



Route 7/15 NORWALK

NEWSLETTER
Winter 2017

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Department of Transportation Kicks Off Route 7/15 Norwalk Project



The Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) is focusing on improving connections between Route 7, the Merritt Parkway (Route 15), and Main Avenue in the City of Norwalk.

The goals of the project are to provide missing connections between Route 7 and the Merritt Parkway, and to improve connectivity, mobility, access, and safety for all users through Route 7, the Merritt Parkway, and Main Avenue interchanges. The current layout of the Route 7/15 interchange does not allow direct connections between:

- Route 7 northbound to Merritt Parkway northbound;
- Route 7 southbound to Merritt Parkway northbound;
- Merritt Parkway southbound to Route 7 southbound and;
- Merritt Parkway southbound to Route 7 northbound.

The missing direct connections require travelers to use Main Avenue, resulting in heavy congestion and long delays. The

project is included in Governor Dannel P. Malloy's "Let's GO CT" transportation plan to invest in transportation infrastructure.

Construction on the Route 7/15 Norwalk Project first began in 2005, with an original plan to reconstruct the interchange. However, CTDOT halted construction in 2006, when project critics filed a lawsuit claiming that construction would impair visual and historic character of the area and have negative impacts on historic bridges. The court determined that the project records did not demonstrate that avoidance, minimization, and mitigation alternatives associated with impacts to historic features had been adequately analyzed.

Subsequent to the lawsuit, CTDOT reviewed the original design alternatives and evaluated a variety of new solutions. In 2008, CTDOT formed and worked with a public stakeholder group, which included residents, representatives from the Merritt Parkway Conservancy, public agencies, and other interested parties. Strong public consensus

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"Currently, too many drivers are forced to get off the highway in order to navigate between two roads, [...] leading to unnecessary traffic and accidents."

– Governor Dannel P. Malloy

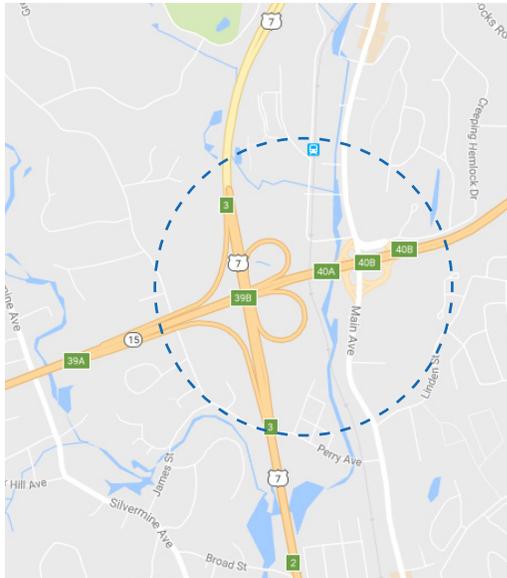


Quick Facts

Route 7/15 Norwalk Project



Project Location: Route 7, the Merritt Parkway (Route 15), and Main Avenue interchanges in Norwalk



Project Goals:

The goals of the project are to provide missing connections between Route 7 and the Merritt Parkway, and to improve connectivity, mobility, access, and safety for all users through the Route 7, the Merritt Parkway, and Main Avenue interchanges.



Project History:

- Early 2000s: Environmental documentation process completed
- 2005: Construction started
- 2006: Construction stopped when lawsuit was filed; subsequent court decision required review of the National Environmental Policy Act documentation process
- 2008: Stakeholder meetings were held
- 2009: Preferred design alternative (21C) was agreed upon
- 2009: Project halted due to lack of funding
- Summer 2016: Project was reinitiated
- Winter 2017: Continued evaluation of potential alternatives and documentation of existing conditions



Get Involved With the Project!

Community participation is critical to the success of the Route 7/15 Norwalk Project! The project team expects to hear many different opinions about how to improve connections between Route 7, the Merritt Parkway, and Main Avenue.

There will be ample opportunities for residents, business owners, and travelers to share their opinions throughout the life of the project. In order to develop a comprehensive transportation solution that best serves the needs of these stakeholders, CTDOT is actively seeking input. Participation from those who live, work, and travel in and near Route 7, the Merritt Parkway, and Main Avenue will help ensure that the project prioritizes the public's needs while producing a viable and cost-effective solution.

Get involved by:



Visiting our website, 7-15Norwalk.com, often for project updates and details about upcoming public meetings and events.



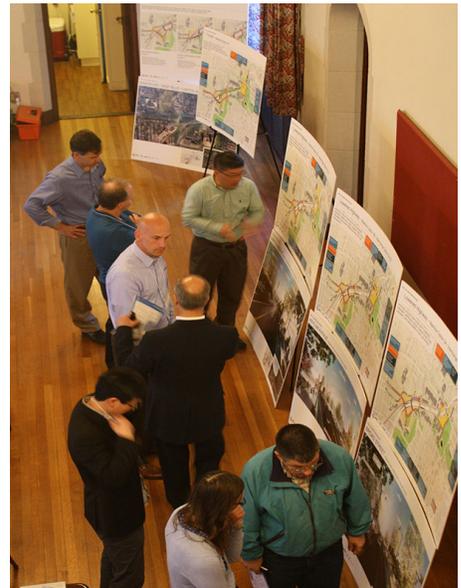
Submitting comments to share ideas with the project team. Submit comments via the project website, by emailing Andy Fesenmeyer at andy.fesenmeyer@ct.gov, or via mail to Andy Fesenmeyer, Connecticut Department of Transportation, 2800 Berlin Turnpike, Newington, CT 06131.



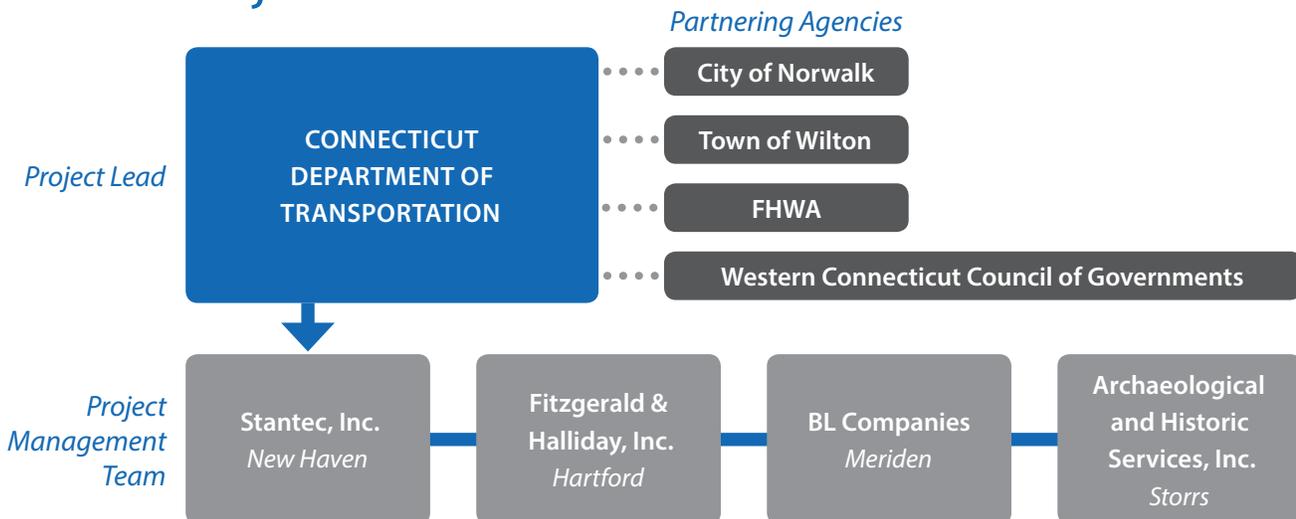
Joining the mailing list to receive project updates by completing the online form at 7-15Norwalk.com/contact.php.

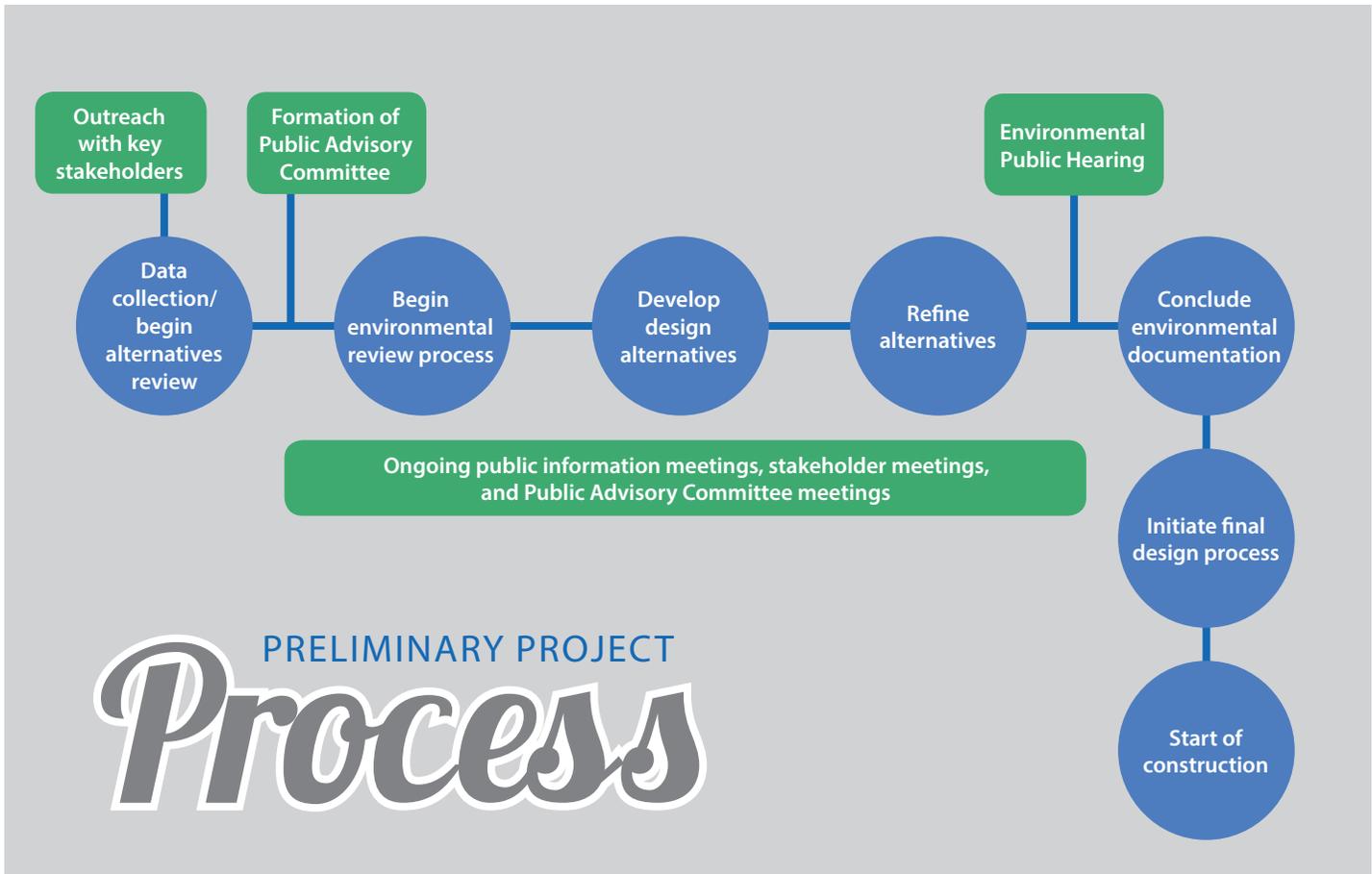


Connecting on Facebook, facebook.com/7-15Norwalk, and Twitter, twitter.com/715Norwalk.



Meet the Project Team





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was reached on a new design alternative, identified as 21C, at a public meeting in 2009. However, due to a lack of funding, the project was unable to move forward.

CTDOT reinstituted the project in 2016. Since then, the team has been meeting with stakeholders to explain how the project will proceed over the next two years and find out how community needs may have changed since 2009. As the project moves forward, CTDOT and its team of consultants will work with the City of Norwalk, the Town of Wilton, Merritt Parkway advocates, local businesses, bicycle and pedestrian organizations, historic preservation groups, and residents to improve connections in the area while maintaining the Merritt Parkway's

historic character.

The first phase focuses on reaching out to community members to generate interest in the project, a reassessment of the design alternatives analysis, and environmental documentation.

The project planning process has started, and CTDOT has hired Stantec, Inc., a consulting firm with offices in New Haven, to lead the project with assistance from Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc. of Hartford, BL Companies of Meriden, and Archaeological and Historic Services, Inc. of Storrs.

The Route 7/15 Norwalk Project team has launched a website and will host a series of public meetings this year. CTDOT will work with a Public Advisory Committee,



and other public outreach efforts include newsletters and social media updates. Please sign up for our mailing list and stay connected as this project develops!