



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

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

**Appendix P  
Draft MOA**

August 2022

Prepared for:  
Connecticut Department of  
Transportation Federal Highway  
Administration

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN THE  
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION  
AND THE  
ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
AND THE  
CONNECTICUT STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER  
AND THE  
CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
REGARDING THE  
ROUTE 7/ROUTE 15 (MERRITT PARKWAY) INTERCHANGE PROJECT  
NORWALK, CONNECTICUT  
FEDERAL AID PROJECT 0015(133)  
STATE PROJECT 102-358**

**SUBMITTED PURSUANT to 36 C.F.R. § 800.6(a)**

**WHEREAS**, the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT), an agency of the State of Connecticut, proposes a series of changes to the intersection of Route 7, Route 15 (the Merritt Parkway), and Main Avenue in Norwalk, Connecticut (the undertaking); and

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is providing funding for the undertaking, making it subject to the provisions of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (54 U.S.C. § 306108) and its implementing regulations, 36 C.F.R. Part 800, in addition to the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. § 4332), and Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act, (23 U.S.C. § 138(a)); and

**WHEREAS**, FHWA in consultation with CTDOT and the Connecticut State Historic Preservation Officer (CTSHPO) has defined the Area of Potential Effect (APE) of the undertaking as shown on the attached map (Attachment A); and

**WHEREAS**, FHWA has consulted with CTSHPO pursuant to 36 C.F.R. Part 800 and determined that the following National Register of Historic Places-listed or eligible properties are within the undertaking's APE: the Merritt Parkway Historic District, including five of its contributing components (the Perry Avenue Bridge, the Norwalk River Bridge, the Metro-North Bridge, the Main Avenue Bridge, and the West Rocks Road Bridge); the Verneur Pratt Historic District; the Glover Avenue Bridge; and three pre-contact era archaeological sites; and

**WHEREAS**, FHWA, in consultation with CTSHPO, has determined that the undertaking will have unavoidable adverse effects pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 800.5 on the Merritt Parkway Historic District and three of its contributing components (the Norwalk River Bridge, the Metro-North Bridge, and the Main Avenue Bridge); the Glover Avenue Bridge; and three archaeological sites; (collectively, the "Historic Properties"); and

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**WHEREAS**, the Merritt Parkway Historic District, including all its contributing components within the project limits, was documented for the Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) in 1992 (HAER No. CT-63, HAER No. CT-90, HAER No. CT-91, HAER No. CT-92, HAER No. CT-93, and HAER No. CT-94); and

**WHEREAS**, written and photographic documentation of the Glover Avenue Bridge was prepared to CTSHPO standards and archived in the Connecticut Historic Preservation Collection, University of Connecticut Archives and Special Collections, in 2000; and

**WHEREAS**, the Tribal Historic Preservation Officers (THPOs) of the Delaware Nation, the Delaware Tribe of Indians, the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation, the Mohegan Tribe of Indians in Connecticut, and the Narragansett Indian Tribe, have participated in the consultation process pursuant to the 36 C.F.R. Part 800 regulations implementing Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. § 306108) and have been invited to concur in this Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) and will continue to be consulted in the implementation of the MOA; and

**WHEREAS**, this MOA was developed with appropriate public involvement pursuant to 36 C.F.R. 800.2(d) and 800.6(a) and in consultation with the CTSHPO, CTSHPO, the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), and invited Consulting Parties (listed in Attachment C); and

**WHEREAS**, the Connecticut Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (CTASLA), Merritt Parkway Conservancy (MPC), the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the Norwalk Association of Silvermine Homeowners (NASH), the Norwalk Historical Commission (City of Norwalk), the Norwalk Historical Society, the Norwalk Preservation Trust, Preservation Connecticut, and the Silvermine Community Association have participated in the consultation process pursuant to 36 C.F.R. Part 800 and have been invited to concur in this MOA and will continue to be consulted in the implementation of the MOA; and

**WHEREAS**, the MPC, NASH, the City of Norwalk, and the Silvermine Community Association participated with CTDOT in the formulation of design guidelines for the project, itemized in “Merritt Parkway Landscape Assessment Guidelines” (Attachment B); and

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with 36 C.F.R. § 800.6(a)(1), FHWA has notified the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP) of its adverse effect determination with specified documentation, and the ACHP has chosen to participate in the consultation pursuant to 36 C.F.R. § 800.6(a)(1)(iii);

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the FHWA, the ACHP, the CTSHPO, and the CTDOT agree that the undertaking shall be implemented with the following stipulations to ensure that effects to the historic properties are taken into account:

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**I. STIPULATIONS**

FHWA will ensure that the following measures are carried out within ten (10) years of the date on which this MOA is executed unless the deadline is extended in accordance with Section VI of this MOA.

1. In preparing the undertaking's final design, CTDOT shall, to the degree possible, follow the guidelines in "Merritt Parkway Landscape Assessment Guidelines" (March 2020). On behalf of FHWA, CTDOT shall distribute thirty (30), sixty (60), ninety (90) percent and final design plans with CTSHPO, the Tribes, and the concurring parties, each of whom will have a thirty (30) day comment period in which to submit their comments to CTDOT. FHWA and CTDOT will consider these comments as design further progresses.
2. Within the thirty-day comment period for each of the milestone design plan submissions listed in Stipulation 1, FHWA and CTDOT will meet with the PAC Landscape Subcommittee to review comments on the landscape design components and design of the Parkway. CTDOT & FHWA will consider their input as design further progresses.
3. CTDOT shall design the replacement for the Main Avenue Bridge and Glover Avenue Bridge in consideration of the form, scale, and materials of the existing structure so as to complement the established aesthetic of the Merritt Parkway Historic District. On behalf of FHWA, CTDOT shall share the 30, 60, and 90 percent and final design plans with CTSHPO, the Tribes, and the concurring parties, each of whom will have a thirty (30) day review period in which to submit their comments to CTDOT. FHWA and CTDOT shall consider these comments as design further progresses.
4. Throughout construction of the undertaking, CTDOT's cultural resource qualified staff shall coordinate with design and construction team to review changes to the construction documents resulting from value engineering, change orders, site conditions, or other factors which affect the design character of the parkway. CTDOT qualified staff shall consult with CTSHPO regarding these changes, should they occur. CTDOT shall provide regular updates on the construction of the undertaking to the concurring parties.

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5. Prior to construction-related activities, CTDOT shall prepare supplementary written and photographic documentation of the Glover Avenue Bridge according to HAER Level II standards. CTDOT shall submit a draft of the supplementary documentation to CTSHPO and FHWA for review and shall revise the documentation according to comments received. CTDOT shall submit the final, approved documentation to HAER and provide CTSHPO with electronic copies of the documentation upon completion.
6. CTDOT shall incorporate the existing stone tablet in the design of the Glover Avenue Bridge replacement, identifying it as the dedicatory plaque of the previous 1912 bridge on the site.
7. Prior to finalizing Plans, Specification, and Estimates, CTDOT shall, in consultation with FHWA, CTSHPO, TPHOs, and Concurring Parties, develop an Archaeological Treatment Plan that provides guidance on minimizing impacts to archaeological sites. The Archaeological Treatment Plan will be consistent with the CTSHPO's *Environmental Review Primer for Connecticut's Archaeological Resources* and the United States Secretary of the Interior's *Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation*. It shall, to the extent practicable and offered by the THPOs, incorporate guidance based on indigenous knowledge.
8. Within 3 years of the execution of this MOA, CTDOT shall create, or cause to be created through the engagement of a qualified consultant, a web-based "story map" highlighting the history, development, and important architectural and design elements of the Merritt Parkway. The story map shall include photographs, narratives, and mapping details digitally tied to an overall GIS-based map of the National Register listed corridor. Draft materials for the story map shall be submitted to CTSHPO, and other Consulting Parties, for review and comment, as appropriate.

CTDOT shall provide the story map to the Merritt Parkway Conservancy to augment their Merritt Parkway Museum website. CTDOT shall notify CTSHPO, and the other Consulting Parties, when the webpage goes live.

## **II. DURATION OF THIS MOA**

This MOA will expire if its terms are not carried out within ten (10) years from the date of its execution. Prior to such time, the signatories will consult to reconsider the terms of the MOA and amend it in accordance with Section VI.

### **III. UNANTICIPATED DISCOVERIES AND EFFECTS**

- A. In the event that an historic property is discovered or unanticipated effects on identified archaeological properties occurs, CTDOT shall notify the FHWA and CTSHPO and refrain from further project activities in the immediate vicinity of that may reasonably be assumed to affect the historic property. CTDOT shall to the extent possible, protect the historic property *in situ* to allow for consultation with FHWA, CTSHPO, and the Tribes. No artifacts shall be removed from the site unless approved by all parties.
- B. In consultation with FHWA, CTSHPO, and the Tribes, CTDOT shall develop a suitable course of action to address the discovery.
- C. In the event that an acceptable resolution cannot be achieved, FHWA will follow the dispute resolution process set forth in Section V.

### **IV. MONITORING AND REPORTING**

CTDOT shall provide notification to all signatories and concurring parties to this MOA, via email or letter, when all stipulations of this MOA have been fully satisfied.

Each year following the execution of this MOA until it expires or is terminated, CTDOT shall provide all parties to this MOA a summary report detailing work undertaken pursuant to its terms. Such report shall include any scheduling changes proposed, any problems encountered, and any disputes and objections received in FHWA and CTDOT's efforts to carry out the terms of this MOA.

### **V. DISPUTE RESOLUTION**

Should any signatory or concurring party to this MOA object at any time to any actions proposed or the manner in which the terms of this MOA are implemented, FHWA shall consult with such party to resolve the objection. If FHWA determines that such objection cannot be resolved, FHWA will:

1. Forward all documentation relevant to the dispute, including the FHWA's proposed resolution, to ACHP. ACHP shall provide FHWA with its advice on the resolution of the objection within thirty (30) days of receiving adequate documentation. Prior to reaching its final decision on the dispute, FHWA shall prepare a written response that takes into account any timely advice or comments regarding the dispute from ACHP, signatories, and concurring parties, and shall provide them with a copy of its written response. FHWA will then proceed according to its final decision.

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2. If ACHP does not provide its advice regarding the dispute within the thirty (30) day time period, FHWA may make a final decision on the dispute and proceed accordingly. Prior to reaching such a final decision, FHWA shall prepare a written response that takes into account any timely comments regarding the dispute from the signatories and concurring parties to the MOA, and shall provide them and ACHP with a copy of such written response.
3. Notify the Signatories, Invited Signatories, and consulting parties of its final decision. FHWA shall then proceed according to its final decision.
4. Carry out all other actions subject to the terms of this agreement that are not the subject of the dispute.

## **VI. AMENDMENTS**

If any signatory to this MOA believes that this MOA should be amended, that signatory may propose amendments to the other signatories, whereupon all signatories shall consult to consider the amendments pursuant to 36 C.F.R. §§ 800.6(c)(7) and 800.6(c)(8).

## **VII. TERMINATION**

If any signatory to this MOA determines that its terms will not or cannot be carried out, that party shall immediately consult with the other signatories to attempt to develop an amendment per Stipulation VI, above. If within thirty (30) days (or another time period agreed to by all signatories) an amendment cannot be reached, any signatory may terminate the MOA upon written notification to the other signatories.

Once the MOA is terminated, and prior to work continuing on the undertaking, FHWA must either (a) execute an MOA pursuant to 36 CFR § 800.6 or (b) request, take into account, and respond to the comments of the ACHP under 36 CFR § 800.7. FHWA shall notify the signatories as to the course of action it will pursue.

## **VIII. COUNTERPARTS**

This MOA may be signed in counterpart copies, all of which, taken together, shall constitute but one and the same document.

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**EXECUTION OF THIS MOA**

Execution of this MOA by FHWA, CTSHPO, CTDOT, and ACHP and implementation of its terms are evidence that

- a. FHWA has afforded ACHP an opportunity to comment on the proposed undertaking and its effects on the historic properties; and
- b. FHWA has afforded CTSHPO an opportunity to comment on the proposed undertaking and its effects on the historic properties; and
- c. FHWA has taken into account the effects of the undertaking on the historic properties.

**SIGNATURES FOLLOW ON SEPARATE PAGES**

***Signatories***

- ☐ Advisory Council on Historic Preservation
- ☐ Federal Highway Administration
- ☒ Connecticut State Historic Preservation Officer
- ☐ Connecticut Department of Transportation (*Invited Signatory*)

***Concurring Parties***

- ☒ Connecticut Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects
- ☒ Merritt Parkway Conservancy
- ☐ National Trust for Historic Preservation
- ☐ Norwalk Association of Silvermine Homeowners (NASH)
- ☐ Norwalk Historical Commission
- ☒ Norwalk Historical Society
- ☒ Norwalk Preservation Trust
- ☒ Preservation Connecticut



**SIGNATORY PAGE**

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT  
BETWEEN  
THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION  
AND  
THE CONNECTICUT STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER  
AND  
THE CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
REGARDING THE  
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**Advisory Council on Historic Preservation**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Reid Nelson, Executive Director

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNATORY PAGE**

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**Federal Highway Administration**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Amy Jackson-Grove, Division Administrator

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNATORY PAGE**

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**Connecticut State Historic Preservation Officer**

By:



Jonathan Kinney

Connecticut State Historic Preservation Officer

Date: 4/24/23

**SIGNATORY PAGE**

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**Connecticut Department of Transportation**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Kimberly Lesay  
Bureau Chief, Bureau of Policy and Planning

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Concurring Party**

**Connecticut Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects**

By:

  
Peter Viteretto

Date: 4/25/23

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**Concurring Party**

**Merritt Parkway Conservancy**

By:   
Wes Haynes, Executive Director

Date: 4.26.2023

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT  
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**Concurring Party**

**National Trust for Historic Preservation**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Thompson M. Mayes  
Chief Legal Officer and General Counsel

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT  
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**Concurring Party**

**Norwalk Association of Silvermine Homeowners (NASH)**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Heather Dunn, President

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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**Concurring Party**

**Norwalk Historical Commission, City of Norwalk**

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Dana Laird, Chair

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT  
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**FEDERAL AID PROJECT 0015(133)  
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**Concurring Party**

**Norwalk Historical Society**

By: *Diane Jellerette*  
Diane Jellerette, Executive Director


Date: *April 20, 2023*

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**Concurring Party**

**Norwalk Preservation Trust**

By:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Tod Bryant, President

Date:

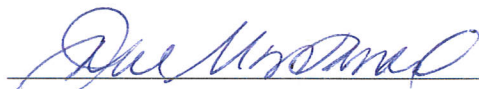
4/27/2023

**MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT  
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**Concurring Party**

**Preservation Connecticut**

By:

  
Jane Montanaro, Executive Director

Date:

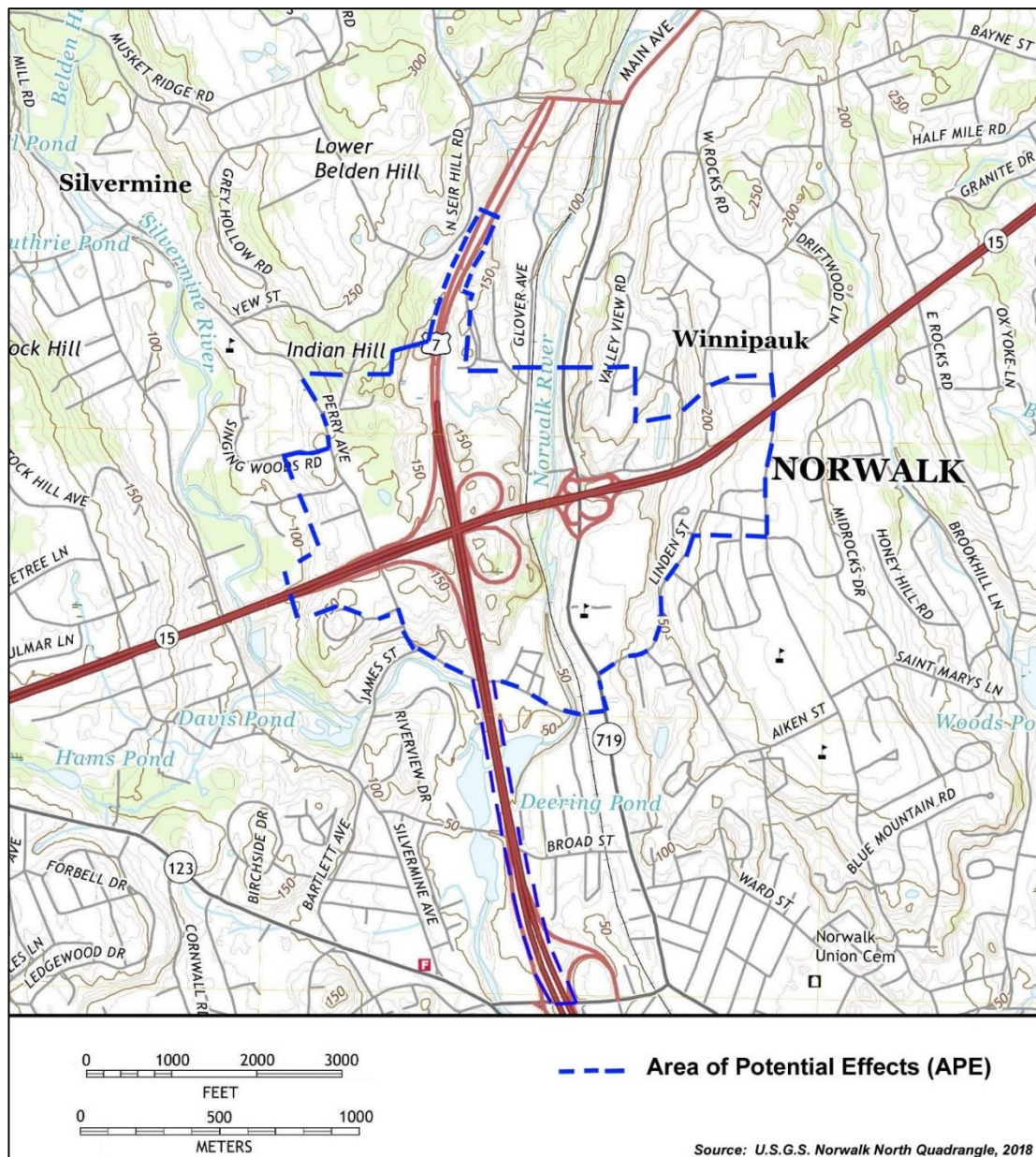
4/24/23

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**ATTACHMENT A**

**Description of Undertaking and Area of Potential Effects (APE)**

The APE shown encompasses direct and indirect impacts (visual, noise) for the undertaking. The following page shows the project area and anticipated direct impacts.

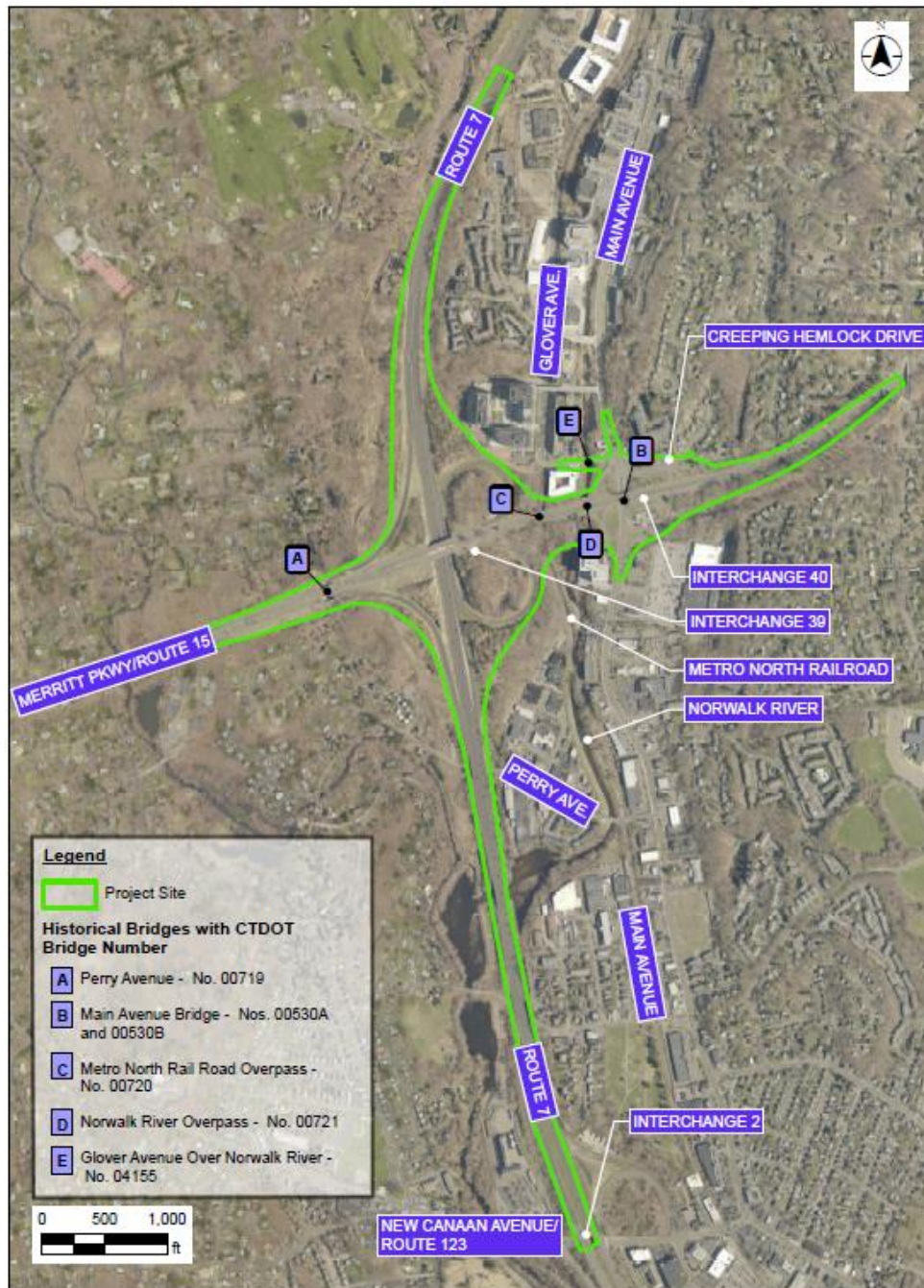




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**Project Site Impacts**

Project limits encompassing all of the build alternatives considered under the Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Evaluation (EA/EIE). This area is anticipated to have ground-disturbing impacts caused by the undertaking.



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**ATTACHMENT B**

**Merritt Parkway Landscape Assessment Guidelines (2020)**

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To:	7-15 Norwalk Project Advisory Committee Section 106/Landscape Subcommittee	From:	John F. Eberle, PE Stantec Consulting Services Inc.  55 Church Street New Haven, CT 06510
File:	192310508	Date:	April 21, 2020

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**Reference: Merritt Parkway Landscape Assessment Guidelines**

As a follow-up to the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Section 106/Landscape Subcommittee meeting of November 21, 2019, Stantec provided an update to the draft Merritt Parkway Landscape Assessment Guidelines ('Guidelines') to attendees taking into consideration comments recorded at the meeting. The purpose of the Guidelines is to provide some direction for assessing alternatives as part of the Environmental Assessment (EA) document, and to inform the development of the design of the preferred alternative subsequent to the conclusion of the Environmental Documentation process. The purpose of this memorandum is to summarize the background and key assumptions for development of the Guidelines as well as provide expanded definitions of guideline categories.

**I. INTRODUCTION**

The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) is proposing a series of changes to the intersection of Route 7, Route 15 (the Merritt Parkway), and Main Avenue in Norwalk, Connecticut. Interchange No. 39 currently provides partial connections between Route 7 and the Merritt Parkway including:

- Route 7 northbound to the Merritt Parkway southbound
- Route 7 southbound to the Merritt Parkway southbound
- Merritt Parkway northbound to Route 7 northbound
- Merritt Parkway northbound to Route 7 southbound.

Connections between Route 7 and the Merritt Parkway to and from the north are not provided. The project is intended to remedy this situation by providing full connections between Route 7, the Merritt Parkway, and Main Avenue.

The Merritt Parkway, completed in the early 1940s and extending 37 miles from the Connecticut/New York state line to the Housatonic River in Stratford, has been designated both a Connecticut Scenic Road and a National Scenic Byway. The Parkway is also listed in the National Register of Historic Places as a significant example of an important type of designed landscape (early 20<sup>th</sup>-century scenic parkways inspired by the City Beautiful Movement).

Because of the Parkway's historic significance, it is imperative that the project be undertaken in a way that is sympathetic to its essential character. Currently, the project is in the planning phase, evaluating alternatives that will meet the project's Purpose and Need. Once a preferred alternative is selected, the design will be further developed to a greater level of detail.

The purpose of the Guidelines is to inform the development of the final design so that the project's improvements can be integrated into the Parkway's historic character and landscape aesthetic.



**Reference:**      **Merritt Parkway Landscape Assessment Guidelines**

## **II. PROCESS**

The Guidelines build upon understandings of the Parkway's essential character as articulated in previous documents, including

- "Merritt Parkway Historic District," National Register of Historic Places documentation, prepared by Catherine Lynn and Christopher Wigren (1991).
- *A Landscape Plan for the Merritt Parkway* (1994).
- *Merritt Parkway Guidelines for General Maintenance and Transportation Improvements* (1994).
- *Merritt Parkway Conservation and Restoration Plan: Bridge Restoration Guide* (2002).
- .
- Published studies, including *The Merritt Parkway* by Bruce Radde (1991) and *The Merritt Parkway: The Road that Shaped a Region* by Laurie Heiss and Jill Smyth (2014).

The Guidelines were initially prepared by Stantec, CTDOT's engineering and landscape architecture consultant, and then reviewed, revised, and approved by CTDOT. Public involvement included a landscape workshop held in Norwalk in September 2018 and presentation of the draft Guidelines to the Project Advisory Committee Section 106/Landscape Subcommittee in November 2019. Follow-up included incorporation of stakeholder comments recorded at the meeting and redistribution of the edited Guidelines. The stakeholders who participated included representatives of the Merritt Parkway Conservancy, Preservation Connecticut (formerly the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation), the City of Norwalk, neighborhood groups, and local business owners.

## **III. KEY ASSUMPTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE GUIDELINES IN THE FINAL DESIGN**

- The project's Purpose and Need cannot be met without some changes to the Parkway as it currently exists; additional ramps and entrance/exit lanes will be necessary.
- Application of the Guidelines to the existing Parkway within the project limits revealed a mix of positive and negative attributes. Positive attributes include some areas with appropriate plantings, some effective buffers, and a few distinctive rock outcroppings. Negative attributes include invasive species, depleted plantings, encroachment of modern development, lack of buffers in key areas, poor access for maintenance, and inconsistent guiderail and signage standards and aesthetics.
- Implementation of the Guidelines in the design process can both preserve and enhance existing positive attributes and improve existing negative attributes, thereby integrating the project's improvements into the Parkway's historic character and landscape aesthetic.

## **IV. THE GUIDELINES**

The Merritt Parkway Landscape Assessment Guidelines that will be implemented in the course of finalizing the design of the preferred alternative are as presented in tabular form on the next page.

Category	Guidelines
<b>Views within, from, and to Parkway (all user groups)</b>	Parkway road sides exhibit varied spatial organization with focal points and park-like experiences
	Views of ramp roadside landscapes exhibit park-like characteristics
	Bridge structures are featured, yet integrated into planting design, vegetation, and topography
	Distant landscape views beyond the right-of-way are provided (distinctive architecture, scenic vistas)
<b>Vegetation and planting design</b>	Widths of road sides are adequate for planting and creating and/or maintaining naturalized landscape character
	Vegetation and planting frame views, complement bridge structures, and screen unsightly views
	Non-invasive plant species and palette are complementary of the Parkway setting
	Seasonal characteristics and clusters of native and specimen plant species provide contrast and visual interest between ground plane, understory, and canopy
	Existing and advantageous vegetation is preserved to provide aesthetic, buffer and park-like value
<b>Topography</b>	Built road-sides transition into naturalized landscape
	Slight to moderate slopes on roadsides are conducive to planting and landscape maintenance access
<b>Aesthetic Rehabilitation</b>	Remnant, scarred, and cluttered right-of-way areas are rehabilitated to enhance Parkway character
	Engineered components (e.g. stormwater measures) do not detract from Parkway landscape features
<b>Circulation</b>	Roadway footprint does not diminish existing Parkway landscape character
	Fences and barriers do not visually impose upon park-like and naturalized features
<b>Amenities</b>	Design vocabulary is consistent and recognizable as the Parkway
<b>Sustainability</b>	Planting areas provide suitable space and soil volume to allow plant species to achieve potential growth and habit
	Park-like landscape provides ease of access to road sides for sustained maintenance
<b>Natural features</b>	Landscape design and vegetation reveal natural and scenic resources such as watercourses, landform, and rocky ledge
<b>Safety</b>	Vegetation, planted areas, and amenities do not obstruct critical sight lines
	Planting design and vegetated areas conform to CTDOT safety guidelines

**Reference:** Merritt Parkway Landscape Assessment Guidelines

Guidelines are grouped according to the following categories:

### **Views within, from, and to the Parkway**

All user groups (motorists, passengers, cyclists, pedestrians, building occupants, other) within, approaching, and leaving the project area should experience the park-like setting of the Merritt Parkway. This experience may be enhanced through landscape design including varied spatial organization created by plantings and vegetation; focal points that highlight natural and cultural features within the landscape; and view corridors that accentuate distant architectural and natural features. In instances where buildings are very close to the Parkway ROW with minimal landscape buffer, landscape enhancement options within the immediate building surrounds within the Parkway ROW may be limited.

### **Vegetation and planting design**

The width of roadside established in the preferred alternative must be adequate for planting. Existing vegetation with aesthetic and functional qualities should be preserved to create and/or maintain naturalized landscape character within the Merritt Parkway right-of-way. Framing views, enhancing bridge structures, screening unsightly views, and buffering between roadway lengths with native and non-invasive species are desired characteristics. Roadsides provide opportunity to enhance seasonal interest of the Parkway surrounds with clusters of native and specimen plant species that provide contrast between ground plane, understory, and canopy.

### **Topography**

Topography and roadway alignment are key features in creating a park-like setting and unique travel experience. To the extent that new ramp lengths are needed, their respective roadsides should transition smoothly into the naturalized landscape. Slight to moderate slopes on roadsides are conducive to preserving desirable stands of existing vegetation and establishing new plantings that accentuate views and that are easily accessible for sustained landscape maintenance.

### **Amenities**

Design vocabulary will be consistent and recognizable as the Parkway. As the CTDOT progresses with phased safety improvements along the entire length of the Parkway, amenities such as guiderail, parapet walls, signage, drainage appurtenances, and roadway edge treatments are being installed consistently, with a common aesthetic. To the extent possible, these same amenities will be incorporated into the design of new and rehabilitated access and egress ramps for the two proposed interchanges in the project area.

### **Aesthetic Rehabilitation**

The project area has experienced decades of intervention, including the construction of Route 7 over 25 years ago, and the start and termination of construction of the Main Avenue interchange in 2006. This project, through landscape design integrated with roadway engineering, will aim to rehabilitate remnant, scarred and cluttered right-of-way areas to enhance the Parkway's character within the project area. Integrated landscape architecture and engineering design for stormwater measures and other critical functions should not detract from existing Parkway features. They should be visual attributes.

**Reference:** Merritt Parkway Landscape Assessment Guidelines

### **Circulation**

Through integrated engineering and landscape architecture design, the roadway footprint of the preferred alternative will minimize visual impact on existing Parkway character. Opportunities to enhance roadsides and preserve existing natural features, in conjunction with new ramp alignments, are priorities. Fences and barriers that may be required will not impose upon or detract from the Parkway's existing and/or re-established park-like character.

### **Sustainability**

More today than at any other point in the Parkway's history, sustainability in design and maintenance is paramount. Planting areas should provide suitable spaces and soil volume to allow for adequate plant growth and visual impact. Creating a park-like landscape with ease of access for sustained maintenance, optimum safety conditions for field staff, and minimal traffic disruption during maintenance operations are an important part of these design guidelines.

### **Natural features**

Landscape reveals natural resources (e.g., watercourses, woodlands, rocky ledge). In recognizing the rich landscape history of the Parkway, preserving and exposing/uncovering natural features is essential. New plantings and landform may provide enhancement by accentuating view corridors toward natural features and displacing invasive vegetation.

### **Safety**

Safety goes hand in hand with all landscape guidelines. Landscape architecture and engineering design prioritize safety, mobility and user experience. As such, vegetation, planted areas, and amenities will be located so as not obstruct critical sight lines. Planting design and vegetated areas will conform to CTDOT safety guidelines while aiming for enhancement of the Parkway's park-like character as a foundation of the preferred alternative's design.

**Stantec Consulting Services Inc.**

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Attachment:

c.

Design with community in mind

Memorandum of Agreement  
Route 7 / Route 15 Interchange Project  
Federal Aid Project No 0015(133) / State Project No 102-358  
Norwalk, Connecticut

**ATTACHMENT C**

**List of Section 106 Consulting Parties**

Throughout the Section 106 evaluation of this project, several parties have participated in the evaluation of the undertaking's potential impacts to historic properties. Although not all of the below-listed parties have opted to be concurring parties to this MOA, they will continue to be informed of the progress of this project and provided with the opportunity to continue providing input. The Section 106 consulting parties to the Route 7/15 Interchange Project #102-358 are:

City of Norwalk  
Connecticut Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA)  
Delaware Nation  
Delaware Tribe of Indians  
Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation  
Merritt Parkway Conservancy  
The Mohegan Tribe  
Narragansett Indian Tribe  
National Trust for Historic Preservation  
Norwalk Association of Silvermine Homeowners (NASH)  
Norwalk Historical Commission  
Norwalk Historical Society  
Norwalk Land Trust  
Norwalk Preservation Trust  
Norwalk River Watershed Association  
Preservation Connecticut  
Sierra Club, CT  
Silvermine Community Association