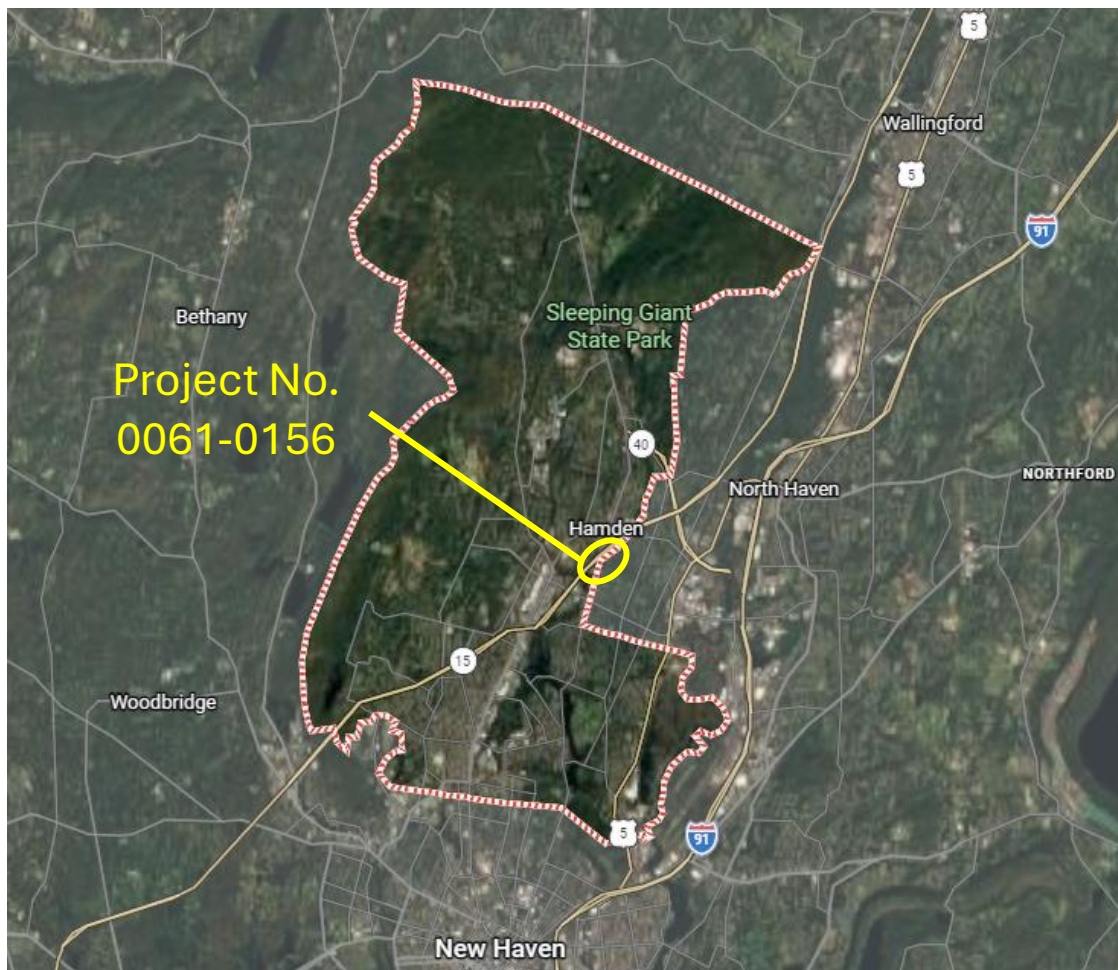


PROJECT DESCRIPTION
State Project Number: 0061-0156
Route 15 Interchange 51 Improvements
Towns of Hamden and North Haven

PROJECT LOCATION:

The project is located in the Towns of Hamden and North Haven at Route 15 interchange 51 (Old Exit 61). Along Route 15, project limits extend from MP 51.25 to 51.93 NB and MP 51.23 to 51.96 SB, and on State Route 707 (Whitney Avenue), project limits extend from MP 3.21 to 3.52. The southern project limits are along the Hamden/North Haven town line. The northbound ramps abut the Mill River and Web Shop Pond. This project is located in CTDOT District 3 and within the South Central Regional Council of Governments (SCRCOG).



EXISTING CONDITIONS:

Route 15 is part of the National Highway System. It is a divided highway with two travel lanes in each direction and shoulders on both sides; the mainline and ramps are classified as expressway. The posted speed limit is 55 mph, with 85% of drivers traveling at speeds of 77 mph or greater. The annual average daily traffic (AADT) was 72,600 vehicles per day in 2019 and 67,800 vehicles per day in 2022. The subject interchange is the combination of five expressway ramps, which all connect Route 15 and Whitney Avenue.

Noted deficiencies include inadequate acceleration and deceleration distances for on- and off-ramps based on existing geometric conditions. Stop-controlled northbound and southbound on-ramps cause a high number of front-to-rear crashes. Additionally, the wooden noise barrier along Route 15 southbound is at the end of its service life.

Whitney Avenue is a four-lane undivided roadway with no shoulders, classified as principal arterial. The posted speed limit is 30 mph, with 85% of drivers traveling at speeds of 42 mph or greater. The annual average daily traffic (AADT) was 14,200 vehicles per day in 2023. The roadside development is residential and commercial, and the overall context of this area is urban, with a population density of about 2900 persons per square mile. The lanes on Whitney Avenue are 10 ft and 11 ft wide with no shoulders.

There are sidewalks on both sides of Whitney Avenue, with the exception of a 1500-foot-long sidewalk gap south of the interchange. There are limited opportunities for pedestrians to safely cross Whitney Avenue in the vicinity of the ramps due to a lack of marked crossings.

Noted deficiencies include a lack of adequate bicycle and pedestrian facilities.



PURPOSE AND NEED:

Route 15 interchange 51 has routinely been identified as a priority location in need of large-scale operational and safety improvements.

The purpose of this project is to improve safety at the Route 15 interchange 51 ramps and improve mobility for all roadway users along Whitney Avenue.

This project is needed because of the high number of front-to-rear crashes at this interchange due to the stop-controlled on-ramps. On Whitney Avenue, inadequate bicycle and pedestrian facilities create potentially hazardous conditions.

DESCRIPTION:

Proposed improvements on Route 15 include the removal of the stop controls and the addition of acceleration lanes for the northbound and southbound on-ramps, as well as the addition of a deceleration lane for the northbound off-ramp. A retaining wall will be added between the southbound mainline and the southbound off-ramp. The existing wooden noise barrier along Route 15 southbound will also be replaced as part of this project.

A proposed signal at the end of the southbound exit 52 off-ramp will allow for left- and right-turn movements onto Whitney Avenue, so the existing southbound exit 51 off-ramp can be eliminated. All ramp termini will be signalized where they meet Whitney Avenue, and marked crosswalks will be installed.

There is a project beginning in 2026 that includes resurfacing and restriping Whitney Avenue south of the interchange, so as part of this project the section of Whitney Avenue just south of the northbound ramps will be striped to tie into that section further south.

Sidewalks will be constructed along Whitney Avenue to close the existing sidewalk gap. Sidewalk curb ramps will be upgraded to meet ADA requirements, and Whitney Avenue will be resurfaced curb-to-curb within the project limits.

RIGHTS-OF-WAY:

There are right-of-way impacts associated with the proposed improvements, including a partial sliver acquisition of a commercial property to accommodate a turn lane and sidewalk reconstruction. We are anticipating temporary easements and rights to grade for sidewalk construction, retaining wall modifications, and guiderail installation.

PROJECT SCHEDULE:

The project schedule is subject to the availability of funding, right-of-way acquisition, and approval of required permits.

Construction is anticipated to begin in Spring 2028.

PROJECT COST (CONSTRUCTION):

This project will be funded with 80% federal and 20% state funds.

Estimated Construction Cost: \$27.7M