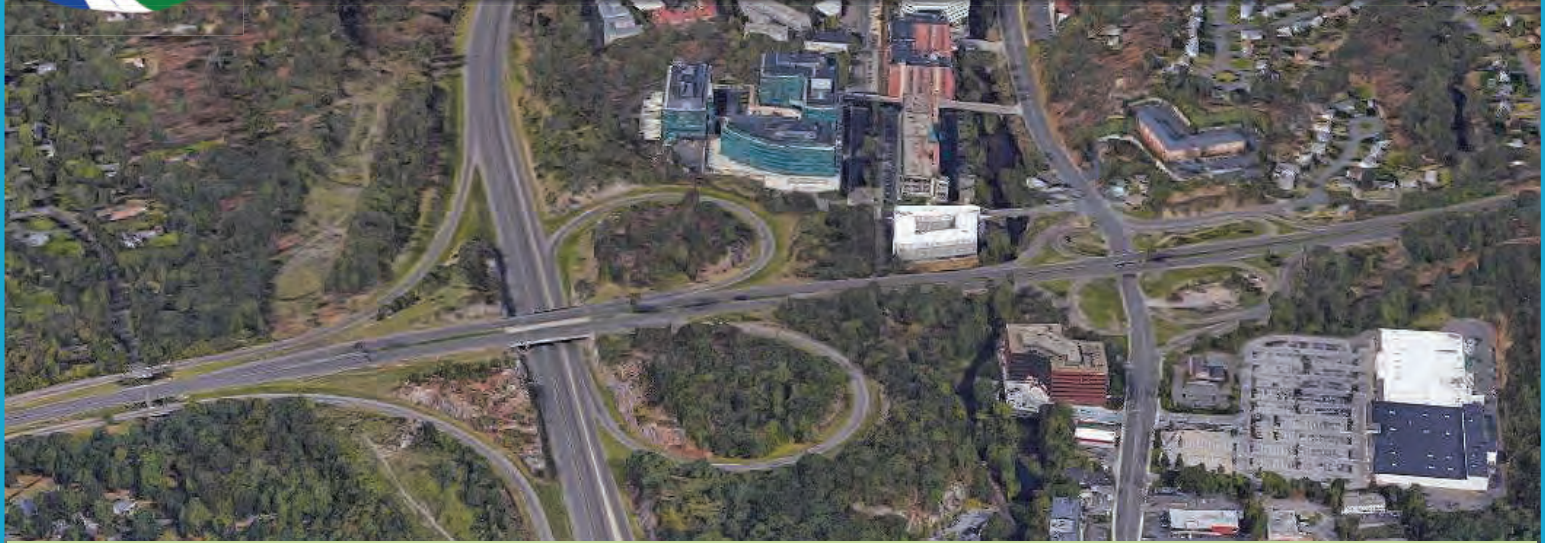
Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #5

November 14, 2018

Meeting Presentation



Route 7/15 Norwalk Project – Project Advisory Committee Meeting #5



Wednesday, November 14th, Norwalk City Hall



PAC Meeting #5– November 14, 2018
CTDOT State Project R102-358

Route 7/15 Norwalk - AGENDA

- Introductions
- Reviewing role of PAC
- SUMMARY OF 9/17 MEETINGS
 - Purpose & Need Comments
 - Summary of PAC #4
 - Landscape Workshop
- Alternative Review
- Alternatives Assessment Screening
- Next Steps/Questions





Route 7/15 Norwalk - Role of PAC

To be instrumental in helping to craft a successful outcome, by:

1. Attend meetings, review material and **educate yourself**
2. **Share viewpoints and ideas** in project dialog
3. Link between the study team and the community - **in both directions**
4. Help reach consensus on project issues and alternates - **honor differences in opinion and perspective**
5. **Support the consensus** of the PAC



SUMMARY OF 9/17 MEETINGS



Route 7/15 Norwalk - Purpose and Need Update

- Include “landscape” into integration goal
*“Integrate the Project Roadways and **Landscape** with the Environment and Neighborhood context”*
- Move the footnote on landscape guidelines into full text
“as documented in the National Register of Historic Places nomination and State Scenic Road designation, following recommendations in the Merritt Parkway Guidelines for General Maintenance and Transportation Improvements, Merritt Parkway Landscape Master Plan, and Merritt Parkway Bridge Restoration Guide”



Route 7/15 Norwalk - Needs & Deficiencies Report

- What we heard...
 - Are you considering bicycle and pedestrian access at Grist Mill?
 - Why was there little reference to “landscape” deficiencies?





Route 7/15 Norwalk - Landscape Workshop

What are the **most** appealing landscape/visual features within the project area?

- Views of natural and built environments
- Parkway feel for traffic calming
- Plant variety/visibility



Route 7/15 Norwalk - Landscape Workshop

What are the **least** appealing landscape/visual features within the project area?

- Glover Avenue Apartments- New construction is too visible
- Construction staging areas
- Route 7 cloverleaf
- Non-original bridges





Route 7/15 Norwalk - Landscape Workshop

What is **most** important to you?

- Views
- Structures (Bridges)
- Maintenance
- Scale
 - Topography/landscape relationship
 - Hierarchy of plant materials to create intimate scale
 - Note contrast to I-95
- Vegetation/Natural Resources



ALTERNATIVES REVIEW

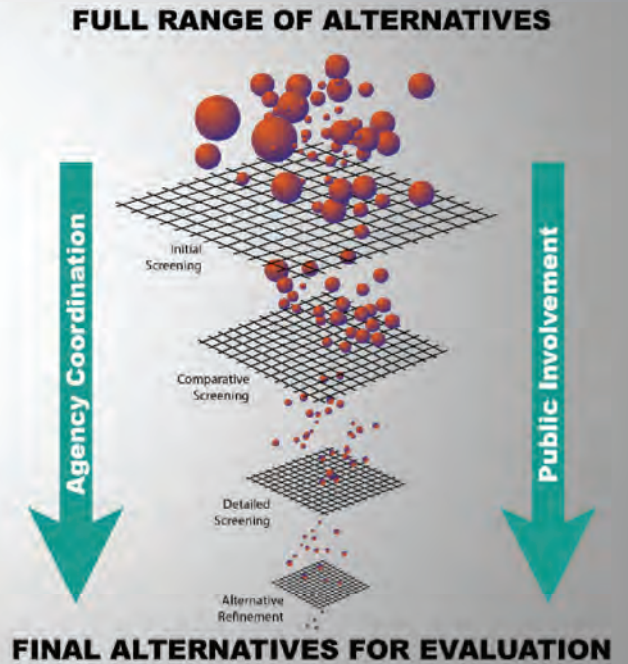




Route 7/15 Norwalk

ALTERNATIVE SCREENING PURPOSE

- Allows for wide range of alternatives to be considered in a conceptual manner
- Move from many to a few alternatives to be fully evaluated within the NEPA/CEPA process (Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Evaluation)
- Multi-Level approach
 - Purpose and Need
 - Goals and Objectives
 - Other Considerations



LEVEL 1 SCREENING (PURPOSE AND NEED)





Route 7/15 Norwalk

ALTERNATIVE SCREENING

- Project team took a step back to review all alternatives discussed in prior Environmental Assessment and stakeholder workshops
- Quick evaluation of traffic operations and key needs/goals
- **Why...**
 - Do any have merit based on current purpose and need/goals
 - Confirm issues still exist



Route 7/15 Norwalk

ALTERNATIVE SCREENING

Level 1 (Purpose and Need)

The key criteria to meet the Purpose & Need:

- **Roadway System Linkages:** *Does the alternative provide complete connections between Route 7 and the Merritt Parkway?*
- **Mobility Improvements:** *Does the alternative provide connections between Main Avenue and Route 7 and improve mobility for all users (motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists) at project interchange areas?*
- **Safety Considerations:** Does the alternative improve safety in the vicinity of Interchange 39 and 40 on the Merritt Parkway?



Route 7/15 Norwalk

ALTERNATIVE SCREENING Level 1 (Purpose and Need)

Criteria	NO-BUILD	ALT. 1	ALT. 2	ALT. 2A	ALT. 3	ALT. 4	ALT. 5	ALT. 6	ALT. 7A	ALT. 8	ALT. 9	ALT. 10	ALT. 11	ALT. 12	ALT. 12A	ALT. 13	ALT. 14	ALT. 15	ALT. 16	ALT. 17	ALT. 18	ALT. 19B	ALT. 20B	ALT. 21C	ALT. 21D	ALT. 22	ALT. 23	ALT. 24B	ALT. 25	ALT. 26	
Purpose & Need																															
Roadway System Linkage Linkage between Route 7 and Merritt Parkway																															
Mobility Improve mobility for all users (motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists) at project interchange areas*			Concept developed but refined as Alt. 2A so discarded											Concept developed but refined as Alt. 12A so discarded										Concept refined as Alt. 21D so discarded				Concept developed at same time as Alt. 21C. Alt. 21C was previously determined to be the better version of this alternative.			
Safety Considerations Safety in vicinity of Interchanges 39 and 40**																															

Ability to Meet Purpose and Need	
Meets P&N	
Moderately Meets P&N	
Does Not Meet P&N	
More Analysis Needed	

How was the Ability to Meet Purpose and Need Determined?			
Criteria	Meets P&N (■) if	Moderately Meets P&N (■) if	Does Not Meet P&N (■) if
Roadway System Linkage Linkage between Route 7 and Merritt Parkway	Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway	N/A.	Connections are not made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway
Mobility Improve mobility for all users (motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists) at project interchange areas*	Vehicular connections are provided between Main Avenue and Route 7 and all connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements are apparent.	Vehicular connections are provided between Main Avenue and Route 7 but not all connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements may or may not be apparent.	Vehicular connections are not provided between Main Avenue and Route 7 and/or no connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. The local road network is not improved.
Safety Considerations Safety in vicinity of Interchanges 39 and 40**	No apparent geometric deficiencies (e.g., inadequate distances, tight ramps) are identified.	Some apparent geometric deficiencies such as short weaving distances between ramps are maintained or adjacent on- and/or off-ramps are proposed	Many apparent geometric deficiencies such as short weaving distances, inadequate acceleration/deceleration lanes, etc. are proposed or past assessments specifically denoted safety concerns.



Route 7/15 Norwalk

ALTERNATIVE SCREENING Level 1 (Purpose and Need)

Criteria	Meets P&N (■) if
Roadway System Linkage Linkage between Route 7 and Merritt Parkway	Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway
Mobility Improve mobility for all users (motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists) at project interchange areas*	Vehicular connections are provided between Main Avenue and Route 7 and all connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements are apparent.
Safety Considerations Safety in vicinity of Interchanges 39 and 40**	No apparent geometric deficiencies (e.g., inadequate distances, tight ramps) are identified.



Route 7/15 Norwalk

ALTERNATIVE SCREENING Level 1 (Purpose and Need)

Criteria	Moderately Meets P&N (■) if
Roadway System Linkage Linkage between Route 7 and Merritt Parkway	N/A.
Mobility Improve mobility for all users (motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists) at project interchange areas*	Vehicular connections are provided between Main Avenue and Route 7 but not all connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements may or may not be apparent.
Safety Considerations Safety in vicinity of Interchanges 39 and 40**	Some apparent geometric deficiencies such as short weaving distances between ramps are maintained or adjacent on- and/or off-ramps are proposed



Route 7/15 Norwalk

ALTERNATIVE SCREENING Level 1 (Purpose and Need)

Criteria	Does Not Meet P&N (■) if
Roadway System Linkage Linkage between Route 7 and Merritt Parkway	Connections are not made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway
Mobility Improve mobility for all users (motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists) at project interchange areas*	Vehicular connections are not provided between Main Avenue and Route 7 and/or no connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. The local road network is not improved.
Safety Considerations Safety in vicinity of Interchanges 39 and 40**	Many apparent geometric deficiencies such as short weaving distances, inadequate acceleration/deceleration lanes, etc. are proposed or past assessments specifically denoted safety concerns.



Route 7/15 Norwalk

ALTERNATIVE SCREENING Level 1 (Purpose and Need)

Criteria	NO-BUILD	ALT. 1	ALT. 2	ALT. 2A	ALT. 3	ALT. 4	ALT. 5	ALT. 6	ALT. 7A	ALT. 8	ALT. 9	ALT. 10	ALT. 11	ALT. 12	ALT. 12A	ALT. 13	ALT. 14	ALT. 15	ALT. 16	ALT. 17	ALT. 18	ALT. 19B	ALT. 20B	ALT. 21C	ALT. 21D	ALT. 22	ALT. 23	ALT. 24B	ALT. 25	ALT. 26
Purpose & Need																														
Roadway System Linkage Linkage between Route 7 and Merritt Parkway																														
Mobility Improve mobility for all users (motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists) at project interchange areas*			Concept developed but refined as Alt. 2A so discarded											Concept developed but refined as Alt. 12A so discarded										Concept refined as Alt. 21D so discarded					Concept developed at same time as Alt. 21C. Alt. 21C was previously determined to be the better version of this alternative.	
Safety Considerations Safety in vicinity of Interchanges 39 and 40**																														

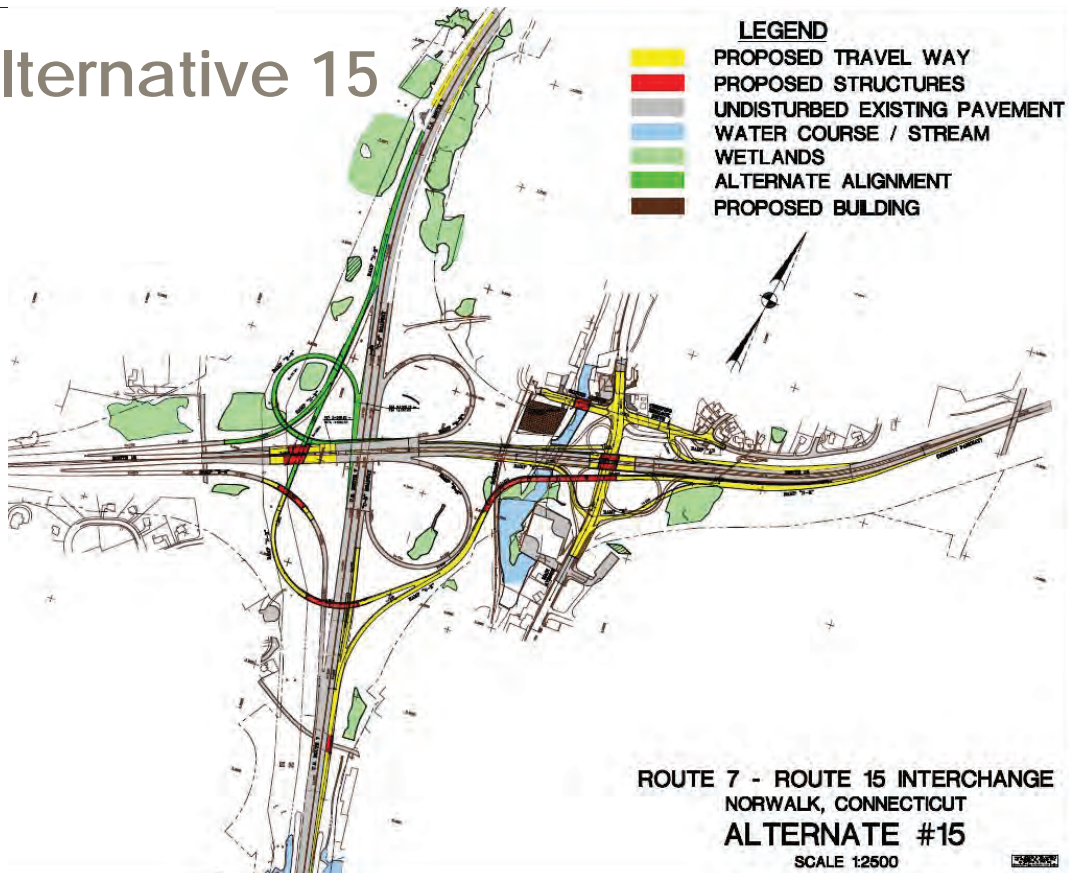
Ability to Meet Purpose and Need

Meets P&N	
Moderately Meets P&N	
Does Not Meet P&N	
More Analysis Needed	

How was the Ability to Meet Purpose and Need Determined?

Criteria	Meets P&N (■) if	Moderately Meets P&N (■) if	Does Not Meet P&N (■) if
Roadway System Linkage Linkage between Route 7 and Merritt Parkway	Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway	N/A.	Connections are not made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway
Mobility Improve mobility for all users (motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists) at project interchange areas*	Vehicular connections are provided between Main Avenue and Route 7 and all connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements are apparent.	Vehicular connections are provided between Main Avenue and Route 7 but not all connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements may or may not be apparent.	Vehicular connections are not provided between Main Avenue and Route 7 and/or no connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. The local road network is not improved.
Safety Considerations Safety in vicinity of Interchanges 39 and 40**	No apparent geometric deficiencies (e.g., inadequate distances, tight ramps) are identified.	Some apparent geometric deficiencies such as short weaving distances between ramps are maintained or adjacent on- and/or off-ramps are proposed	Many apparent geometric deficiencies such as short weaving distances, inadequate acceleration/deceleration lanes, etc. are proposed or past assessments specifically denoted safety concerns.

Alternative 15

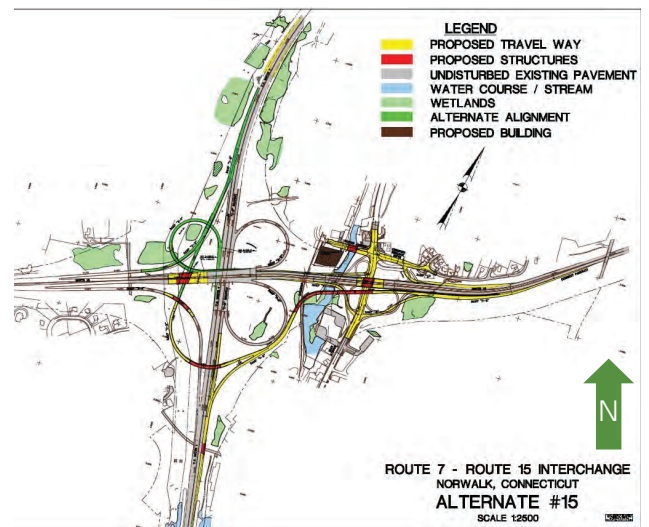


ROUTE 7 - ROUTE 15 INTERCHANGE
 NORWALK, CONNECTICUT
 ALTERNATE #15
 SCALE 1:2500

Alternative 15

Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

- Roadway System Linkage – Connections are not made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway. There is no connection between southbound Route 15 and northbound Route 7.
- Mobility – Vehicular connections are not provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Some of the vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements are apparent.
- Safety – Geometric deficiencies (weaving movements and distances along SB Route 15 within cloverleaf Route 7 interchange) are apparent.



COMMENTS/QUESTIONS





Route 7/15 Norwalk

ALTERNATIVE SCREENING Level 1 (Purpose and Need)

Criteria	NO-BUILD	ALT. 1	ALT. 2	ALT. 2A	ALT. 3	ALT. 4	ALT. 5	ALT. 6	ALT. 7A	ALT. 8	ALT. 9	ALT. 10	ALT. 11	ALT. 12	ALT. 12A	ALT. 13	ALT. 14	ALT. 15	ALT. 16	ALT. 17	ALT. 18	ALT. 19B	ALT. 20B	ALT. 21C	ALT. 21D	ALT. 22	ALT. 23	ALT. 24B	ALT. 25	ALT. 26
Purpose & Need																														
Roadway System Linkage Linkage between Route 7 and Merritt Parkway																														
Mobility Improve mobility for all users (motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists) at project interchange areas*																														
Safety Considerations Safety in vicinity of Interchanges 39 and 40**																														

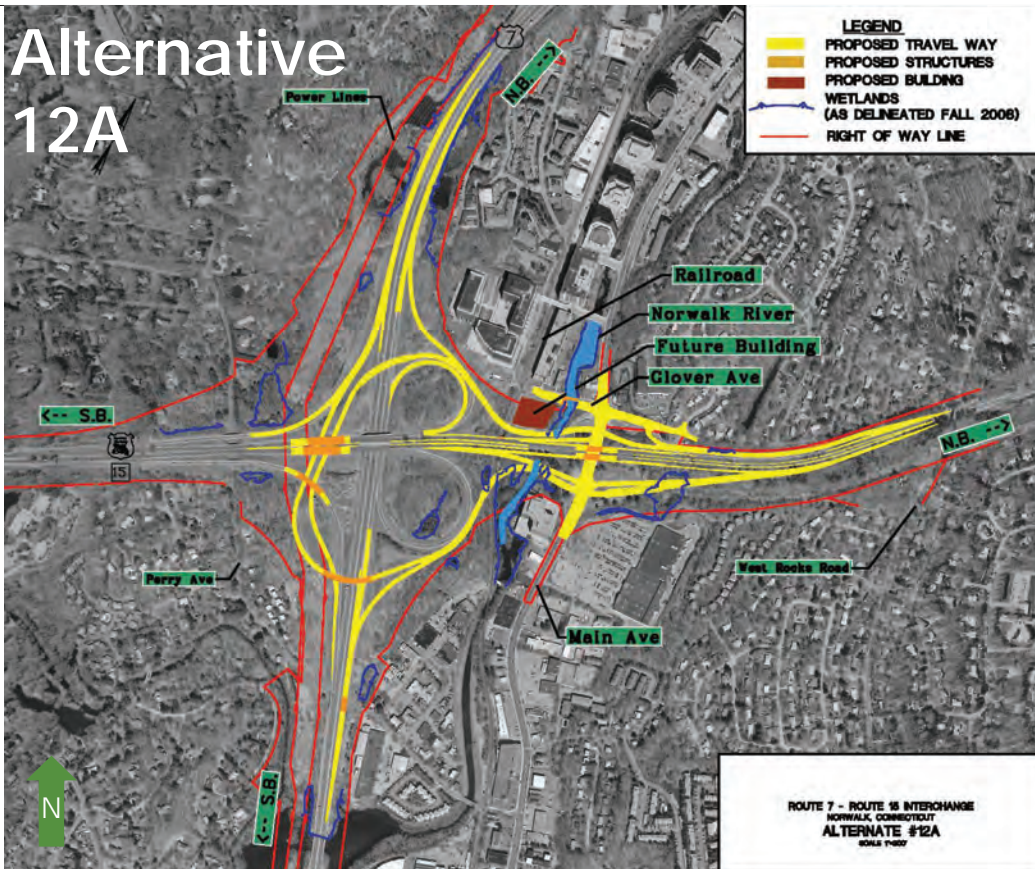
Ability to Meet Purpose and Need

Meets P&N	
Moderately Meets P&N	
Does Not Meet P&N	
More Analysis Needed	

How was the Ability to Meet Purpose and Need Determined?

Criteria	Meets P&N (■) if	Moderately Meets P&N (■) if	Does Not Meet P&N (■) if
Roadway System Linkage Linkage between Route 7 and Merritt Parkway	Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway	N/A.	Connections are not made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway
Mobility Improve mobility for all users (motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists) at project interchange areas*	Vehicular connections are provided between Main Avenue and Route 7 and all connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements are apparent.	Vehicular connections are provided between Main Avenue and Route 7 but not all connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements may or may not be apparent.	Vehicular connections are not provided between Main Avenue and Route 7 and/or no connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. The local road network is not improved.
Safety Considerations Safety in vicinity of Interchanges 39 and 40**	No apparent geometric deficiencies (e.g., inadequate distances, tight ramps) are identified.	Some apparent geometric deficiencies such as short weaving distances between ramps are maintained or adjacent on- and/or off-ramps are proposed	Many apparent geometric deficiencies such as short weaving distances, inadequate acceleration/deceleration lanes, etc. are proposed or past assessments specifically denoted safety concerns.

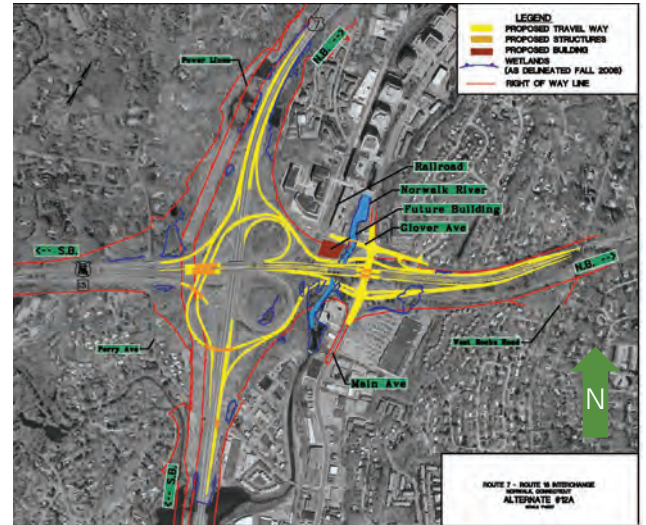
Alternative 12A



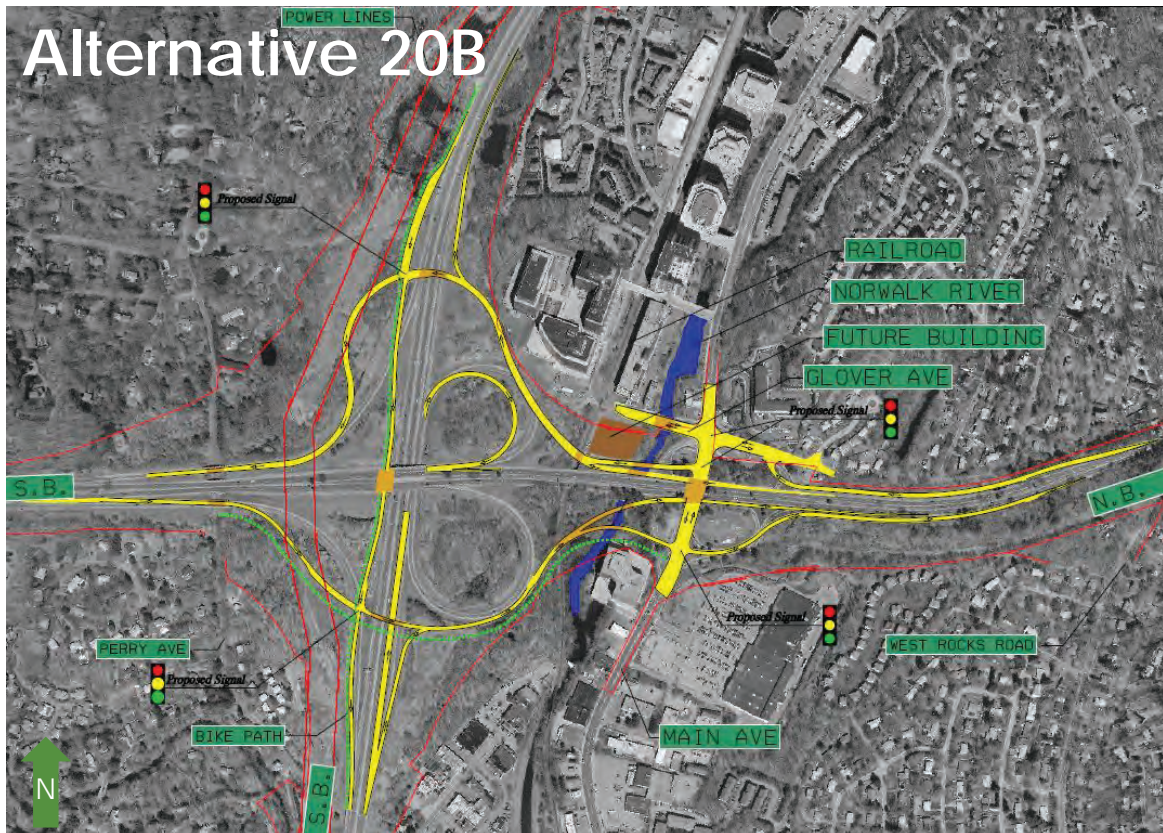
Alternative 12A

Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

- Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.
- Mobility – Vehicular connections are provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Some of the vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements are apparent.
- Safety – Geometric deficiencies (successive merge points along SB Route 15 within short distances) are apparent.



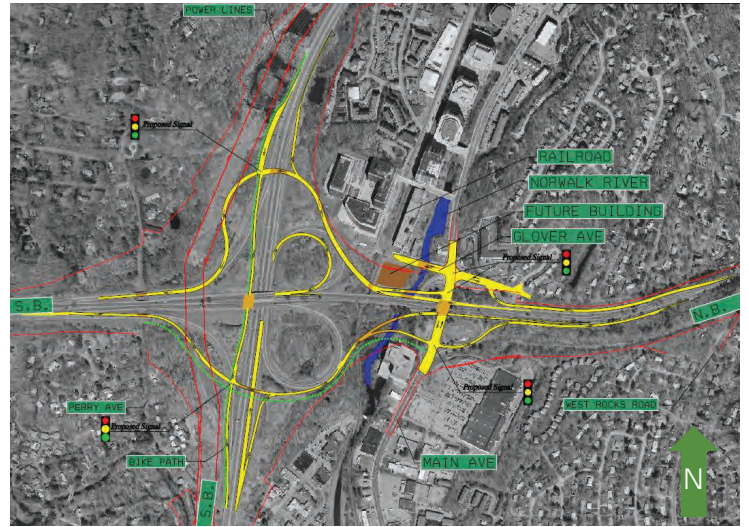
The Alternative meets Project Purpose and Need.



Alternative 20B

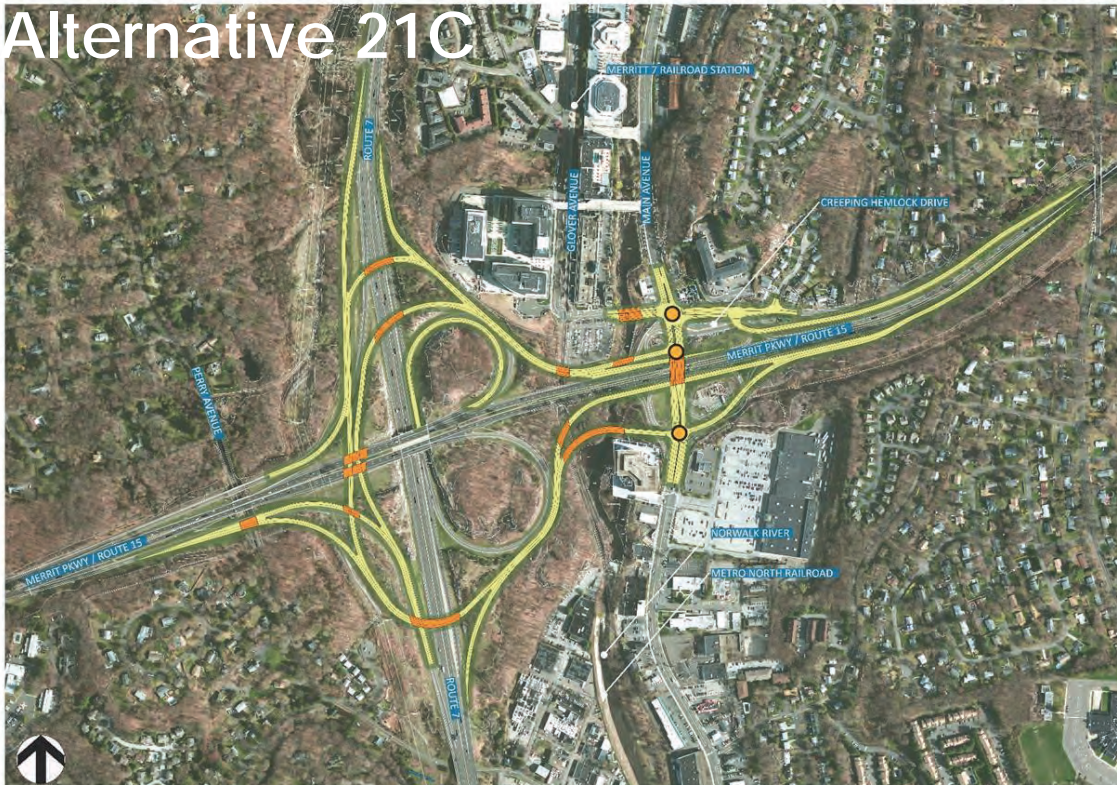
Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

- Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.
- Mobility – Vehicular connections are provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements are apparent.
- Safety – No apparent geometric deficiencies.



The Alternative meets Project Purpose and Need.

Alternative 21C



Alternative 21C

Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

- Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.
- Mobility – Vehicular connections are provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements are apparent.
- Safety – Geometric deficiencies (Multiple weaves within Route 7/15 interchange (each quadrant)) are apparent.



The Alternative meets Project Purpose and Need.

Alternative 26



Alternative 26

Ability to Meet Project Purpose and Need

- Roadway System Linkage – Connections are made in all directions are made to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway.
- Mobility – Vehicular connections are provided between Main Avenue and Route 7. Vehicular connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements are apparent.
- Safety – No apparent geometric deficiencies.



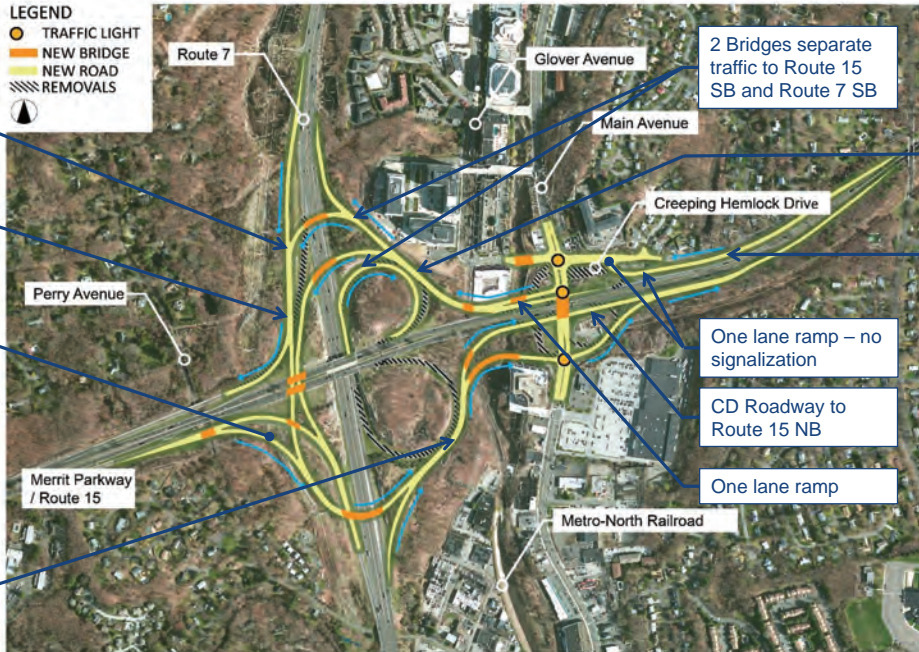
The Alternative meets Project Purpose and Need.





Route 7/15 Norwalk

ALTERNATIVE 21C



One Route 7 SB exits

Short 415' Weave Ramp Section

Alignment impacts CLP Towers

450' Weave Section Loop Ramp R-300'

2 Bridges separate traffic to Route 15 SB and Route 7 SB

Short 400' Weave - 2 lane ramp segment

Long deceleration lane

One lane ramp - no signalization

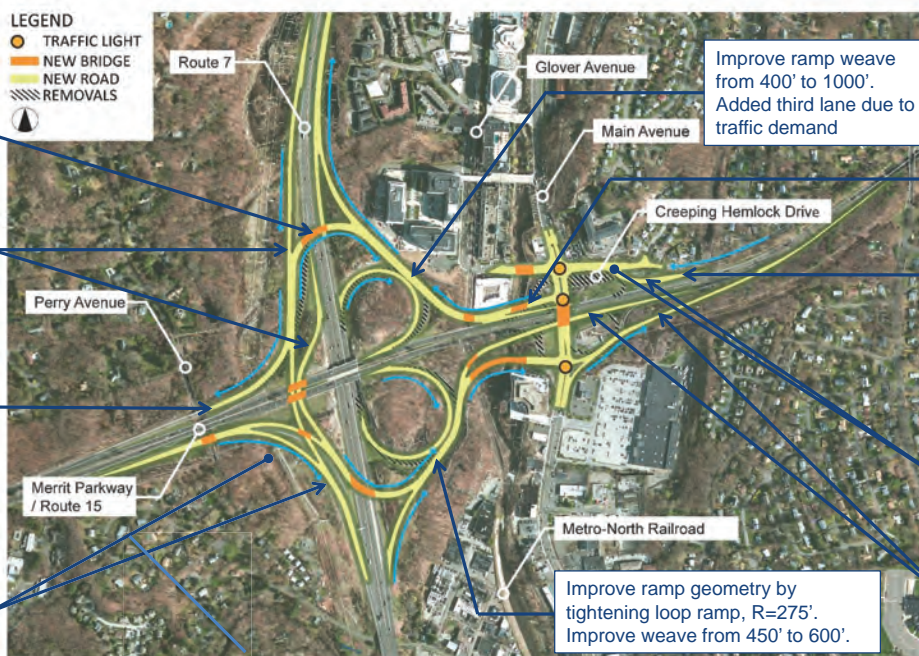
CD Roadway to Route 15 NB

One lane ramp



Route 7/15 Norwalk

ALTERNATIVE 21D



Combines 2 Bridges to 1 Bridge over Route 7. Provides access to both Route 15 SB and Route 7 SB. Adds second lane due to traffic demand

Two Route 7 SB exits

Ramp weave eliminated with second Route 7 SB exit

Tighter ramp geometry avoids impact to CLP towers

Improve ramp weave from 400' to 1000'. Added third lane due to traffic demand

Add second lane due to traffic demand

Reduced decel. lane

Added signal and modified ramp for 2 lanes

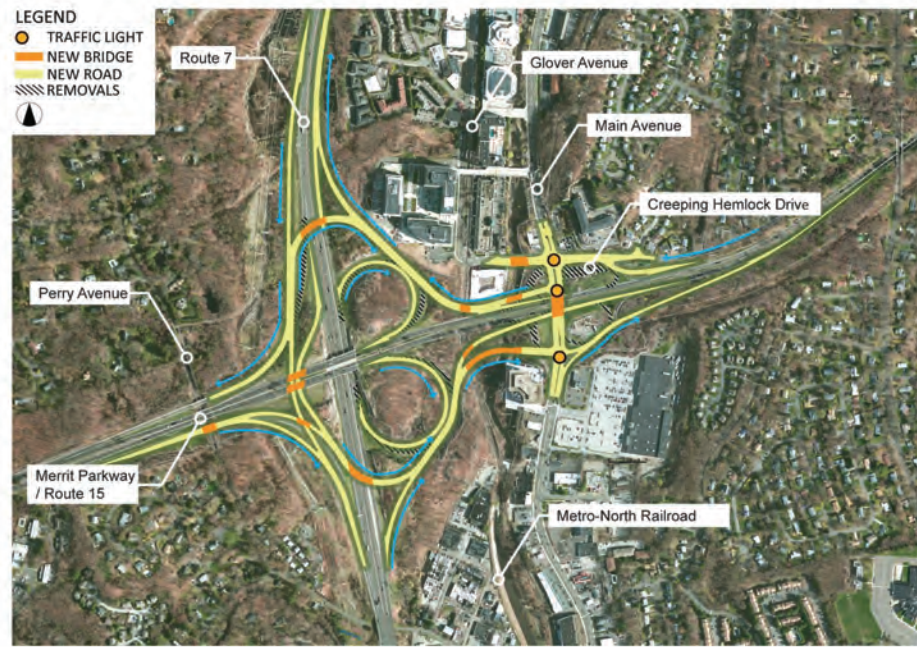
Separate NB Route 15 Entrance Ramps (no CD). Allows for tighter footprint at Main Ave

Improve ramp geometry by tightening loop ramp, R=275'. Improve weave from 450' to 600'.



Route 7/15 Norwalk

ALTERNATIVE 21D



Route 7/15 Norwalk

Level 1 (Purpose and Need) Screening Results

Criteria	NO-BUILD	ALT. 12A	ALT. 20B	ALT. 21D	ALT. 26
Purpose & Need					
Roadway System Linkage Linkage between Route 7 and Merritt Parkway					
Mobility Improve mobility for all users (motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists) at project interchange areas*					
Safety Considerations Safety in vicinity of Interchanges 39 and 40**					



Route 7/15 Norwalk - Discussion

- Does Level 1 alternative screening make sense?
- Do we need to further review any additional alternatives?



ALTERNATIVES SCREENING- LEVEL 2





Route 7/15 Norwalk

ALTERNATIVES SCREENING Level 2 (Goals & Objectives)

Criteria	NO-BUILD	ALT 12A	ALT 20B	ALT21D	ALT 26
Purpose & Need (Level I Screening Results)					
Roadway System Linkage Linkage between Route 7 and Merritt Parkway					
Mobility Improve mobility for all users (motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists) at project interchange areas					
Safety Considerations Safety in vicinity of Interchanges 39 and 40					
Goals & Objectives					
Reduce Congestion					
Long-Term Serviceability					
-Improved connections to alternate modes of transportation (rail, bus, bike...)					
-Compatible with City/Regional initiatives					
Optimizing Value Gained from Public Investment					
- Cost effective solutions					
- Reducing maintenance costs					
- Minimizing impacts of construction to public					
-Implementing sustainable practices					
Integrate Project Roadways and Landscape with Environment/Neighborhoods					
- Design consistent with MP historic/scenic character including preservation of historic bridges where practical					
- Preserving, enhancing surviving historic landscape, where practical.					
- Creating new landscape design consistent with Parkway's original design intent					

DRAFT



NEXT STEPS



Route 7/15 Norwalk - NEXT STEPS

- **PAC**
 - Refinement of Level 2 criteria (Winter 2019)
- **Continue historic property impact consultation**
 - Section 106 sub-committee (Winter 2019)
- **Landscape sub-committee follow up**
 - Strong overlap with Section 106 committee
 - We will continue with landscape discussion as part of the Section 106 committee and as project design moves forward



Route 7/15 Norwalk



Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #6

April 30, 2019

Meeting Summary

PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) MEETING #6

Meeting Summary

Date: April 30, 2019

Norwalk City Hall Community Room

Time: 6:30pm

Attendance

PAC Members	
David Waters	Building and Land Technology
Drew Berndlmaier	City of Norwalk
Mike Yeosock	City of Norwalk
Chris Wigren	Connecticut Historical Trust
JoAnn McGrath	Marcus Properties
Jo-Anne Horvath	None
Alan Kibbe	None
Joanne Ferrara	None
Ray Rauth	Sound Cyclists
Wes Haynes	Merritt Parkway Conservancy
Nancy Rosett	Norwalk Bike Walk Commission
Tod Bryant	Norwalk Preservation Trust
Peter Viteretto	Silvermine Community Association
Timothy Densky	Empire State Realty Trust, Inc.
Ariana Vera	Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG)
Connecticut Department of Transportation and FHWA Staff	
Tom Doyle	CTDOT
Andy Fesenmeyer	CTDOT
Emilie Holland	FHWA
Kurt Salmoiraghi	FHWA
Project Consultant Team	
Ken Livingston	Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.
Meghan Bard	Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.
Shawna Kitzman	Fitzgerlad & Halliday, Inc.
Marguerite Carnell	Archaeological and Historical Services, Inc.
John Eberle	Stantec
Gary Sorge	Stantec Consulting Services Inc.
Emily Valentino	Stantec Consulting Services Inc.
General Public	

1. Welcome

Andy Fesenmeyer of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), welcomed everyone to the 6th Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting for the Route 7/15 Norwalk Project. He noted that this meeting is going to focus on looking at videos and models of the four remaining alternatives.

2. Meeting Overview

Andy F. reviewed the meeting's agenda items:

- Introductions
- General Updates
- Review of PAC #5
- MPAC Meeting
- RDV Model
- Schedule Looking Forward
- Next Steps for PAC

3. Summary of PAC #5 and MPAC

After introductions, Andy F. reviewed status of project process. He explained that Level 1 screening is completed, winnowing the initial 28 alternatives down to the current four. In the previous meeting, PAC members were asked to

review the Level 1 screening matrix. Alternatives that met the Purpose and Need advanced to the next level of screening, while those that did not were filtered out.

Andy F. also stated that they had presented at a Merritt Parkway Advisory Committee meeting for the second time where they provided an update on the project status.

4. Schedule Forward

Andy reviewed the project schedule. Environmental assessment and impact evaluation are upcoming, followed by preliminary and final design and construction in 2024. Next steps for the PAC include the Section 106/Landscape Subcommittee Meeting on May 7, 2019, PAC Meeting #7- Level 2 Screening Workshop (early June) and continued alternative screening.

5. RDV Videos

John Eberle of Stantec introduced design visualization presented in the RDV model. He explained that the select videos and models show alternatives from different views and driving directions. He stressed that the models are not final designs but indicate critical design areas, spatial relationships, and topography. The models do not include landscaping elements or infrastructure details, both of which will be added to alternatives that advance.

John E. then went through several videos, explaining what they were showing and pointing out critical design areas. To help orient the PAC members, Meghan Bard indicated the point of view on the projected maps.

PAC members viewed videos of the following routes: Alt 21 NB 15, Alt 26 NB 15, Alt 21 SB 7, Alt 26 SB 7, Alt 21 SB 15 to SB7, and Alt 26 SB 15 to NB 7.

6. Break-Out Review of the RDV Model

PAC members then separated into two groups to explore the RDV model in-depth. Andy F. told PAC members that they would not be regrouping to wrap, and that people were welcome to stay as long as they wanted to view the models and watch videos that had not yet been shown.

Ken Livingston led one group, showing members the alternatives from different viewpoint with one group, while John E. showed the model to the second group. They explained how each alternative varied from existing conditions and from each other. A PAC member requested that when viewing different alternatives from each viewpoint, that they revert to the existing view, so it was clearer what the change would be.

A PAC member asked about the Norwalk River Valley Trail (NRVT). The NRVT was not included in the models based on discussions with the NRVT group, that the current alignment will proceed along the powerlines right of way, west of the Route 7 and proceed under Perry Avenue Bridge. There was also a question about the Merritt Parkway Trail, and Andy F. stated it was not part of the project area and why were trying not to impact it.

A PAC member commented that the Creeping Hemlock neighborhood experiences vehicle congestion during the morning commute. Andy F. agreed that was a problem and confirmed that the new design should address that issue.

A question was raised about Alternative 26 which adds signals to Route 7, and whether that alternative would result in speed limit changes. Emily Valentino said they would use traffic calming measures to show drivers they were going from an expressway to a signal and that the signals will be obvious and will be safer than the existing.

Peter Viteretto noted his preference for Alternative 26, which has the least amount of roadway and allows for more greenery or landscaping. He also requested to view the alternatives that are closest to existing conditions, noting that certain alternatives are "orders of magnitude" different from today's interchange. He suggested that Alternative 12A is very confusing, and the flyovers would be disorienting for a driver.

JoAnne McGrath requested to view how a driver would navigate from Merritt Parkway to Main Avenue. The group discussed the need for a structure such as rock cut or retaining wall at Main Avenue once realigned.

John E. reviewed bike facilities and the proposed 8' sidewalk.

John E. noted that while level of service is a factor in evaluating the alternatives, many factors are under consideration such as air and noise impacts. There are also many opportunities within each alternative. No alternative is a panacea.

Peter V. suggested that less signage is compatible with the historic Merritt Parkway. From a preservation standpoint, the design team must replace what is lost in character. He also asked the group to consider improving the experience along the river, supporting design decisions that would create a more joyful experience.

PAC members agreed that the models were helpful in understanding what the different alternatives were, and what the new routes would be and how they are different from the existing conditions.

PAC members were encouraged to leave comments on provided comment forms.

Comment form: The long ramps provide opportunities to merge onto the Parkway at unsafe speeds. We need traffic calming - less roads, more curves. W. Haynes, Merritt Parkway Conservancy

Follow up Action Item(s)

The foregoing is considered to be a true and accurate record of all items discussed. If any discrepancies or inconsistencies are noted, please contact the writer immediately.

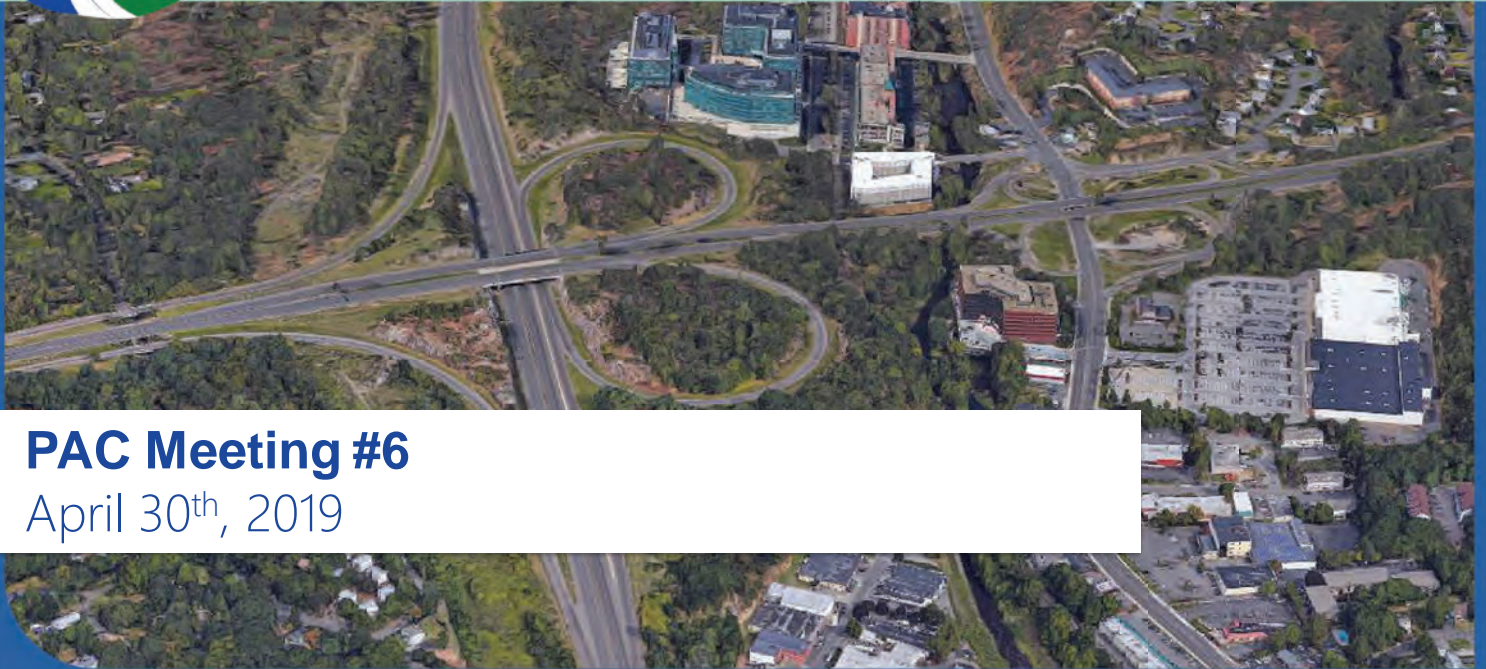
Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #6

April 30, 2019

Meeting Presentation



Route 7/15 NORWALK



PAC Meeting #6

April 30th, 2019



Route 7/15 NORWALK

PAC #6 - April 30, 2019
CTDOT State Project #102-358

AGENDA

- Introductions
- General Updates
 - Review of PAC #5
 - MPAC Meeting
- Schedule Looking Forward
- Next Steps for PAC
- 3D Model Review



GENERAL UPDATES



Route 7/15 NORWALK

PAC #6 - April 30, 2019
 CTDOT State Project #102-358

Alternative Screening: Level 1 Purpose and Need

- Reviewed the full 28 alternatives were reviewed during Level 1 screening

Criteria	NO-BUILD	ALT. 1	ALT. 2	ALT. 2A	ALT. 3	ALT. 4	ALT. 5	ALT. 6	ALT. 7A	ALT. 8	ALT. 9	ALT. 10	ALT. 11	ALT. 12	ALT. 12A	ALT. 13	ALT. 14	ALT. 15	ALT. 16	ALT. 17	ALT. 18	ALT. 19B	ALT. 20B	ALT. 21C	ALT. 21D	ALT. 22	ALT. 23	ALT. 24B	ALT. 25	ALT. 26	
Purpose & Need																															
Roadway System Linkage Linkage between Route 7 and Merritt Parkway																															
Mobility Improve mobility for all users (motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists) at project interchange areas*			Concept developed but refined as Alt. 2A so discarded																												
Safety Considerations Safety in vicinity of Interchanges 39 and 40**																															

Ability to Meet Purpose and Need	
Meets P&N	Green
Moderately Meets P&N	Yellow
Does Not Meet P&N	Black
More Analysis Needed	Grey

Criteria	How was the Ability to Meet Purpose and Need Met (Green) if	
Roadway System Linkage Linkage between Route 7 and Merritt Parkway	Connections are made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway	N/A. Connections are not made in all directions to/from Route 7 and Merritt Parkway
Mobility Improve mobility for all users (motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists) at project interchange areas*	Vehicular connections are provided between Main Avenue and Route 7 and all connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements are apparent.	Vehicular connections are provided between Main Avenue and Route 7 but not all connections are maintained between Merritt Parkway and Creeping Hemlock Drive. Local road network improvements may or may not be apparent.
Safety Considerations Safety in vicinity of Interchanges 39 and 40**	No apparent geometric deficiencies (e.g., inadequate distances, tight ramps) are identified.	Some apparent geometric deficiencies such as short weaving distances between ramps are maintained or adjacent on- and/or off-ramps are proposed
		Many apparent geometric deficiencies such as short weaving distances, inadequate acceleration/deceleration lanes, etc. are proposed or past assessments specifically denoted safety concerns.



Alternative Screening: Level 1 Purpose and Need

- Level 1 screening resulted in 4 alternatives that met Purpose and Need

Criteria	NO-BUILD	ALT. 12A	ALT. 20B	ALT. 21D	ALT. 26
Purpose & Need					
Roadway System Linkage Linkage between Route 7 and Merritt Parkway					
Mobility Improve mobility for all users (motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists) at project interchange areas*					
Safety Considerations Safety in vicinity of Interchanges 39 and 40**					



MPAC Meeting

- Presented for second time to the Merritt Parkway Advisory Committee
- Provide update on project status

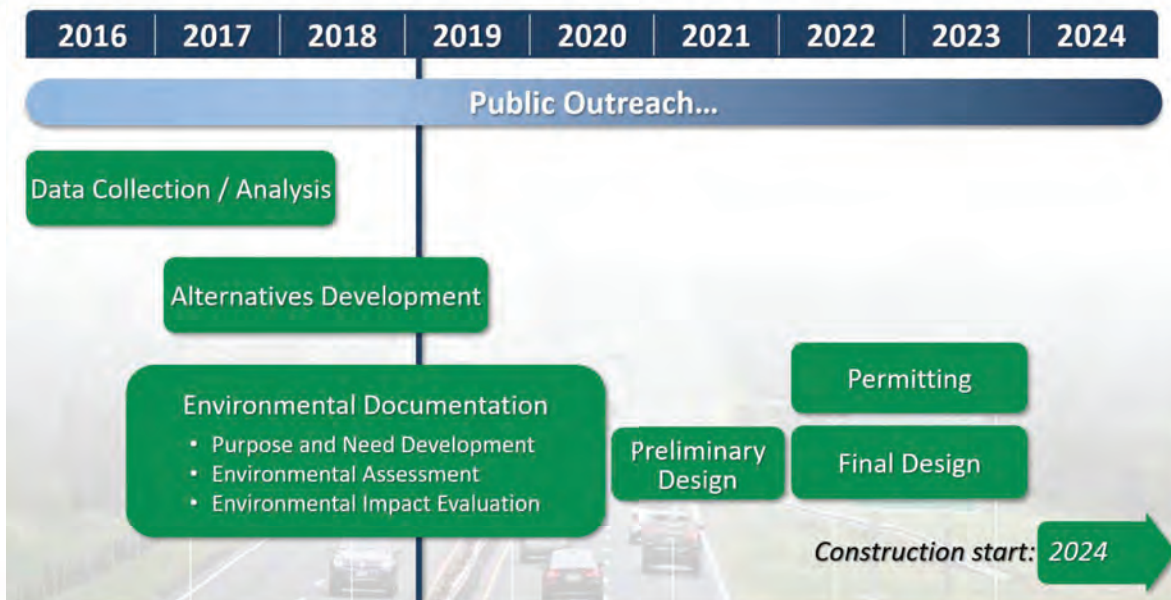


Schedule Looking Forward



Route 7/15 NORWALK - PROJECT SCHEDULE

PAC #6 - April 30, 2019
CTDOT State Project #102-358





Next Steps for PAC

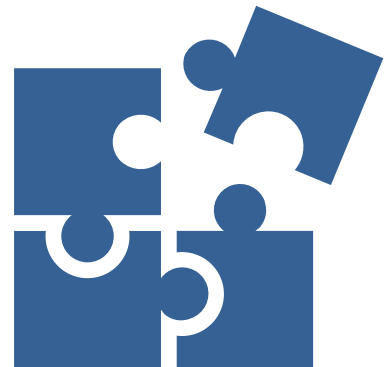


Route 7/15 NORWALK

PAC #6 - April 30, 2019
CTDOT State Project #102-358

Next Steps

- Section 106/Landscape Subcommittee Meeting- May 7th
- PAC Meeting #7- Level 2 Screening Workshop (early June)
- Continue alternative screening





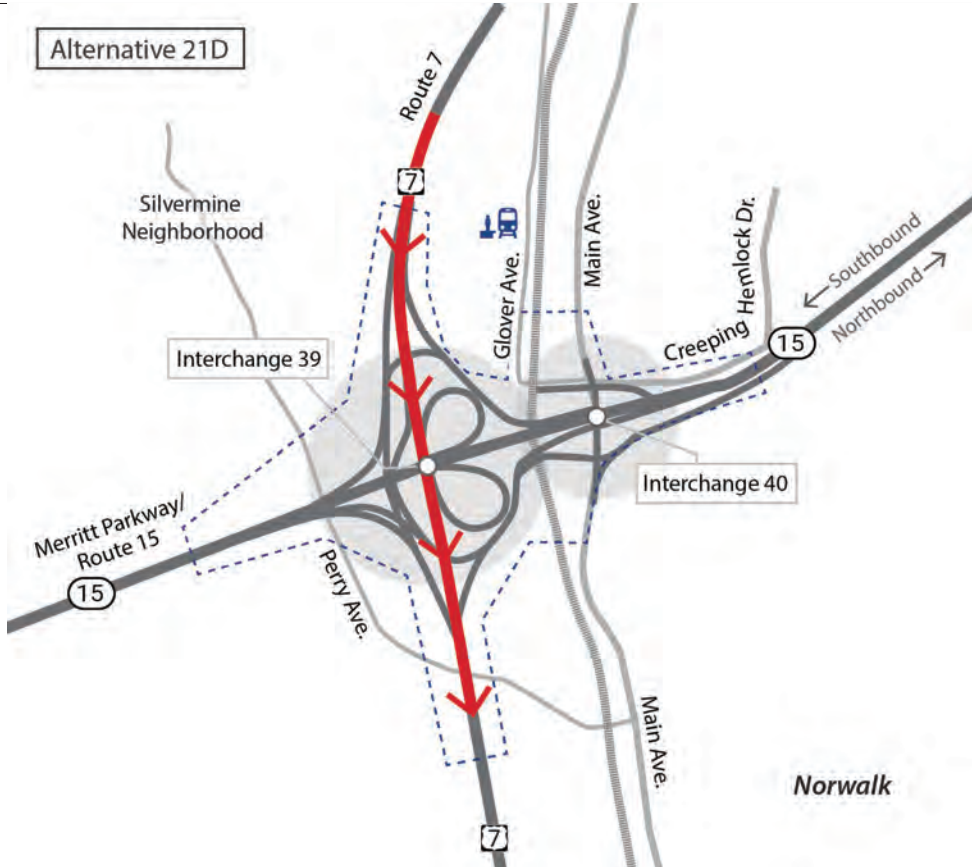
3D Model Review



Alternative 26



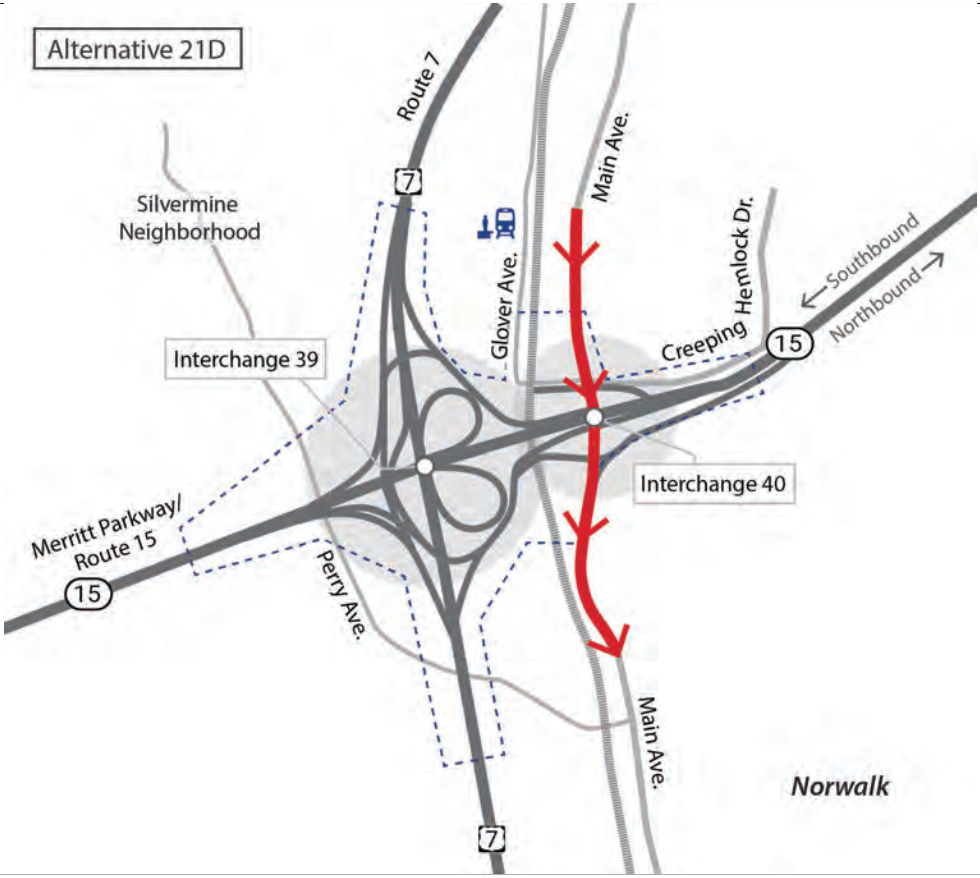
Alternative 21D



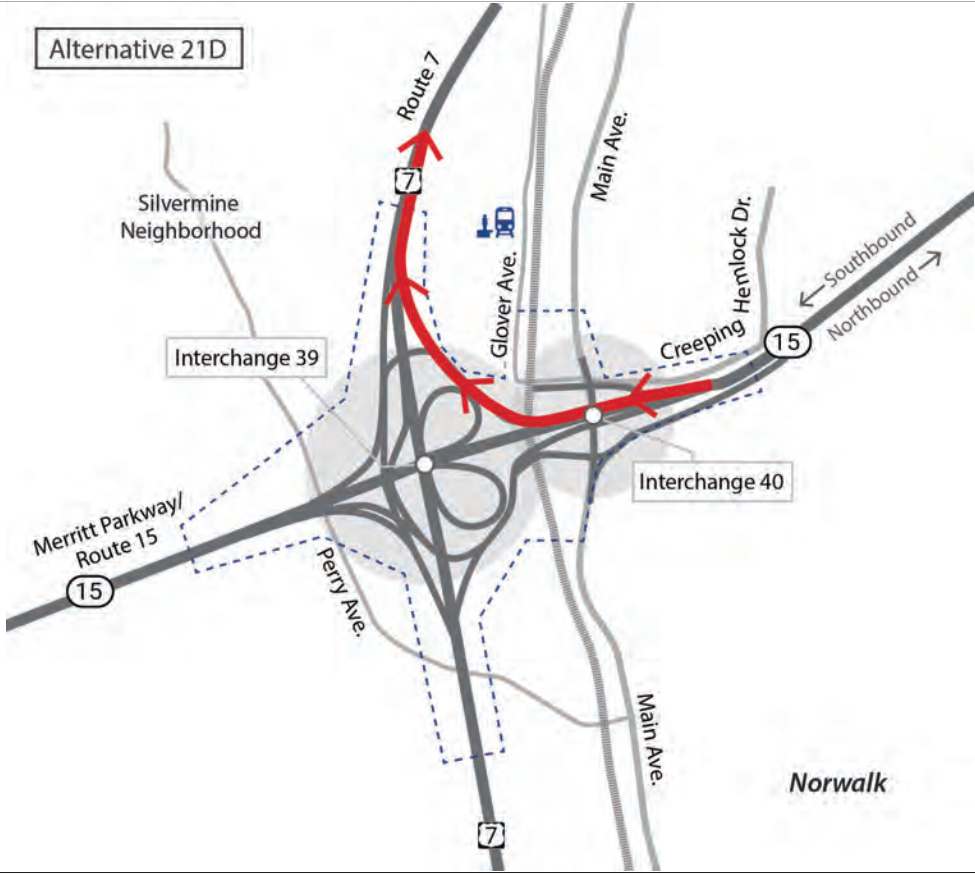
Alternative 26



Alternative 21D



Alternative 21D



Alternative 21D



Alternative 21D



Alternative 21D



Alternative 21D



Alternative 21D







Route 7/15 NORWALK

PAC #6 - April 30, 2019
CTDOT State Project #102-358

- [Alt 21 NB 15](#)
- [Alt 26 NB 15](#)
- [Alt 21 SB 7](#)
- [Alt 26 SB 7](#)
- [Alt 21 SB Main](#)
- [Alt 21 SB 15 to NB7](#)
- [Alt 21 SB 15 to SB7](#)
- [Alt 21 NB 7 to NB 15](#)
- [Alt 21 SB 7 to NB 15](#)
- [Alt 21 NB 15 to Main](#)
- [Alt 21 SB Main to SB 7](#)
- [Alt 26 SB 15 to NB 7](#)
- [Alt 26 NB 7 to NB 15](#)
- [Alt 20B SB 15 to SB 7](#)



THANK YOU!

Questions?



Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #7

June 20, 2019

Meeting Summary



PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) MEETING #7

Meeting Summary

Date: June 20, 2019

Merritt 7 - City Hall Community Room

Time: 6:30pm

Attendance

PAC Members	
Jim carter	Norwalk Valley Trail
JoAnn McGrath	Marcus Properties
Jo-Anne Horvath	Creeping Hemlock Neighborhood
Alan Kibbe	Norwalk Association of Silvermine Homeowners
Nancy Rosett	Norwalk Bike Walk Commission
Jeff Ram	Empire State Realty Trust, Inc.
Peter Viteretto	CT ASLA
Wes Haynes	Merritt Parkway Conservancy
Connecticut Department of Transportation and FHWA Staff	
Yolanda Antoniak	CTDOT
Andy Fesenmeyer	CTDOT
Project Consultant Team	
Marcy Mille	Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.
Paul Stanton	Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.
John Eberle	Stantec
Chris Mojica	Stantec
Gary Sorge	Stantec
General Public	

1. Welcome

Andy Fesenmeyer, of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), welcomed everyone to the 7th Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting for the Route 7/15 Norwalk Project. He stated that this meeting would be different from the previous meeting whereby the project team would be looking for considerable input from the PAC on the Level 2 Screening Criteria. The goal is to achieve a reasonable range of alternatives at the end of the meeting.

2. Meeting Overview

Andy F. reviewed the meeting's agenda items:

- Introductions



Route 7-15 Norwalk

- General Updates
 - Review of PAC #6
 - Section 106 Process
- Level 1 Screening
- Level 2 Screening
- Schedule / Next Steps

3. General Updates

After introductions, Andy F. provided updates on two recent meetings. First, he provided a recap of PAC Meeting #6. He stated that the group viewed model videos and RDV model of the remaining alternatives. The project team emailed the PAC the virtual tour videos on June 10, 2019. In addition, Andy F. provided a recap of the Section 106 May 2019 meeting, noting that the report is being revised and will be sent to the PAC once it is complete.

4. Level 1 Screening

John Eberle, of Stantec Consulting Services Incorporated, reviewed the Level 1 Screening. He stated that 28 alternatives were assessed against the Purpose and Need. Four alternatives met the Purpose and Need: 12A, 20B, 21D, 26, and the No Build Alternative.

5. Level 2 Screening

John E. next introduced the Level 2 Screening process. He stated that the four alternatives would start on a clean slate and be assessed against new Level 2 Screening criteria. The first goal of this meeting is to review, identify, and discuss the Level 2 Screening criteria. The goal of the Level 2 Screening is not to pick a preferred alternate, but rather to get to a reasonable range of alternatives to assess. A reasonable range of alternatives is typically two alternatives, perhaps three. The PAC would first discuss the criteria and then the metrics. If time allows, the PAC will review all four alternatives against the criteria and metrics.

John E. discussed how the project team has revisited the criteria from 2008 to create the Level 2 Screening criteria. He noted that the projected identified 2008 criteria were filtered out if they:

- Were previously screened in Level 1
- Are to be covered in the EA/EIE, and
- Are likely to be the same for each alternative.

Four remaining criteria included neighborhood impacts, tree clearing, natural barriers, and reduction to project scope. John E. suggested that these four be carried forward into the Level 2 Screening analysis.

Criteria Review

Criterion A: Compatible with Regional Initiatives

John E. stated that this criterion considers the region's desires and initiatives for travel between municipalities. It is a binary (i.e. yes or no answer) metric. Nancy Rosett, of Norwalk Bike Walk Commission, asked if the project team could better describe or provide an example of a regional initiative. Andy F. responded that, from a regional perspective, there is desire for a corridor to be free-flow. Alternatives should aim to serve travelers moving through the region, not stopping at local destinations.

Alan Kibbe questioned if these connections should be an alternative to I-95 during a crash or incident. Andy F. commented that it should.

An attendee asked if WestCOG was represented at the meeting and if they are planning to prioritize the regional connectivity of Route 7. John E. answered that a representative from WestCOG was not in attendance but the project team and PAC could ask them about their regional perspective and any official stance on what is a "regional" initiative. He added this is a broad assessment and it is important to consider this holistically.

Criterion B: Construction Costs

John E. stated that this criterion considers the magnitude of construction costs of each alternative. the Nancy R. asked why there was no middle metric. Andy F. answered that the project team has not completed detailed cost estimates at this time.

Criterion C: Maintenance Costs

John E. stated that this criterion considers the magnitude of maintenance costs of each alternative. Peter Viteretto, of Silvermine Community Association, and others questioned whether landscape maintenance, sign



Route 7-15 Norwalk

maintenance, and guardrail maintenance costs are included in this criterion. John E. stated that they are not included at this time because they likely would not be deciding factors. For the same reason, stormwater is not included in this Level 2 Screening. Gary Sorge, of Stantec, added that many of these factors are design factors, planned much later in the engineering and design process. These alternatives are very conceptual now.

An attendee questioned whether the concrete barrier would be added through Exits 39 and 40 as part of the current work, and whether these barriers would be impacted as part of this project. Andy F. stated that he did not know, but he would find out from others at CTDOT.

Criterion D: Integrating Project Roadways into Environment / Neighborhood Context

John E. stated that this item considers the simplicity / compactness of each alternative. Alan K. commented that this criterion mirrors construction costs. John E. agreed (in this case) but added that it is important to separate this item because there could be situations where they are different.

There was discussion whether simple and compact alternatives are more likely to be given the highest ranking (green). John E. acknowledged that there are negative connotations with larger, more complex projects. Residents and travelers are more aware (e.g. seeing, hearing) of these larger projects. An attendee asked whether views would be considered in this criterion. Paul Stanton, of Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc. stated that viewsheds will be considered in the environmental analysis. Andy F. reiterated that the Level 2 Screening should be a simple, overview analysis.

Gary S. added that perhaps the highest ranking for any build alternative may be yellow in this category. John E. stated that the PAC may want to consider and discuss this criterion and metrics a bit more at the next meeting.

Criterion E: Elevated Ramps

John E. stated that the construction of elevated ramps was a major issue in 2008. Thus, the existence of elevated ramps in any alternative should be considered a fatal flaw. An attendee questioned whether the PAC and project team could eliminate 12A at this time, because it has this fatal flaw. John E. stated that this alternative would likely be eliminated as part of the Level 2 Screening, but the PAC and project team needed to go through the process.

Criterion F: Potential Impacts to the Norwalk River

John E. stated that this criterion considers the potential impact or bridges that will be constructed over the Norwalk River. Peter V. asked if stormwater impacts would be considered as part of this criterion. John E. answered that they are not considered in the Level 2 Screening because the design (much of which is not completed yet) can greatly minimize stormwater impacts.

Criterion G: Proximity of New Ramps / Roadways to Neighborhoods

Andy F. stated that the project team used to only consider the impacts to the Silvermine neighborhood. Now, the project team is looking at impacts to three quadrants around the intersection. When asked, Andy F. stated that the project team will have the model available to show this to the PAC and public.

Criterion H: Construction Duration / Impacts to Public

John E. stated that this criterion considers the magnitude of construction length and impacts to the public of each alternative. There were no comments from the PAC on this criterion.

Criterion I: Direct Archaeological Resources Impacts

John E. stated that this criterion is included because it is a differentiator. The Section 106 Report was recently sent to the PAC. There were no comments from the PAC on this criterion.

6. General Comments

Peter V asked if the PAC could have the general volumes of linear footage of roadway. John E. answered that the project team will have quantitative information and will provide this information along with the models. Gary S. added that this data will also include areas of greenspace.

7. Schedule/Next Steps

Andy F. stated that the project team would like to host one more PAC meeting to review outstanding comments or discussion on the evaluation criteria. He also said that PAC would be tasked with rating the alternatives



Route 7-15 Norwalk

against the criteria. Finally, the project team would present the upcoming environmental documentation process and schedule at that meeting. The project team would like to host this meeting in mid-July and would contact the PAC about availability on a select number of dates.

John E. reiterated that this process's purpose is not to get to a preferred alternative but rather to a reasonable range of alternative which can then be assessed as part of the National Environmental Policy Act / Connecticut Environmental Policy Act processes.

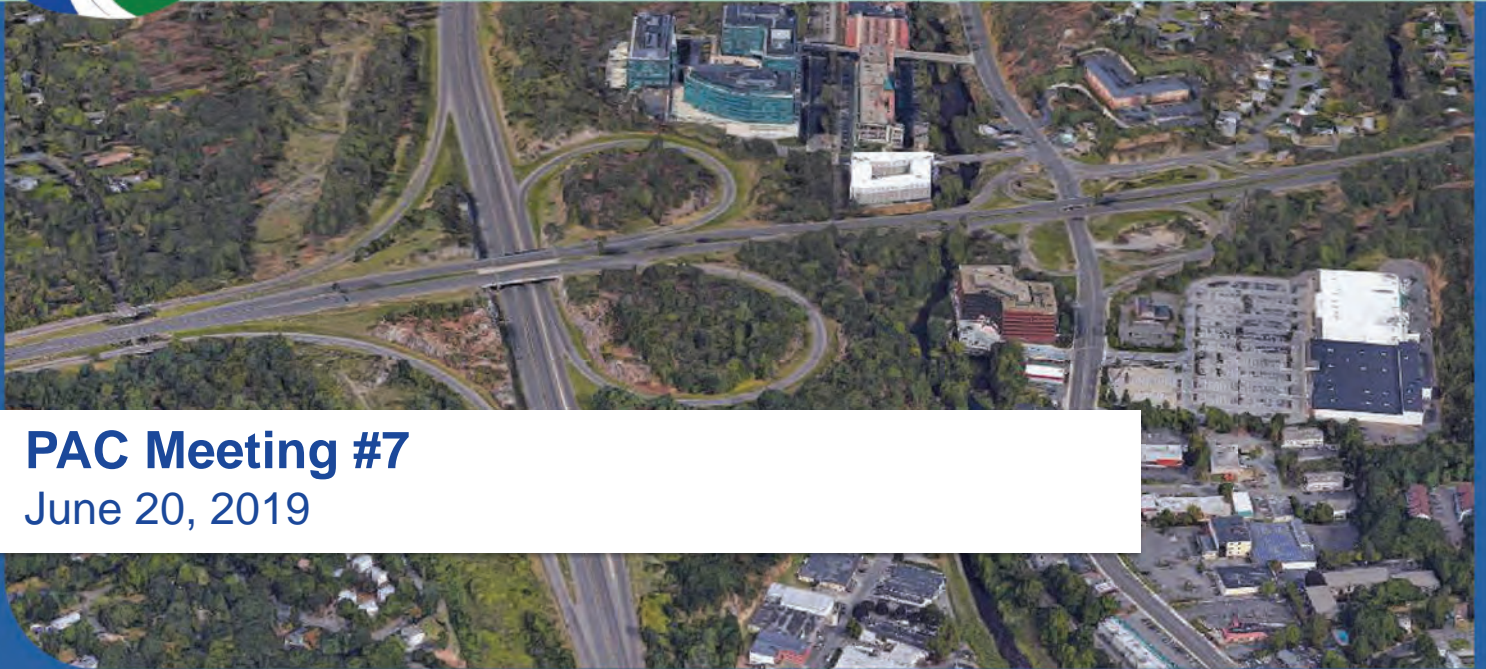
Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #7

June 20, 2019

Meeting Presentation



Route 7/15 NORWALK



PAC Meeting #7 June 20, 2019



Route 7/15 NORWALK

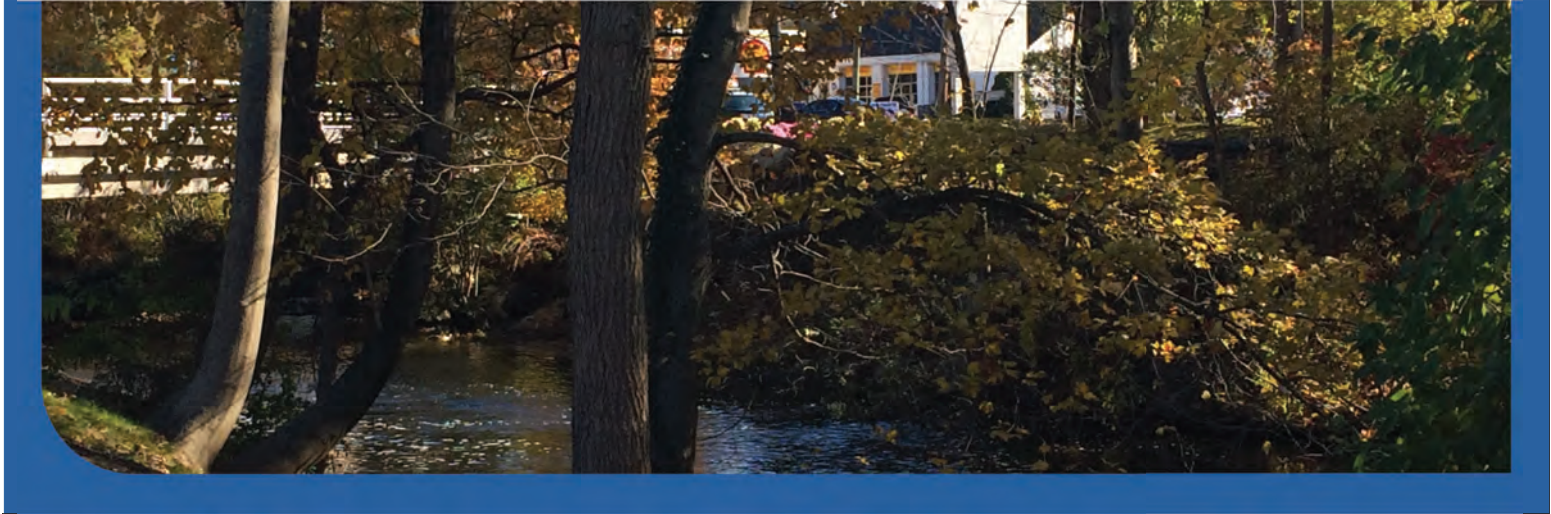
PAC #7 – June 20, 2019
CTDOT State Project #102-358

AGENDA

1. Introductions
2. General Updates
 - Review of PAC #6
 - Section 106 Process
3. Level 1 Screening
4. Level 2 Screening
5. Schedule / Next Steps



General Updates



Route 7/15 NORWALK

PAC #7 – June 20, 2019
CTDOT State Project #102-358

Review of PAC #6

- Viewed videos and RDV model of remaining alternatives

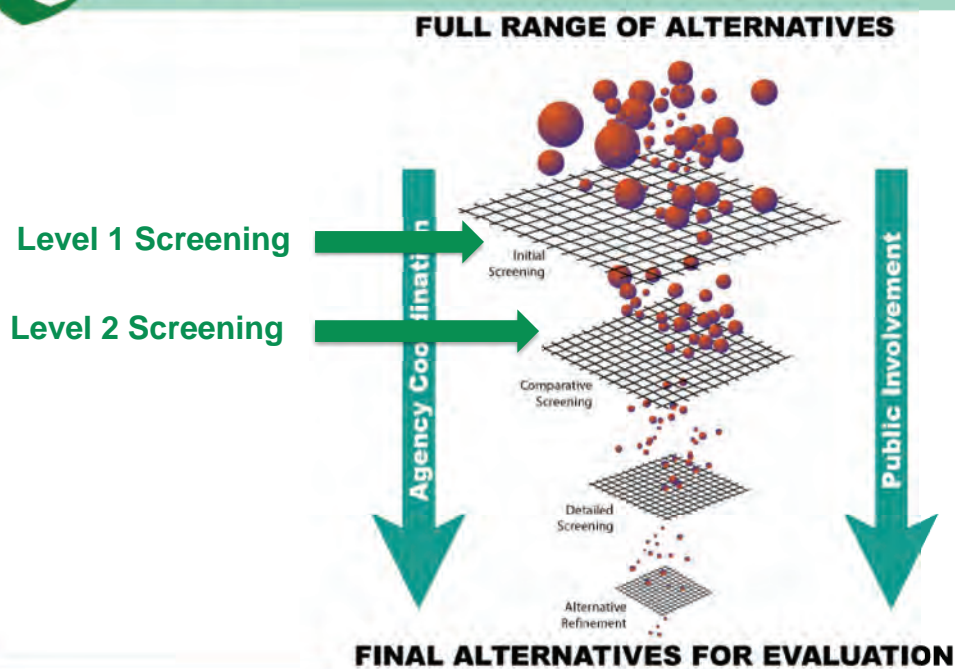




Section 106 Process

Consulting Parties meeting (May 2019):

- Provided overview of above-ground cultural resources
- Presented overview of archaeological resources
- Modified Public Report Phase I and II Cultural Resource Surveys based on feedback
- Revised report to be posted on project website





Level 1 Screening



Route 7/15 NORWALK

PAC #7 – June 20, 2019
CTDOT State Project #102-358

Level 1 Screening

- Analyzed alternatives against the Purpose and Need
- Screened out alternatives that did not meet the Purpose and Need
- Four alternatives remain: 12A, 20B, 21D, and 26



Alternative Screening: Level 1 Purpose and Need

Four alternatives met Purpose and Need

Purpose and Need Criteria	NO-BUILD	ALT. 12A	ALT. 20B	ALT. 21D	ALT. 26
Roadway System Linkage Linkage between Route 7 and Merritt Parkway					
Mobility Improve mobility for all users (motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists) at project interchange areas*					
Safety Considerations Safety in vicinity of Interchanges 39 and 40**					



Level 2 Screening





Route 7/15 NORWALK

Purpose

- Begin with clean slate (all four alternatives are equal)
- Review against additional criteria beyond Purpose and Need
- Identify a **reasonable range** of alternatives to assess in the Environmental Document (EA / EIE)



Route 7/15 NORWALK

Where Have We Been?

- 2008 alternative review process
- Outside of formal environmental documentation
- Ranked issues / criteria
- Mix of topics

Issue Rank	Issue From Survey	Alternate #12A	Alternate Cloverleaf W/ D2	Alternate #21
1	Improve Safety and Reduce Accidents	++	+	+++
2	Impact to Neighborhoods	Some	Most	Least
3	Impact to Wetlands	Most	Least	Least
4	Tree Clearing	Some	Most	Least
5	Impact to Historic Character/Aesthetic Integrity of Parkway	Most	Least	Some
5a	Number of Historic Structures Impacted	4	4	3
6	Noise Impact to Neighborhood	Some	Most	Least
7	Impact to Historic character of Silvermine Area	Some	Most	Least
8	Ability to Maintain Natural Barriers Between Highways and Neighborhoods/Landscaping	Yes	No	Yes
9	Impact to Home Values	?	?	?
10	Introduce Weave on Parkway	No	Yes	No
11	Advance Project to Construction	++	+	+
12	Reduce Congestion	++	+	+++
13	Ability to Construct Glover Ave & Creeping Hemlock First	Yes	Yes	Yes
14	Reduce Project Scope	No	No	No
15	Flooding/Drainage Concerns Due to Less Trees	Some	Most	Least
16	Ability to Accommodate Bicycles/Pedestrians	Yes	Yes	Yes
17	Widening of Glover Ave	Yes	Yes	Yes
18	Keep Location of Ramps in the Commercial/Industrial area of Main Ave.	Yes	Yes	Yes
19	Impact to the Norwalk River	Most	Least	Some
20	Ability to Include Aesthetic Treatment To New Structures	Yes	Yes	Yes



Route 7/15 NORWALK

More on the Screening Criteria

- Focus on issues
- Which ones still have value?
- Which ones will be reviewed in the EA / EIE?

<u>Issue From Survey</u>
Improve Safety and Reduce Accidents
Impact to Neighborhoods
Impact to Wetlands
Tree Clearing
Impact to Historic Character/Aesthetic Integrity of Parkway
Number of Historic Structures Impacted
Noise Impacts to Neighborhood
Impact to Historic Character of Silvermine Area
Ability to Maintain Natural Barriers Between Highways and Neighborhoods/Landscaping
Impact to Home Values
Introduce Weave on Parkway
Advance Project to Construction
Reduce Congestion
Ability to Construct Glover Ave & Creeping Hemlock First
Reduce Project Scope
Flooding/Drainage Concerns Due to Less Trees
Ability to Accommodate Bicycles/Pedestrians
Widening of Glover Ave
Keep Location of Ramps in Commercial/Industrial area of Main Ave
Impact to Norwalk River
Ability to include Aesthetic Treatment to New Structures



Route 7/15 NORWALK

Addressed in Level 1 Screening (Purpose and Need)

<u>Issue From Survey</u>
Improve Safety and Reduce Accidents
Impact to Neighborhoods
Impact to Wetlands
Tree Clearing
Impact to Historic Character/Aesthetic Integrity of Parkway
Number of Historic Structures Impacted
Noise Impacts to Neighborhood
Impact to Historic Character of Silvermine Area
Ability to Maintain Natural Barriers Between Highways and Neighborhoods/Landscaping
Impact to Home Values
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Advance Project to Construction
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Ability to Accommodate Bicycles/Pedestrians
Widening of Glover Ave
Keep Location of Ramps in Commercial/Industrial area of Main Ave
Impact to Norwalk River
Ability to include Aesthetic Treatment to New Structures



Route 7/15 NORWALK

**Will be Assessed in
the Environmental
Document**

Issue From Survey
Improve Safety and Reduce Accidents
Impact to Neighborhoods
Impact to Wetlands
Tree Clearing
Impact to Historic Character/Aesthetic Integrity of Parkway
Number of Historic Structures Impacted
Noise Impacts to Neighborhood
Impact to Historic Character of Silvermine Area
Ability to Maintain Natural Barriers Between Highways and Neighborhoods/Landscaping
Impact to Home Values
Introduce Weave on Parkway
Advance Project to Construction
Reduce Congestion
Ability to Construct Glover Ave & Creeping Hemlock First
Reduce Project Scope
Flooding/Drainage Concerns Due to Less Trees
Ability to Accommodate Bicycles/Pedestrians
Widening of Glover Ave
Keep Location of Ramps in Commercial/Industrial area of Main Ave
Impact to Norwalk River
Ability to include Aesthetic Treatment to New Structures



Route 7/15 NORWALK

**Is the Same for Each
Alternative**

Issue From Survey
Improve Safety and Reduce Accidents
Impact to Neighborhoods
Impact to Wetlands
Tree Clearing
Impact to Historic Character/Aesthetic Integrity of Parkway
Number of Historic Structures Impacted
Noise Impacts to Neighborhood
Impact to Historic Character of Silvermine Area
Ability to Maintain Natural Barriers Between Highways and Neighborhoods/Landscaping
Impact to Home Values
Introduce Weave on Parkway
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Widening of Glover Ave
Keep Location of Ramps in Commercial/Industrial area of Main Ave
Impact to Norwalk River
Ability to include Aesthetic Treatment to New Structures



Route 7/15 NORWALK

Remaining Criteria

- Impact to neighborhoods
- Tree clearing
- Ability to maintain natural barriers between highway and neighborhoods / landscaping
- Reduce project scope

Issue From Survey
Improve Safety and Reduce Accidents
Impact to Neighborhoods
Impact to Wetlands
Tree Clearing
Impact to Historic Character/Aesthetic Integrity of Parkway
Number of Historic Structures Impacted
Noise Impacts to Neighborhood
Impact to Historic Character of Silvermine Area
Ability to Maintain Natural Barriers Between Highways and Neighborhoods/Landscaping
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Widening of Glover Ave
Keep Location of Ramps in Commercial/Industrial area of Main Ave
Impact to Norwalk River
Ability to include Aesthetic Treatment to New Structures



Route 7/15 NORWALK

Level 2 Screening Criteria

Criteria	NO BUILD	ALT 12A	ALT 20B	ALT21D	ALT 26
Purpose & Need (Level 1 Screening Results)					
Roadway System Linkage					
Linkage between Route 7 and Merritt Parkway					
Mobility					
Improve mobility for all users (motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists) at project interchange areas					
Safety Considerations					
Safety in vicinity of Interchanges 39 and 40					
Level 2 Screening Criteria					
Compatible with Regional Initiatives					
Construction Costs					
Maintenance Costs					
Integrating Project Roadways into Environment/Neighborhood Context					
Elevated Ramps					
Potential Impacts to Norwalk River					
Proximity of New Ramps/Roadways to Neighborhoods					
Construction Duration/Impacts to Public					
Direct Archaeological Resources Impacts					



Level 2 Screening Criteria

Criteria	Alt 12A	Alt 20B	Alt 21D	Alt 26
A) Compatible with Regional Initiatives				
B) Construction Costs				
C) Maintenance Costs				
D) Integrating Project Roadways into Environment / Neighborhood Context				
E) Elevated Ramps				
F) Potential Impacts to Norwalk River				
G) Proximity of New Ramps / Roadways to Neighborhoods				
H) Construction Duration / Impacts to Public				
I) Direct Archaeological Resources Impacts				



Level 2 Screening Criteria and Evaluation

- For each of the four alternatives, the nine criteria are measured to determine if each one:
 - Meets goal
 - Moderately meets goal
 - Does not sufficiently meet goals
 - Has a fatal flaw

Criterion	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw



Criterion A Evaluation

Criterion	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
A) Compatible with Regional Initiatives				



Criterion A Evaluation

Criterion	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
A) Compatible with Regional Initiatives	Traffic operations are free flow in nature optimizing traffic flow through corridor		Traffic operations are controlled by traffic signals creating some delay in traffic flow through corridor	



Criterion B Evaluation

Criterion	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
B) Construction Costs				



Criterion B Evaluation

Criterion	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
B) Construction Costs	Significantly lower construction costs relative to other alternatives		Significantly higher construction costs relative to other alternatives	



Criterion C Evaluation

Criterion	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
C) Maintenance Costs				



Criterion C Evaluation

Criterion	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
C) Maintenance Costs	Least number of bridges, bridge lengths and roadway miles to be maintained	Moderate number of bridges, bridge lengths and roadway miles to be maintained	Greatest number of bridges, bridge lengths and roadway miles to be maintained	



Criterion D Evaluation

Criterion	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
D) Integrating Project Roadways into Environment / Neighborhood Context				



Criterion D Evaluation

Criterion	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
D) Integrating Project Roadways into Environment / Neighborhood Context	No new ramps / roadways in proximity to Merritt Parkway	Simplified and compact interchange footprint as compared to other alternatives	Complex and more extensive interchange footprint as compared to other alternatives	



Criterion E Evaluation

Criterion	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
E) Elevated Ramps				



Criterion E Evaluation

Criterion	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
E) Elevated Ramps	Design includes no ramps / roadways elevated higher than the Merritt Parkway			Design includes new ramps / roadways elevated higher than the Merritt Parkway



Criterion F Evaluation

Criterion	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
F) Potential Impacts to Norwalk River				



Criterion F Evaluation

Criterion	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
F) Potential Impacts to Norwalk River	No Norwalk River crossings required	Some anticipated Norwalk River crossings required	Most anticipated Norwalk River crossings required	



Criterion G Evaluation

Criterion	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
G) Proximity of New Ramps / Roadways to Neighborhoods				



Criterion G Evaluation

Criterion	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
G) Proximity of New Ramps / Roadways to Neighborhoods	Least neighborhood quadrants with new ramps or roadways extending beyond existing footprint of ramps / roadways toward neighborhood areas	Some neighborhood quadrants with new ramps or roadways extending beyond existing footprint of ramps / roadways toward neighborhood areas	Most neighborhood quadrants with new ramps or roadways extending beyond existing footprint of ramps / roadways toward neighborhood areas	



Criterion H Evaluation

Criterion	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
H) Construction Duration / Impacts to Public				



Criterion H Evaluation

Criterion	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
H) Construction Duration / Impacts to Public	Minimal anticipated construction duration/impacts compared to other alternatives based on roadway miles and new bridges required to construct	Moderate anticipated construction duration/impacts compared to other alternatives based on roadway miles and new bridges required to construct	Greatest anticipated construction duration/impacts compared to other alternatives based on roadway miles and new bridges required to construct	



Criterion I Evaluation

Criterion	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
I) Direct Archaeological Resources Impacts				



Criterion I Evaluation

Criterion	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
I) Direct Archaeological Resources Impacts	No impacts	Potential impacts	Likely impacts	



Complete Level 2 Screening Evaluation

Criteria	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
Compatible with Regional Initiatives	Traffic operations are free flow in nature optimizing traffic flow through corridor		Traffic operations are controlled by traffic signals creating some delay in traffic flow through corridor	
Construction Costs	Significantly lower construction costs relative to other alternatives		Significantly higher construction costs relative to other alternatives	
Maintenance Costs	Least number of bridges, bridge lengths and roadway miles to be maintained	Moderate number of bridges, bridge lengths and roadway miles to be maintained	Greatest number of bridges, bridge lengths and roadway miles to be maintained	
Integrating Project Roadways into Environment / Neighborhood Context	No new ramps/roadways in proximity to Merritt Parkway	Simplified and compact interchange footprint as compared to other alternatives	Complex and more extensive interchange footprint as compared to other alternatives	



Complete Level 2 Screening Evaluation

Criteria	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
Elevated Ramps	Design includes no ramps/roadways elevated higher than the Merritt Parkway			Design includes new ramps/roadways elevated higher than the Merritt Parkway
Potential Impacts to Norwalk River	No Norwalk River crossings required	Some anticipated Norwalk River crossings required	Most anticipated Norwalk River crossings required	
Proximity of New Ramps / Roadways to Neighborhoods	Least neighborhood quadrants with new ramps or roadways extending beyond existing footprint of ramps/roadways toward neighborhood areas	Some neighborhood quadrants with new ramps or roadways extending beyond existing footprint of ramps/roadways toward neighborhood areas	Most neighborhood quadrants with new ramps or roadways extending beyond existing footprint of ramps/roadways toward neighborhood areas	
Construction Duration / Impacts to Public	Minimal anticipated construction duration/impacts compared to other alternatives based on roadway miles and new bridges required to construct	Moderate anticipated construction duration/impacts compared to other alternatives based on roadway miles and new bridges required to construct	Greatest anticipated construction duration/impacts compared to other alternatives based on roadway miles and new bridges required to construct	
Direct Archaeological Resources Impacts	No impacts	Potential Impacts	Likely impacts	



Route 7/15 NORWALK



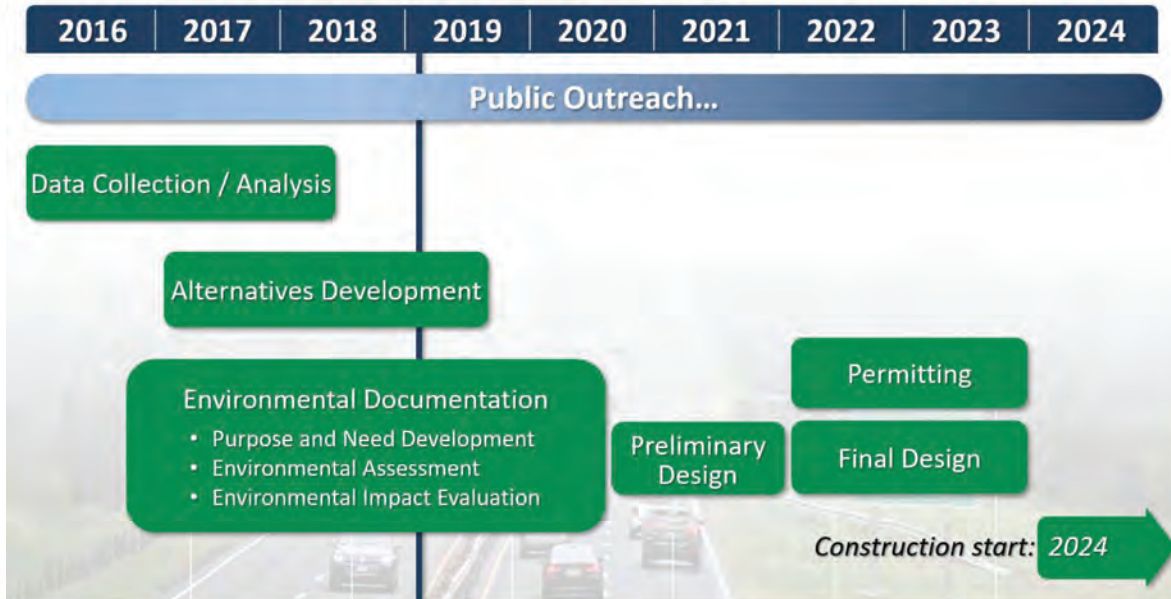
Schedule / Next Steps





Route 7/15 NORWALK

PAC #7 – June 20, 2019
CTDOT State Project #102-358

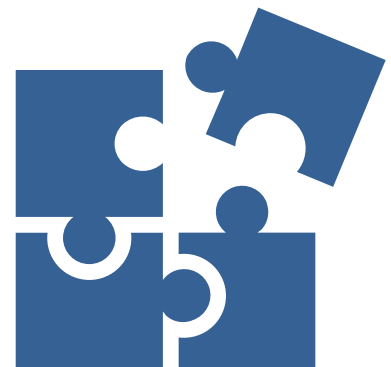


Route 7/15 NORWALK

PAC #7 – June 20, 2019
CTDOT State Project #102-358

Next Steps

- Host PAC # 8 in Summer 2019
 - Conduct Level 2 Screening exercise
 - Obtain reasonable range of alternatives
 - Discuss environmental documentation process
- Conduct environmental review process and documentation (EA, CIE)





THANK YOU!

Questions?



Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #8

July 11, 2019

Meeting Summary



PROJECT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) MEETING #8

Meeting Summary

Date: July 11, 2019

Merritt 7 - City Hall Community Room

Time: 6:30pm

Attendance

PAC Members	
David Waters	Building and Land Technology
Drew Berndmaier	City of Norwalk
Mike Yeosock	City of Norwalk
Timothy Densky	Empire State Realty Trust
JoAnn McGrath	Marcus Properties
Jo-Anne Horvath	Creeping Hemlock Neighborhood
Alan Kibbe	Norwalk Association of Silvermine Homeowners
Nancy Rosett	Norwalk Bike Walk Commission
Tod Bryant	Norwalk Preservation Trust
Peter Viteretto	CT ASLA
Ariana Vera	Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WestCOG)
Wes Haynes	Merritt Parkway Conservancy
Connecticut Department of Transportation and FHWA Staff	
Yolanda Antoniak	CTDOT
Andy Fesenmeyer	CTDOT
Michael Calabrese	CTDOT
Emilie Holland	FHWA
Project Consultant Team	
Ken Livingston	Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.
Meghan Bard	Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.
Paul Stanton	Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc.
John Eberle	Stantec
Gary Sorge	Stantec
General Public	



Route 7-15 Norwalk

1. Welcome

Andy Fesenmeyer, of the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), welcomed everyone to the 8th Project Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting for the Route 7/15 Norwalk Project. He said the meeting would focus on getting to a reasonable number of alternatives to take into the environmental documentation process.

2. Meeting Overview

Andy F. reviewed the meeting's agenda items:

1. Introductions
2. Review of PAC #7
3. Level 2 Screening Exercise
4. Environmental Documentation Process
5. Next Steps
6. Schedule

3. Review of PAC #7

John Eberle, of Stantec, reviewed the PAC #7 meeting, discussing the Level 1 screening, as well as the Level 2 screening and evaluation criteria that had been established in the previous meeting. John E. discussed the objective of the Level 2 screening exercise, reiterating that the goal is not to pick a preferred alternative, but rather to get to a reasonable number of alternatives for analysis in the environmental document.

4. Level 2 Screening Exercise

John E. showed the Level 2 screening criteria that was discussed during the PAC #7 meeting. A PAC member asked where noise and air quality are on the screening matrix, and John E. stated that they are not part of this level of screening, noting that those and other criteria will be studied in detail in the environmental document. John E. said that the PAC will go through each of the Level 2 Screening criteria individually, grading with black (Fatal Flaw), red (Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal), yellow (Moderately Meets Goal), or green (Meets Goal). A blank screening matrix was shown on a board at the front of the room, and Paul S. graded each alternative on the board based on the discussions that ensued.

1. Compatible with Regional Initiatives: Regional initiatives were defined as keeping the interchange between Route 7 and the Merritt Parkway free flow. Alt 26 and Alt 20B were both graded red, and 12A and 21D were graded green.

2. Construction Costs: John E. presented data on the number and length of bridges, ramp lengths and road miles to show that some alternatives would be more expensive than others. Alt 12A was determined to be the alternative with the highest construction costs, so was graded red. Alt 20B and Alt 21D were grouped together as being less expensive than 12A but more expensive than 26, so were graded yellow. Alt 26 has the lowest number of bridges, bridge and ramp lengths and was graded green.

3. Maintenance Costs: John E. presented the same data as for construction costs, as they expect maintenance costs to be similarly proportionate. Alt 12A was graded red, Alt 20B and Alt 21D were graded yellow, and Alt 26 was graded green.

4. Integrating Project Roadways into Environment / Neighborhood Context: Meets Goal was established as "No new ramps / roadways in proximity to Merritt Parkway," and as all alternatives will have new ramps, none would be graded green. The criteria would then focus on the footprint and compactness of the alternatives. Alt 12A, Alt 20B, and Alt 21D all have large footprints and were graded red, while Alt 26 has a more compact footprint and was graded yellow.



Route 7-15 Norwalk

5. Elevated Ramps: Elevated ramps were determined to be a fatal flaw. Alt 12A features an elevated ramp and therefore was graded black. Alt 20B, Alt 21D, and Alt 26 were all graded green as they do not include elevated ramps. John E. graphically demonstrated ramp heights for each alternative in relation to the Merritt Parkway.

6. Potential Impacts on Norwalk River: Meets goal was set as “No Norwalk River crossings,” and all alternatives feature a crossing of the river, so none were graded green. Alt 26 was graded yellow, as it has the fewest river crossings, while Alt 12A, Alt 20B and Alt 21D were all graded red, for having the most river crossings.

7. Proximity of New Ramps / Roadways to Neighborhoods: Alt 26 was graded green as it was determined to impact the least number of neighborhood quadrants, Alt 12A and Alt 21D were both graded yellow as they impacted some neighborhoods, and Alt 20B was graded red because it impacts the most neighborhoods. Peter V. pointed out that new roads for 20B would bring the Parkway closer to the power lines, which would impact landscape views from the Merritt Parkway. One PAC member asked how neighborhood impacts are determined, including air, traffic and noise, and John E. said those will all be assessed in the environmental documentation process.

8. Anticipated Impacts / Effects to NRHP-Eligible Sites: Meets goal was determined to be no impacts, which none of the alternatives met. Moderately meets goal allows for potential impacts, while does not meet goal means likely impacts. Alt 21A, Alt 20B and Alt 21D were all graded yellow and Alt 26 was graded green.

After a short break, John E. presented the completed matrix to the PAC. He asked if the PAC was comfortable eliminating Alt 12A because it has a fatal flaw (i.e. elevated ramps). The PAC members said they were ready to remove Alt 12A from consideration.

Next, John E. asked if the PAC felt Alt 26 should be moved on for a full review, and the PAC members said it should.

Pointing out that 21D had fewer red and more green grades than 20B, John E. asked if the PAC was comfortable removing 20B from consideration and moving 21D to full review. Some PAC members expressed concerns about eliminating 20B because it seems like a compromise solution between 21D and 26, as it is mostly free flowing, featuring only two signals. Andy F. pointed out that 20B was eliminated from consideration in the original study in the 1990's because it is not free flow. There followed some discussion about the necessity of Level 3 screening, and whether PAC members would be comfortable with the idea of 21D being eliminated. One PAC member said they would have a problem with 21D not moving on to a full review, as it had been the consensus alternative in 2008. Andy F suggested tabling the decision temporarily, moving on to discuss the environmental process and then coming back to decide. All agreed with Andy F.'s suggestion.

5. Environmental Documentation Process

Paul S. presented information related to the topics covered in the environmental document. He indicated that natural resources as well as the built environment/community resources are considered in the assessment and gave examples of each. He discussed the process for assessing resources that are minimally impacted, such as farmlands and coastal resources, and then contrasted those to resource topics such as noise and traffic that involve a much more detailed level assessment – including modeling. He then explained how a preferred alternative is arrived at by the FHWA and CTDOT and the decision process

6. Level 2 Screening (cont.)

John E. suggested handing out ballots, but PAC members said they were comfortable voting with a show of hands on a final range of reasonable alternatives for review in the environmental document. John E. asked if they were comfortable removing Alt 20B from consideration and moving Alt 21D and Alt 26 to the environmental review process. Nearly everyone raised their hands in agreement. There was no further discussion on the alternatives. The PAC agreed that Alternative 26 and 21D would be evaluated within the environmental document.



Route 7-15 Norwalk

8. Next Steps

Andy F. thanked the PAC for their work thus far and said they would continue to have a role in the future project planning. He stated that the project team plans to host a public meeting in September 2019, and he hopes the PAC will participate and help notify the public of it.

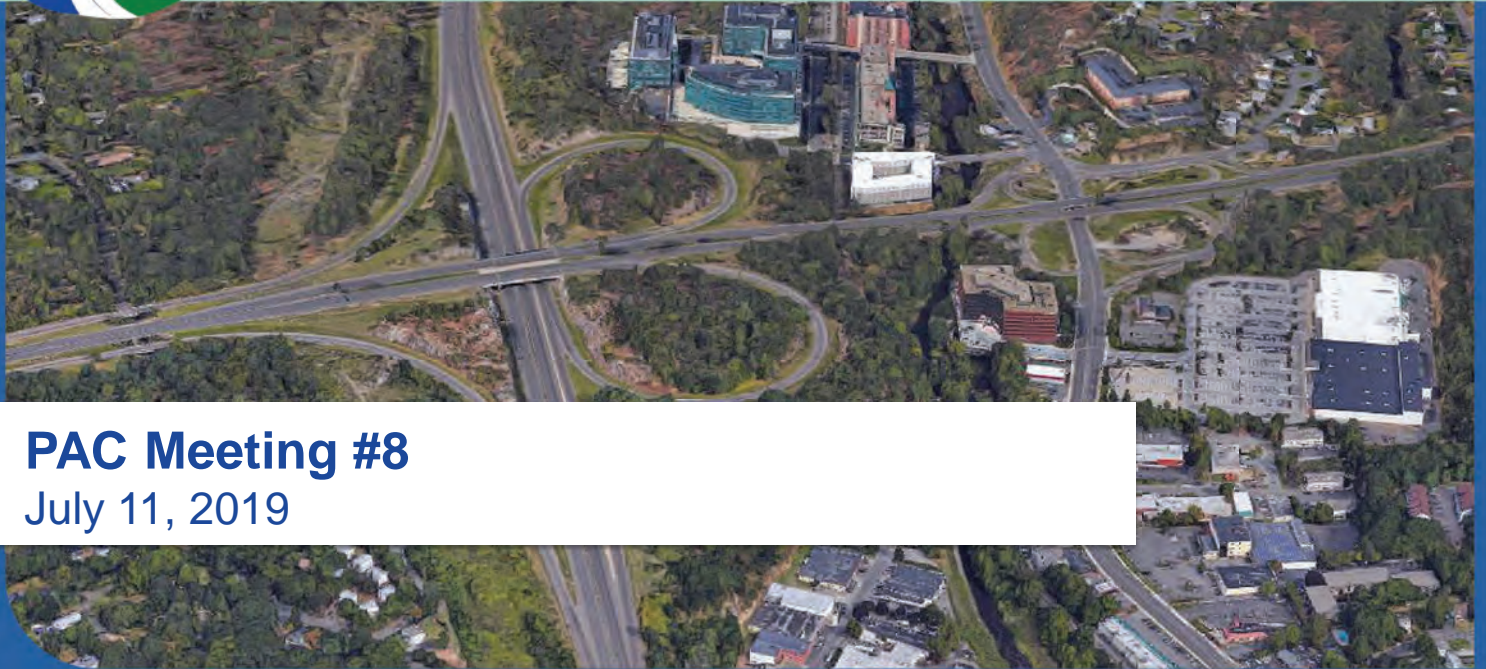
Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #8

July 11, 2019

Meeting Presentation



Route 7/15 NORWALK



PAC Meeting #8

July 11, 2019



Route 7/15 NORWALK

PAC #8 – July 11, 2019
CTDOT State Project #102-358

AGENDA

1. Introductions
2. Review of PAC #7
3. Level 2 Screening Exercise
4. Environmental Documentation Process
5. Next Steps
6. Schedule



Review of PAC #7



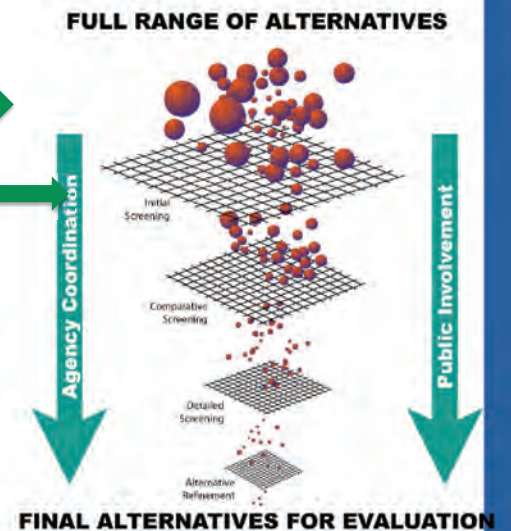
Route 7/15 NORWALK

PAC #8 – July 11, 2019
CTDOT State Project #102-358

- Reviewed Level 1 Screening (Purpose & Need Comparison)
- Began Level 2 Screening Review
 - Comparison to prior (2008) matrix
 - Reviewed evaluation criteria
 - Defined criteria for each topic

Level 1 
Screening

Level 2 
Screening





Route 7/15 NORWALK

Complete Level 2 Screening Evaluation

Criteria	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
Compatible with Regional Initiatives	Traffic operations are free flow in nature optimizing traffic flow through corridor		Traffic operations are controlled by traffic signals creating some delay in traffic flow through corridor	
Construction Costs	Significantly lower construction costs relative to other alternatives		Significantly higher construction costs relative to other alternatives	
Maintenance Costs	Least number of bridges, bridge lengths and roadway miles to be maintained	Moderate number of bridges, bridge lengths and roadway miles to be maintained	Greatest number of bridges, bridge lengths and roadway miles to be maintained	
Integrating Project Roadways into Environment / Neighborhood Context	No new ramps/roadways in proximity to Merritt Parkway	Simplified and compact interchange footprint as compared to other alternatives	Complex and more extensive interchange footprint as compared to other alternatives	



Route 7/15 NORWALK

Complete Level 2 Screening Evaluation

Criteria	Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
Elevated Ramps	Design includes no ramps/roadways elevated higher than the Merritt Parkway			Design includes new ramps/roadways elevated higher than the Merritt Parkway
Potential Impacts to Norwalk River	No Norwalk River crossings required	Some anticipated Norwalk River crossings required	Most anticipated Norwalk River crossings required	
Proximity of New Ramps / Roadways to Neighborhoods	Least neighborhood quadrants with new ramps or roadways extending beyond existing footprint of ramps/roadways toward neighborhood areas	Some neighborhood quadrants with new ramps or roadways extending beyond existing footprint of ramps/roadways toward neighborhood areas	Most neighborhood quadrants with new ramps or roadways extending beyond existing footprint of ramps/roadways toward neighborhood areas	
Construction Duration / Impacts to Public	Minimal anticipated construction duration/impacts compared to other alternatives based on roadway miles and new bridges required to construct	Moderate anticipated construction duration/impacts compared to other alternatives based on roadway miles and new bridges required to construct	Greatest anticipated construction duration/impacts compared to other alternatives based on roadway miles and new bridges required to construct	
Direct Archaeological Resources Impacts	No impacts	Potential Impacts	Likely impacts	



Route 7/15 NORWALK

PAC #8 – July 11, 2019
CTDOT State Project #102-358



Level 2 Screening Exercise





Criterion A: Compatible with Regional Initiatives

Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
Traffic operations are free flow in nature optimizing traffic flow through corridor		Traffic operations are controlled by traffic signals creating some delay in traffic flow through corridor	

Criterion	Alt 12A	Alt 20B	Alt 21D	Alt 26
A) Compatible with Regional Initiatives				



Criterion B: Construction Costs

Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
Significantly lower construction costs relative to other alternatives		Significantly higher construction costs relative to other alternatives	

Criterion	Alt 12A	Alt 20B	Alt 21D	Alt 26
B) Construction Costs				



Supporting Data

Alternative	Road Miles	Bridge Length (ft)	Bridges (#)	Ramp Length (ft)	Norwalk River Crossings (#)
12A	5	2,600	19	17,700	5
20B	5.2	1,500	14	15,700	5
21D	5.6	1,700	14	17,300	5
26	4.5	800	7	8,800	3



Criterion C: Maintenance Costs

Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
Least number of bridges, bridge lengths and roadway miles to be maintained	Moderate number of bridges, bridge lengths and roadway miles to be maintained	Greatest number of bridges, bridge lengths and roadway miles to be maintained	

Criterion	Alt 12A	Alt 20B	Alt 21D	Alt 26
C) Maintenance Costs				



Supporting Data

Alternative	Road Miles	Bridge Length (ft)	Bridges (#)	Ramp Length (ft)	Norwalk River Crossings (#)
12A	5	2,600	19	17,700	5
20B	5.2	1,500	14	15,700	5
21D	5.6	1,700	14	17,300	5
26	4.5	800	7	8,800	3



Criterion D: Integrating Project Roadways into Environment / Neighborhood Context

Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
No new ramps / roadways in proximity to Merritt Parkway	Simplified and compact interchange footprint as compared to other alternatives	Complex and more extensive interchange footprint as compared to other alternatives	

Criterion	Alt 12A	Alt 20B	Alt 21D	Alt 26
D) Integrating Project Roadways into Environment / Neighborhood Context				



Criterion E: Elevated Ramps

Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
Design includes no ramps / roadways elevated higher than the Merritt Parkway			Design includes new ramps / roadways elevated higher than the Merritt Parkway

Criterion	Alt 12A	Alt 20B	Alt 21D	Alt 26
E) Elevated Ramps				



Alternative 12A: Looking East Along Merritt Parkway





Criterion F: Potential Impacts to Norwalk River

Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
No Norwalk River crossings required	Some anticipated Norwalk River crossings required	Most anticipated Norwalk River crossings required	

Criterion	Alt 12A	Alt 20B	Alt 21D	Alt 26
F) Potential Impacts to Norwalk River				



Supporting Data

Alternative	Road Miles	Bridge Length (ft)	Bridges (#)	Ramp Length (ft)	Norwalk River Crossings (#)
12A	5	2,600	19	17,700	5
20B	5.2	1,500	14	15,700	5
21D	5.6	1,700	14	17,300	5
26	4.5	800	7	8,800	3



Criterion G: Proximity of New Ramps / Roadways to Neighborhoods

Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw		
Least neighborhood quadrants with new ramps or roadways extending beyond existing footprint of ramps / roadways toward neighborhood areas	Some neighborhood quadrants with new ramps or roadways extending beyond existing footprint of ramps / roadways toward neighborhood areas	Most neighborhood quadrants with new ramps or roadways extending beyond existing footprint of ramps / roadways toward neighborhood areas			
Criterion		Alt 12A	Alt 20B	Alt 21D	Alt 26
G) Proximity of New Ramps / Roadways to Neighborhoods					



Supporting Data

Neighborhood quadrants impacted	# of Neighborhoods	Neighborhoods
Alt 12A	2	Creeping Hemlock, SW Silvermine
Alt 20B	3	Creeping Hemlock, SW Silvermine, NW Silvermine
Alt 21D	2	Creeping Hemlock, SW Silvermine
Alt 26	1	Creeping Hemlock



Criterion H: Construction Duration / Impacts to Public

Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
Minimal anticipated construction duration / impacts compared to other alternatives based on roadway miles and new bridges required to construct	Moderate anticipated construction duration / impacts compared to other alternatives based on roadway miles and new bridges required to construct	Greatest anticipated construction duration / impacts compared to other alternatives based on roadway miles and new bridges required to construct	

Criterion	Alt 12A	Alt 20B	Alt 21D	Alt 26
H) Construction Duration / Impacts to Public				



Supporting Data

Alternative	Road Miles	Bridge Length (ft)	Bridges (#)	Ramp Length (ft)	Norwalk River Crossings (#)
12A	5	2,600	19	17,700	5
20B	5.2	1,500	14	15,700	5
21D	5.6	1,700	14	17,300	5
26	4.5	800	7	8,800	3



Criterion I: Direct Archaeological Resources Impacts

Meets Goal	Moderately Meets Goal	Does Not Sufficiently Meet Goal	Fatal Flaw
No impacts	Potential impacts	Likely impacts	

Criterion	Alt 12A	Alt 20B	Alt 21D	Alt 26
I) Direct Archaeological Resources Impacts				



Anticipated Impacts / Effects to NRHP-Eligible Sites

	Alt 12A	Alt 20B	Alt 21D	Alt 26
Site 103-57	None	None	None	Direct
Site 103-58 / 103-60	None	None	None	Direct
Site 103-61 / 103-62	Possible	Possible	Possible	None



Route 7/15 NORWALK

Level 2 Screening (PAC)

Criteria	Alt 12A	Alt 20B	Alt 21D	Alt 26
A) Compatible with Regional Initiatives	Green	Red	Green	Red
B) Construction Costs	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Green
C) Maintenance Costs	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Green
D) Integrating Project Roadways into Environment / Neighborhood Context	Red	Red	Red	Yellow
E) Elevated Ramps	Black	Green	Green	Green
F) Potential Impacts to Norwalk River	Red	Red	Red	Yellow
G) Proximity of New Ramps / Roadways to Neighborhoods	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green
H) Construction Duration / Impacts to Public	Red	Red	Red	Yellow
I) Direct Archaeological Resources Impacts	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red



Environmental Documentation Process





Route 7/15 NORWALK

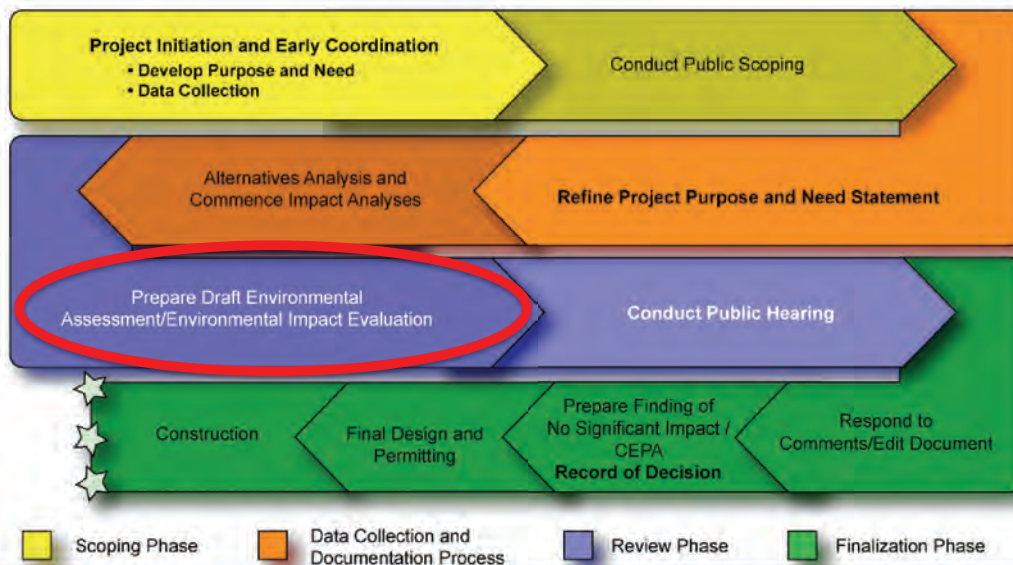
Where have we been

- Prepared Needs and Deficiencies Report
- Developed Purpose and Need Statement
- Completed Scoping Process
 - Public meeting
 - Agency Coordination
- Developed alternatives (28)
- Initiated Section 106 Consultation Process
- Completed Level 1 and Level 2 Screening



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NEPA / CEPA Process





Alternative Analysis within NEPA/CEPA includes ...

- Reasonable range of alternatives from Level 2 screening and,
- No-Action/No-Build Alternative-
The No-Action/No-Build Alternative is used as a benchmark to measure the environmental impacts of build alternatives



Environmental Considerations- Natural Environment

- General Ecology and Endangered Species
- Navigable Waters
- Surface Waters
- Wetlands
- Flood Plains
- Groundwater
- Farmland Protection
- Air Quality





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Environmental Considerations- Built Environment

- Land Use, Zoning, And Local and Regional Plan Of Conservation And Development
- Consistency with State Conservation And Development Plan
- Social and Economic Considerations
- Environmental Justice
- Traffic
- Bicycles And Pedestrians
- Right Of Way/Land Acquisitions
- Noise
- Community Services And Private Utilities



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Environmental Considerations- Built Environment (cont.)

- Community Cohesion
- Cultural Resources
- Scenic Parkway
- Visual Impact Assessment (Via)
- Hazardous Materials
- Energy Analysis
- Construction Impacts





Environmental Documentation Examples- Limited Review Topics

Farmlands

- GIS mapping to identify farmland soils and active farmlands in the project area
- Overlay alternative disturbance footprints to assess for potential impacts
- No overlap = no impact. Resource topic dismissed

Coastal Zone Impacts

- GIS and CTDEEP mapping to identify coastal resources in the project area
- Overlay alternative disturbance footprints with resource mapping to assess potential impacts
- No overlap = no impact. Resource topic dismissed



Environmental Documentation Examples- Detailed Review and Documentation

Noise

- Identify Noise Sensitive Resources (Receptors) based on land use
- Identify noise sources in the project study area
- Take existing noise measurements at receptors
- Construct and run noise model (TNM) to predict future project noise levels
- Compare results to FHWA Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC) to identify impacts
- Assessment of Noise Abatement Measures – reasonable and feasible
- Compare noise impacts for Build and No-Action/No-Build alternatives
- Document findings in the NEPA/CEPA document



Environmental Documentation Examples- Detailed Review and Documentation

Traffic

- Identify traffic study area and collect traffic data
- Develop future year traffic volumes
- Develop and run traffic simulation models
- Compare traffic operation results
- Document findings in the EA/EIE document



Decision making process to identify preferred alternative

Document Preparation

- For each alternative
 - Conduct impact assessment for resource category
 - Identify measures to avoid or minimize resource impacts
 - Identify feasible and reasonable opportunities to mitigate unavoidable impacts
- Compare benefits, adverse impacts, and mitigation for each alternative
- FHWA and CTDOT recommend a preferred alternative



Decision making process to identify preferred alternative

Draft Document Review

- CTDOT announces availability of Draft EA/EIE
- Public comment period and public hearing (minimum 45 days)

Document Completion

- Consider comments and, as needed, revise EA/EIE based on comments
- FHWA and CTDOT will select a Preferred Alternative and issue a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and a Record of Decision (ROD)



Next Steps



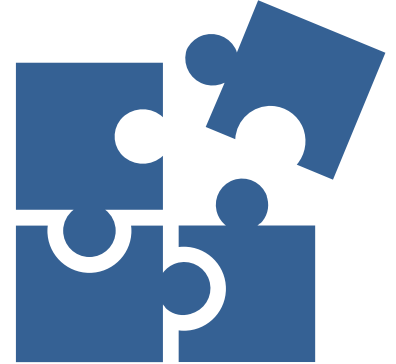


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Next Steps

- Complete and distribute revised Phase I/II Cultural Resource Survey
- Conduct public informational meeting (Fall 2019)
- Conduct landscape subcommittee meeting (Fall 2019)
- Conduct environmental review concurrent with Section 106 Consultation process
- Submit Draft environmental document for review



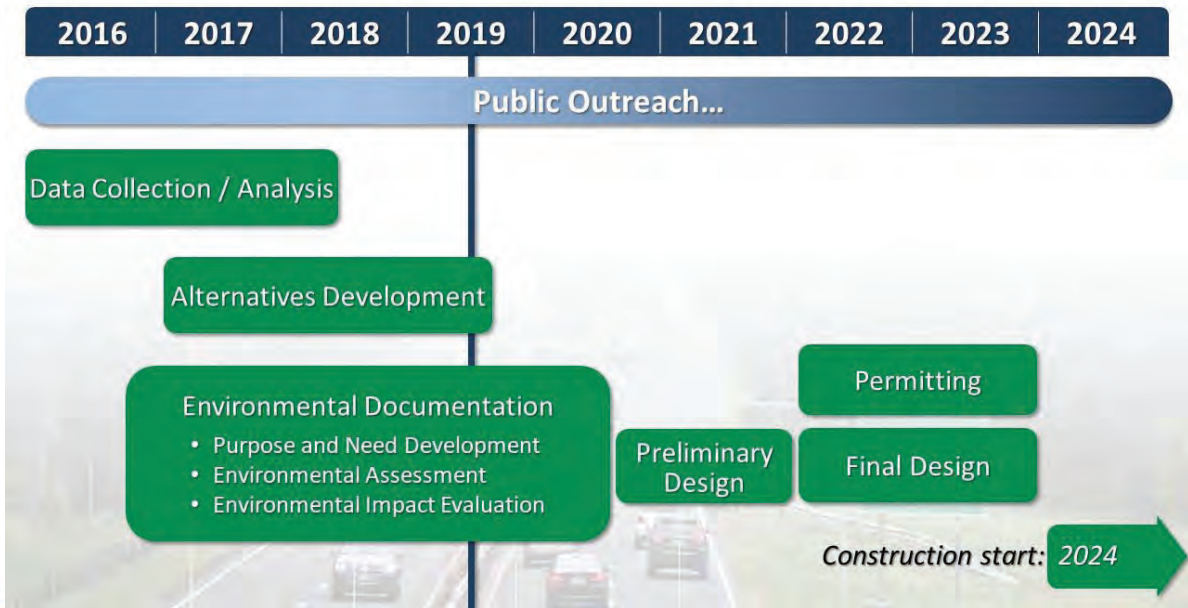
Schedule





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THANK YOU!

Questions?