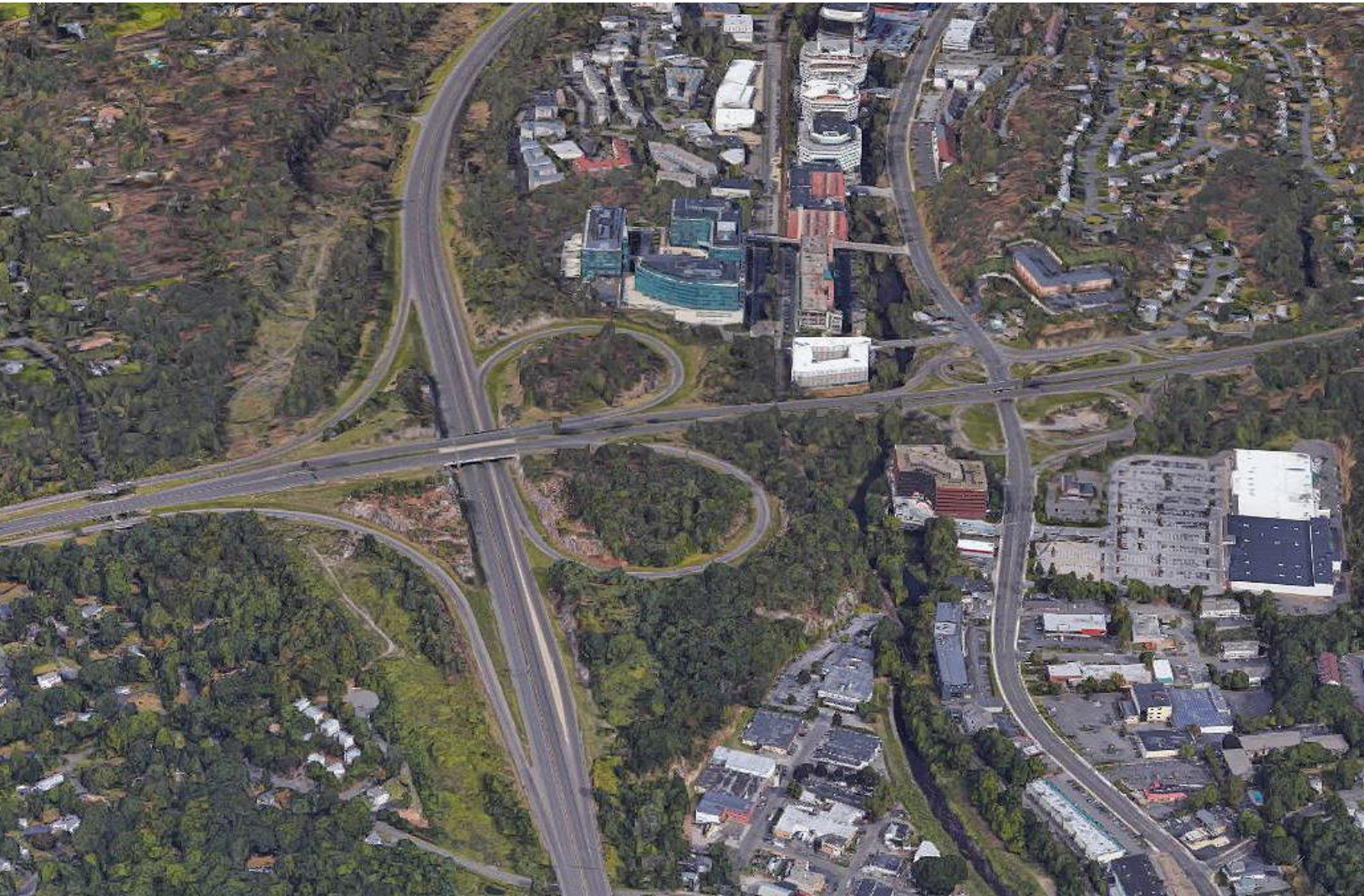




**Route 7/15 Interchange Project
Norwalk, Connecticut
SCOPING SUMMARY REPORT**



January 2019

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Chapter 1 Introduction

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 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); and improve safety in the vicinity of these 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.

The Merritt Parkway was constructed between 1934 and 1940. Planning for Route 7/15 interchange improvements began in the late 1990s. During this time, multiple alternatives were developed and analyzed as part of the environmental planning process. Once environmental documentation was completed, the preferred alternative advanced to final design. Construction began in 2005, with an original plan to reconstruct the interchange. However, in 2006, construction was stopped due to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) being sued under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Subsequent to the lawsuit, CTDOT formed and worked with a public stakeholder group to reevaluate the design alternatives. This group included residents, representatives from the Merritt Parkway Conservancy, public agencies, and other interested parties. Strong public consensus 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.

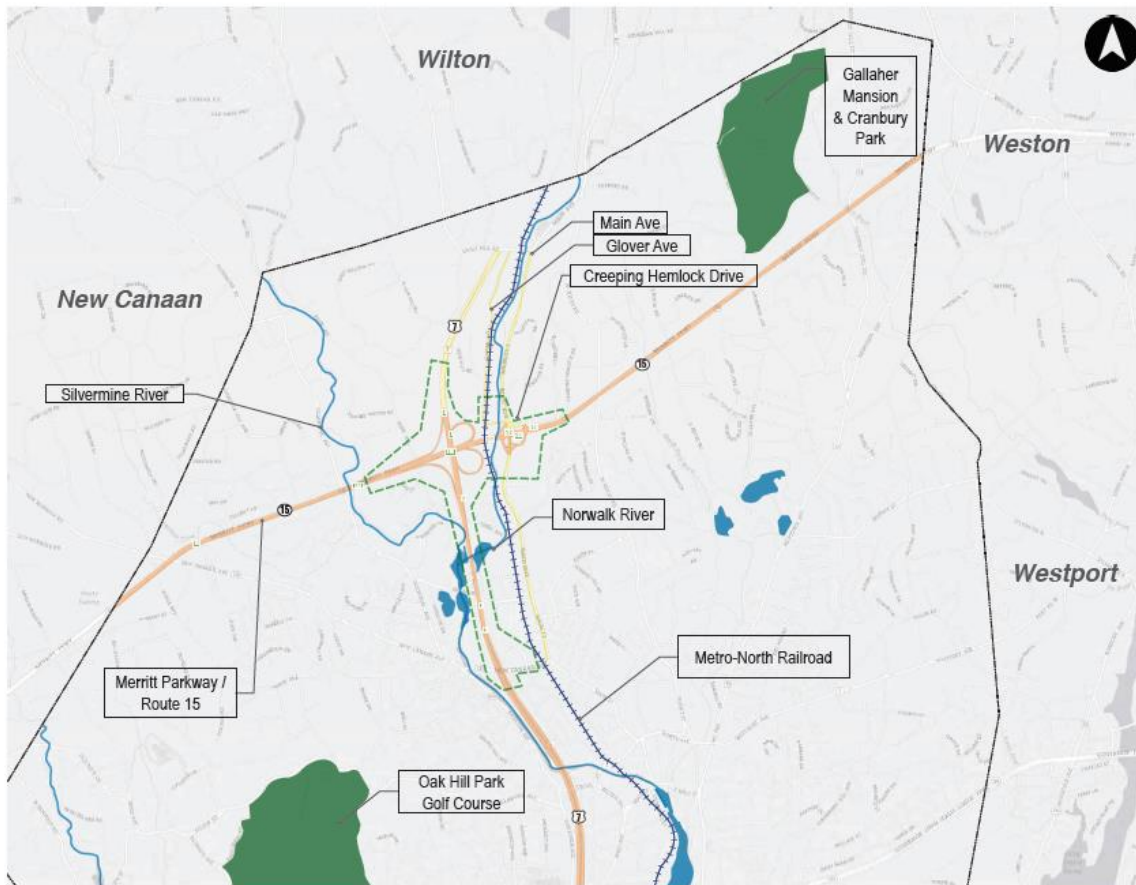
In 2016, CTDOT received a combination of Federal and state funds, and reinitiated the project. Since that time, the team has been meeting with stakeholders to explain how the project will proceed over the next two years and find out how community needs may have changed since 2009. As the project moves forward, CTDOT and its team of consultants are working 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.

Since 2016, the project team has launched an intensive public involvement program, began reassessing design alternatives, and started work on the environmental document. The Route 7/15 Norwalk Project team has launched a website and hosted a public scoping meeting in the fall of 2017. The team is working with a Project Advisory Committee, and other public outreach efforts that have included two newsletters and ongoing social media updates on Facebook and Twitter.



Route 7/15 Norwalk

Project Area



Legend:

- +++++ Metro North Railroad
- Water Resources
- Local Streets (Main Avenue, Glover Avenue, Route 7 and Creeping Hemlock Drive)
- Route 7
- Route 15
- Exits
- City/Town Boundaries
- Gallaher Mansion Cranbury Park & Oak Hill Park Golf Course
- Project Area

CTDOT State Project #102-358

Chapter 2 Purpose of the Report

This report provides a summary of the scoping process and summarizes comments provided by the public and involved agencies during the scoping comment period. This report includes the following key elements:

- Summary of scoping process and format
- Documentation of all public and agency scoping comments
- Scoping display boards

As the Project Team conducts the Environmental Documentation process, consideration of substantive comments will be critical towards refining the reasonable range of alternatives; shaping the scope of the environmental review process.

Chapter 3 NEPA/CEPA and the Scoping Process

Both the federal government and the State of Connecticut have environmental review processes (NEPA) and the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) respectively, to ensure that agencies consider the potential effects of projects that they are undertaking or approving. This project's environmental review will be conducted by CTDOT in accordance with NEPA, as amended; the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508); and CEPA. The environmental document will be dually compliant with both NEPA and CEPA requirements. In addition, CTDOT will adhere to NEPA Implementing Regulations (23 CFR Part 771), and FHWA's Guidance for Preparing and Processing Environmental and Section 4(f) Documents (Technical Advisory 6640.8A, October 30, 1987). The environmental document will address, as necessary, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act; Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation (DOT) Act of 1966 (49 U.S.C. 303); and other relevant federal and state laws and regulations. The environmental document will describe environmental conditions; analyze the possible social, economic, and environmental impacts and benefits of the project; and identify proposed mitigation measures, as warranted.

Scoping is the first step in the environmental process. The Project Team designed this scoping process to solicit input on areas of the project such as its purpose and need, goals and objectives, the study area, alternatives, and potential impacts. Public scoping encourages early communication in the NEPA/CEPA process to help lead agencies gather public input and understand public concern on the project.

Scoping allows the public and relevant regulatory agencies to provide feedback early in the environmental process. Input gathered during the scoping process helps guide the refinement of alternatives. It sets the course for environmental review, ensuring a process that is thorough, comprehensive, and focused on key elements of concern. All public and agency comments submitted during scoping are summarized in this Scoping Summary Report, which will be made available to the public on the project website. This process helps determine the scope of the issues that should be addressed and provides the project team guidance on the development of project alternatives.

For this project, the official CEPA scoping period began on October 3, 2017 with the publication of the project in the Environmental Monitor and ended on November 16, 2017. A public information/scoping

meeting was held on October 17th, 2017. The meeting was intended to provide an overview of the project purpose and obtain comments from the public.

The next step in the process will be a public hearing for Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Evaluation. Once the environmental documentation phase is concluded and a course of action decided upon, project design may proceed.

Chapter 4 Summary of the Public Scoping Meeting

The CTDOT conducted a public scoping meeting on October 17, 2017, from 4:00 to 8:00 PM, at Norwalk City Hall, located at 125 East Ave, Norwalk, CT. The public meeting venue met Americans with Disabilities (ADA) compliance regulations and was located in the City of Norwalk, easily accessible by bus, Metro-North Railroad, automobile and pedestrian routes.

The scoping meeting and related information was advertised in the following publications:

- Norwalk Hour
 - Display ad published on October 3rd and October 10, 2017
- Stamford Advocate
 - Display ad published on October 3rd and October 10, 2017
- Published in the Connecticut Environmental Monitor three times in 2017
 - October 3rd
 - October 17th
 - November 7th
- Norwalk's local television network (Channel 12) advertisements for two weeks beginning September 28, 2017
- Email blasts to project contact list sent September 26, 2017; and an email reminder sent on October 12, 2017
- Route 7/15 project website (www.7-15norwalk.com): notifications posted on the project website on September 26, 2017 and were available through the end of the scoping comment period November 16, 2017.
- CTDOT website (www.ct.gov/dot): a press release was issued by CTDOT on September 28, 2017.

At registration, attendees were asked to sign in and were provided an agenda and comment sheet and, if interest was expressed, the draft purpose and need document, the Route 7/15 Norwalk Fall 2017 newsletter, and a business card. Project Team members verbally explained the agenda, as well as the various ways to comment. Individuals interested in speaking were provided a speaker card upon registration.

The meeting began as an Open House at 4:00 PM, where 19 informational boards (all meeting material was also made available on the project website (www.7-15norwalk.com) were displayed around the room, each staffed by a Project Team member. The public was encouraged to view the boards and ask the Project Team any questions that they may have.

Informational boards included:

- Project Area Map
- Project Schedule/Timeline
- Purpose & Need

- NEPA/CEPA Process
- Natural Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Historic Bridges
- Visual Resources (2)
- Land Use/Socio-Economic Conditions
- Bicycle & Pedestrian Conditions
- Peak Hour Traffic Levels of Service
- Data Collection Locations
- Origin/Destination Traffic Patterns (2)
- 2010-2014 Crashes in Merritt Parkway Corridor
- Alternate 26
- Alternate 21C

During the Open House, several copies of the Fall 2017 newsletter, purpose and need document and comment sheets were available at tables in the main board display area.

Duplicate formal presentations were given at 5:30 PM and 7:30 PM. Each presentation was followed by a public comment listening session. The presentation gave an overview of the project, as follows:

- Project Introduction
- Environmental Documentation Process
- Project Location and Key Environmental Considerations
- Landscape Setting
- Draft Purpose and Need Statement
- Review of Existing Alternatives
- Alternative Analysis Process
- Next Steps

Attendance included 42 members of the public, 5 elected officials, 2 members of the press, 4 consultant teams (BL Companies, Fitzgerald & Halliday, Inc., VN Engineers and Stantec) and CTDOT representatives.

Scoping Comment Session

Following both the 5:30 and 7:30 presentations, members of the public were invited to provide oral comments on the project and the proposed alternatives for improvement. Two (2) elected officials and four (4) members of the public spoke after the 5:30 presentation and two (2) members of the public spoke after the 7:30 presentation. A copy of the comments of the elected officials and members of the public are included as Appendices to this scoping report.

In addition, attendees were directed to comment cards which they could fill out and return at the meeting or send via the US Postal Service. Attendees were also informed that comments could be submitted via the “Contact Us” page on the project website (www.7-15norwalk.com), as cited in outreach materials, and via email and post to Andy Fesenmeyer at CTDOT.

After the conclusion of the final 7:30 presentation and public comment period, Project Team members remained available to answer additional questions until the meeting closed at 8:00 PM.

Chapter 5 Summary of Scoping Comments by Theme

During the Public Scoping Comment period from October 3, 2017, to November 16, 2017, 50 members of the public submitted comments.

The Project Team identified six main themes: Traffic and Transportation, Alternatives, Environmental, Purpose and Need, Public Involvement, and Financing.

Topic	Number of Comments
Traffic and Transportation	18
Alternatives	10
Environmental	5 (<i>public and agency comments</i>)
Purpose and Need	11
Public Involvement	1
Financing	5
Total	50

Please note that some of these comments were about multiple topics, so the dominant topic of each comment was used to identify the comment theme.

All comments received during the Scoping Period will be reviewed and taken under consideration during the environmental documentation process (NEPA/CEPA).

Generalized Comments

The following pages provide a generalized description of the feedback on each topic, with the Project Team response below it. The original comments are verbatim in the scoping comment matrices included in Appendices A and B.

Topic: Traffic and Transportation

Commenters expressed concern about adding traffic signals on Route 7. The primary concern was that adding traffic signals will increase traffic backup on Route 7, especially during peak hours.

Project Team Response: Traffic operations, traffic safety, and land use are only a few of the many considerations that will be taken into account as part of the environmental review/alternatives analysis process for all alternatives.

Topic: Alternatives

Most of the commenters are supportive of the project moving forward but have differing opinions on the alternatives. Some commenters expressed concern and suggested that Alternative 26 will introduce noise/congestion problems due to the addition of traffic signals on Route 7.

Project Team Response: Traffic operations and traffic safety are some of the many considerations that will be made as part of the environmental review/alternatives analysis process for all alternatives.

Topic: Environmental

Most of the commenters about this topic were environmental groups dealing with water quality. A common theme within these comments were concerns about water quality protection in the Norwalk River, existing landscape preservation, and aquifer protection.

Project Team Response: CTDOT, as part of the environmental review process (NEPA/CEPA) will review a wide range of environmental and natural resource issues and will coordinate with appropriate agencies.

Topic: Purpose and Need

Common themes included the importance of finishing the project as it was intended and completing the Route 7 and Merritt Parkway connection.

Project Team Response: 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.

Topic: Public Involvement

Comments were supportive of the public outreach efforts surrounding this project, and opportunities for input.

Project Team Response: Public input will continue to be a key driving force in this project. Please stay tuned to our website at www.7-15norwalk.com and related social media pages for further opportunities to get involved.

Topic: Financing

Many commenters expressed concern about the state budget, project funding sources, and whether allocating money for this project is the best investment of limited state resources.

Project Team Response: We are currently using Federal (80%) and State (20%) funding for this project, and construction is planned to be funded as part of the Governor's "Let's Go CT" transportation plan.

Appendix A
Comments Received During Scoping Meeting

Topic	Date	Comment Type	Organization	Name	Comment
Alternatives	17-Oct-17	5:30 Scoping comment	Norwalk Planning Commission	Mike Mushak	I am a resident of Norwalk, a member of the City Planning Commission and former Bike Walk Task Force member. I want to share my vote in support of the Merritt Parkway Trail, it is integral to this region, as well as the Norwalk Valley Trail. How these two trails integrate is important. The coming of e-bikes is the way of future. The Merritt was once built for the future. We need to look forward towards innovation. Regarding Alternate 26: I wonder if the state can look at rotaries (roundabouts) instead of stoplights for Route 7? I also want to thank representatives Lavielle and Wilms for making case for tolls in the state. The state GOP has been dead set against tolls, but we're a national laughingstock – people come from ALL over the county going through our state and on our highways for free. Tolls will help pay for our transportation expenses.
Alternatives	17-Oct-17	7:30 Scoping comment	PAC	Jo-Anne Horvath	<p>(from written comments read at the meeting): My name is Jo-Anne Horvath and I reside at 1 Cobblers Lane, Norwalk, near Creeping Hemlock Drive, and I am very familiar with this project.</p> <p>Back in 1985 when Bill Collins was mayor of Norwalk, I wrote to his office concerning the exit ramp at Exit 40-B of the Merritt Parkway and since then I have been actively involved in this project.</p> <p>Back in 2008/2009 I was part of a group of neighborhood Stakeholders who met with the State Department of Transportation engineers for a year to develop a concept design for this interchange project. All of those stakeholders at that time chose Alternate 21-C as their preferred plan.</p> <p>I am now serving on the Project Advisory Committee reviewing the two alternates that were discussed this evening. But tonight I am speaking as a Norwalk resident. The design of Alternate 21-C involves flow-through ramps which would provide seamless <u>SAFE</u> connections between the Merritt Parkway and the Route 7 Connector. <u>This is the Alternate Plan I favor.</u></p> <p>Alternate 26, with two traffic signals on the Route 7 Connector highway, would pose a major traffic nightmare! From what I have seen of drivers in this area, they are in a hurry to get to their destinations. Do you think they want to stop for traffic lights? I don't think so. What about distracted drivers - talking on hand free cell phones and texting, etc.? I think too many accidents would happen with rear-end collisions - think about it. Alternate 26 is not the answer!</p>

Topic	Date	Comment Type	Organization	Name	Comment
Alternatives	17-Oct-17	5:30 Scoping comment	Resident	Marcia Kibbe	I am a 32-year resident and have been involved in this project since 2007-8. I have been very interested in project for a long time. This is a necessary project, and I'm glad the DOT is taking these plans into consideration. My main concern is with adding stoplight on Route 7 for Alternate 26. This is going to cause traffic backup, and I'm concerned about the accidents that could be happening, and I'm also concerned about noise from big trucks putting on their brakes to stop at those stoplights. If Route 7 becomes boulevard and there's stoplights there, what is going to happen to the land on either side of Route 7 – what kind of development is going to be there and how will development be controlled? We need this project and need to be pennywise but not pound foolish.
Environmental	17-Oct-17	7:30 Scoping comment	Resident	Diane Lauricella	Thank you for this scoping session. I agree with Ms. Horvath's comments. I was involved in the 2008 environmental studies, there was lots of work done on this project. As a former environmental consultant with the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, I feel that revisiting all 26 alternates seems inefficient way to use state funds. Roundabouts are not popular yet, so 21C seems to be the most efficient use of state money. We need to move forward with this project. Businesses were promised that interchange would be replaced by now, and we don't want to go back to the drawing board. I understand that you must do due diligence, but the CTDOT did good job then (in 2008); we don't need to reinvent the wheel. I will speak with state representatives and senators to help this move forward. Whatever alternative you decide on, please be sure that any storm drains – especially in the southern cloverleaf area – do not harm the aquifer. Also, the Super 7 project needs to look at emergency response to possible contamination.
Financing	17-Oct-17	5:30 Scoping comment	Elected Official, State Rep. 143 District	Gail Lavielle	I am a representative of Norwalk. This was a very professional presentation. I've been to many meetings on this, and I appreciate the very good communication of the project team. Thank you. My comments are related to the current context of the financial situation of the state and its transportation budget. There is only \$2.8 B bonded for transportation this year, and this includes projects for good repair. This project is part of the bonded funding. Recently I met with Connecticut Department of Transportation Commissioner Redeker. When he was asked the status of a 40-year transportation project, he replied that once we get to 2020 "it is Armageddon" in terms of funding. This comment says to me we need to be careful -- not that I advocate doing nothing -- but analysis of federal funding to come and the desperate uncertainty of state budget needs to be considered. The focus needs to be on crucial state good repair projects that are currently in the pipeline, and on projects that must be done first for safety etc., followed by a focus on projects classified as those "that would help". I live in Wilton, and I know this project would help, but we need to see this in light of other projects, so we can be sure we are not missing crucial construction safety projects. We have a lot of state-of-good-repair work to do.

Topic	Date	Comment Type	Organization	Name	Comment
Financing	17-Oct-17	5:30 Scoping comment	Resident	Joe Cusack	The idea of putting an exit lane on the Merritt Parkway to access Route 7 does not work. Put the money somewhere else, like towards expanding Route 7 (Super 7). Is Route 7 always going to end at Grist Mill? It's a road to nowhere, you want to put an exit ramp to nowhere. I feel bad for people living on Grist Mill; their problem is not a needed exit but the dropped end of Route 7. I've been in area for 14 years, and I don't know why the DOT has spent so much money on this. The question should be: what are we doing with 7? If the state has an end plan for continuing Route 7 then we can deal with current situation of the interchange, but only if a larger plan for Route 7 is there. This is all happening with a state that doesn't have budget -- where is the money coming from? I just don't see it. Your presentation was spot on by the way.
Public Involvement	17-Oct-17	5:30 Scoping comment	Elected Official, State Rep. 142 District	Fred Wilms	What we can afford must be part of the conversation, I agree with Representative Lavielle on this. Regarding this project, I like that there has been ongoing outreach to stakeholders. I am happy that the DOT has kept Alternate 21C on the table, especially regarding the Silvermine community. Alternative 26 is a little out of the box, but it merits a further look. I thank the Department for speaking with stakeholders tonight. I also like all the bicycle and pedestrian options being shown. I encourage the DOT to keep the public outreach going, including social media, presentations like this, and more.
Purpose and Need	17-Oct-17	Comment Sheet	Resident		Close down the Interchange 40 entirely. Build just the completion of Route & and Merritt Parkway
Traffic & Transportation	17-Oct-17	5:30 Scoping comment	PAC	Elizabeth Stocker	Those were some good comments from Mr. Cusack: what is going to happen to Route 7? This question needs to be part of the scope of this project. Also, I'd like to ask the project team to pay attention to businesses that might benefit from an expansion of Route 7, and to this regard I hope that the environmental review takes into consideration our business and residents along the Route 7 corridor and the surrounding area.
Traffic & Transportation	17-Oct-17	Comment Sheet	Resident		Pay attention to Creeping Hemlock Drive - note people using that and West Rocks two and from the north to avoid Main Avenue during peak hours.

Appendix B
Comments Received During Scoping Comment Period

Topic	Date	Comment Type	Organization	Name	Comment
Alternatives	22-Oct-17	Email	Resident	C. Martin Weimer	<p>My comment for 7/15 Norwalk Project concerning completion of the Merritt Pkwy and the Rt.7 Connector:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Complete this important Rt.7 Connector interchange ASAP. <p>My comments for 7/15 Norwalk Project concerning the Merritt Pkwy and the Main Ave. interchange (exits 40A-40B):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The 40A-40B interchange will be redundant and should be removed. · The 40A-40B interchange has a high accident rate. · The 40A-40B interchange is no longer necessary because the Rt.7 Connector currently provides an interchange at New Canaan Ave and also access at Grist Mill Rd., both about (1) mile from the 40A-40B interchange. <p>I believe that if you were to "reverse engineer" these interchanges, in other words, if you already had the 7/15 interchange fully completed along with the current Rt.7 Connector interchanges at New Canaan Ave. and Grist Mill Rd.; you could not justify building the current 40A-40B interchange.</p> <p>If my above comments are implemented, the 7/15 Norwalk project becomes less complex and could be completed more quickly and at a much lower cost.</p> <p>Also, there will be no need to modify the Merritt Pkwy bridge over Main Ave. since the volume of traffic on Main Ave will be significantly lower and not need to be widened as proposed.</p>
Alternatives	22-Oct-17	Letter	Resident	Mary D. Campbell	<p>October 22, 2017 Andy Fesenmeyer; Connecticut Department of Transportation 2800 Berlin Turnpike; Newington, CT 06131</p> <p>Dear Mr. Fesenmeyer,</p> <p>I regret I was not able to attend the meeting at Norwalk City Hall on October 17th to share my concerns regarding the Merritt Parkway Route 7 redesign. As a lifetime resident of this area and a frequent user of the Route 7 Connector, I have several objections to the project.</p> <p>First, Alternate 26, a signalized boulevard, is unacceptable. The Route 7 Connector was built to better move traffic on the Route 7 corridor. Installing traffic signals to allow cars to access the Merritt Parkway from the connector is inefficient and will create a traffic nightmare. Look at how the traffic backs up now in the morning and evening during peak commutation times. Adding traffic signals would impede efficient traffic flow, reminiscent of the old Route 7. While it is unfortunate that the project was not done properly the first time and that the connector has not been built any further north, it has improved the flow of traffic on the north/south Route 7 corridor.</p> <p>Secondly, given the financial state of Connecticut, it is fiscally irresponsible to spend \$100 - \$200 million dollars on either alternative for this project. Access to the Merritt Parkway and the Route 7 Connector is readily available within a reasonable distance via Main Avenue/Route 7. The state should install proper signage to direct people to the current access point on Main Avenue/ Route 7.</p> <p>Lastly, does the State of Connecticut have any idea how many vehicles would use the new interchange? Please keep me informed of future meetings and updated information as it relates to this project.</p>

Topic	Date	Comment Type	Organization	Name	Comment
Alternatives	7-Nov-17	Email	Resident	Leigh Grant	At the end of the day, I favor "no build." However, in separate project, reengineer the cloverleaf at 40A and B as it is so outdated and dangerous. Originally, because the boulevard design was much less intrusive and costly, I was in favor of it. But it has become evident that the boulevard design will bring development with it - which I am not in favor of. 26 is far too costly and overbuilt for what it is meant to achieve if this highway is never continued to Danbury. It is a waste of money that Connecticut doesn't have.
Alternatives	8-Nov-17	Website	Resident	Jeremy Frost	I think the "boulevard plan" seems the most practical solution to the needs at hand.
Alternatives	9-Nov-17	Mailed Comment Sheet	Resident	Linda Lee	I think the connections proposed at 39A make no sense. To spend all that money so people travel North on the connector only to reach the end of the connector less than one mile away. People coming from the East can already access the Connector and get down to I-95. The only connections that need to be made are to allow people heading west access to I-95 via the Connector and people driving from I-95 who want to go West on the Merritt without getting off the highway.
Alternatives	14-Nov-17	Website	PAC	Joanne Ferrera	I prefer 21 or 21C alternatives. In my opinion, 26C will create a great deal of noise, unwanted lighting and air pollution in a residential neighborhood due to the traffic signals that will be installed. There is also the potential for more accidents.
Alternatives	15-Nov-17	Website	Resident	Michael Fetterer	Thank you for taking public comment for this project. Appreciate how you are taking the time to get this right. I want to see this project move forward and be as successful as possible. From the intersection of Routes 7 and 15, I live a short distance away, to the northwest. If you adopt the boulevard approach in Alternative 26, I am hoping / requesting you will do a full study on how quickly traffic may flow during peak hours. I would be curious about Rt 7 southbound traffic approaching the intersection to the north of Rt 15. If traffic backs up during peak periods, I would be concerned about air quality in the surrounding area, especially on summer afternoons when air quality sometimes gets into unhealthy levels.

Topic	Date	Comment Type	Organization	Name	Comment
Environmental	25-Oct-17	Letter	Norwalk River Watershed Association	Louise Washer	<p>October 25, 2017 Andy Fesenmeyer; Project Manager, Rt. 7-15 Norwalk; CTDOT</p> <p>Dear Mr. Fesenmeyer, I am writing on behalf of the Norwalk River Watershed Association, a non-profit organization that represents over 800 households and works to protect water quality and wildlife habitat in the Norwalk River watershed. We were impressed with the level of diligence and thought that has been given to this project as presented at the scoping presentation on October 17, and we wish you continued success. We realize public scoping is the initial stage of the project, and we appreciate the chance to offer input at this point before the environmental assessment has been done. Any work in the proposed design areas will impact the Norwalk River. Our main concerns are the effects on water quality and wildlife habitat of any construction done in or near the river and wetlands and of storm water runoff both during the construction process and after. We are especially concerned about threats to water quality because this is one of several large projects planned in the watershed.</p> <p>The Norwalk River is listed as a class B river, an impaired waterway, and the DOT has in the past used that classification as the starting point for claiming that no impact in water quality will result from its projects. While parts of the river are indeed impaired, it is important to understand that organizations like NRWA, Harbor Watch, Trout Unlimited and Norwalk River Watershed Initiative have been working for the last 20 years to improve water quality in the river. These groups use as a guide the Norwalk River Watershed Action Plan, which was written in 1998 and updated in 2011. Three years ago, these organizations and their volunteers were credited by the EPA with helping to remove two sections of the river from the impaired waterways list. As the EPA report stated, “the watershed approach has improved the river.” The EPA report credits our work, citing how, “Countless volunteers have participated in efforts to monitor water quality, identify pollution problems on the river, restore streamside buffers, and enhance trails and access points.” The goal of our work has been and remains to remove more sections of the river from the Impaired Waterways list and to protect the quality of the water entering Long Island Sound. This year alone, NRWA engaged close to 200 volunteers to help improve the watershed. Harbor Watch and Trout Unlimited are larger organizations with even more employees, interns and volunteers.</p> <p>Harbor Watch has been testing water quality in the river consistently for almost 20 years, so our community has a wealth of data to use as a guide for our work to protect the river as a resource. Additional challenges to water quality from construction or from added storm water runoff from new highway projects in the watershed threaten to set back our community’s efforts to improve water quality.</p> <p>In light of the number of projects in our area, NRWA requests that the CTDOT use a third party independent assessor to conduct its Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Evaluation (EA/EIE) and that it include an assessment of the cumulative effects, including increases in storm water runoff, of the multiple CTDOT projects planned for the Norwalk River Watershed. The combined effect of the current planned projects makes rigorous storm water controls for each one all the more imperative. The current Walk Bridge EA/EIE does not go far enough in assessing impact; it simply states no permanent</p>

				<p>impact on water quality. The added storm water outlets will result in increased runoff. It is hard to believe there will be no impact. The current EIE states that to manage runoff, "drainage swales may be used and closed deck approach will be used where applicable." We hope the EIE for the Route 7/15 Interchange will include specific plans for capturing runoff as well as a detailed assessment of damage to water quality, wetlands, wildlife, wildlife habitat and aquatic life during construction and from storm water runoff. We also request that the DOT add requirements for capturing runoff to its plans for the restoration of the Walk Bridge and the Yankee Doodle Bridge. The repair of these bridges and the Route 7 interchange alone present the CTDOT with a unique opportunity to reduce the amount of contaminated storm water runoff that enters the Norwalk River, the harbor, and the Sound. A concrete commitment to capturing runoff from bridges and highways that pass near wetlands and watercourses should be the baseline from which the CTDOT is working. Our community is owed these protections to water quality at the very least since it is bearing the brunt of the negative impact of years of construction on multiple projects. The Route 7/15 EIE should include consideration of the permanent damage that years of temporary impact from construction can cause to water quality, wetlands and aquatic life.</p> <p>We ask the CTDOT to clearly specify mitigation measures and erosion and sedimentation controls for any listed construction activities in and over the water and wetlands. We would like the DOT to provide information on what best management practices will be employed and who will oversee adherence to those standards, including who will test water quality during construction and how often. NRWA asks CTDOT to consult with Harbor Watch, which currently conducts regular water quality testing in the river, about how best to monitor impact during construction and protect wildlife habitat and water quality as well as the best ways to carry out mitigation efforts during and after construction.</p> <p>We hope to see very specific plans for protections to the wetlands and the river during construction. NRWA has had concerns about the effects on water quality and the severe damage to the riverbank at the site of repair work on the Perry Avenue Bridge. Protections of the riverbank vegetation and attempts to avoid compacting the soil are important to protecting the river from harmful runoff both during construction and after. Neither has been done at the Perry Avenue site.</p> <p>We hope the DOT will take this opportunity to improve the methods it uses to safeguard the river and surrounding wildlife habitat during construction projects. We also hope this project will be used as an opportunity to improve the mechanisms for capturing runoff from the intersection before it enters wetlands. We were very disappointed that such improvements were not included in the plans to repair the Yankee Doodle Bridge.</p> <p>Finally, NRWA fully supports the plans for including pedestrian and bike connections to the Norwalk River Valley Trail (NRVT). We see the NRVT as a vital way to connect the community to the Norwalk River and natural resources our community has to offer. Thank you for considering NRWA's concerns.</p> <p>Sincerely, Louise Washer, President Norwalk River Watershed Association</p>
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Topic	Date	Comment Type	Organization	Name	Comment
Environmental	16-Nov-17	Letter	Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection	Linda Brunza	<p>To: Andy Fesenmeyer, PE, Project Manager, Department of Transportation, 2800 Berlin Turnpike, Newington CT From: Linda Brunza- Environmental Analyst Telephone: 860-424-3739 Date: 11/16/2017 Email: Linda.Brunza@ct.gov Subject: Scoping Notice for Route 7/15 Interchange Project, Norwalk</p> <p>The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) received the Notice of Scoping for the Route 7/15 Interchange project proposed by the Department of Transportation (DOT). The project is an initiative to provide missing connections between Route 7 and the Merritt Parkway and improve access and safety. The following comments are submitted for your consideration.</p> <p><u>Inland Wetlands and Watercourses:</u> A map of this area shows that portions of the project may be located in or adjacent to wetlands and watercourses. DEEP recommends that a certified soil scientist perform a reconnaissance of the site in order to determine whether it meets the federal definition of a wetland or watercourse as defined in the 1987 Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual and Regional Supplements for the Clean Water Act Section 404 permit program. If the reconnaissance identifies regulated areas, they should be clearly delineated. Any activity within federally regulated wetland areas or watercourses at the site may require a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Further information is available on-line at Army Corps of Engineers, New England District or by calling the Corps Regulatory Branch in Concord, Massachusetts at 978-318-8338. If a permit is required from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, a Water Quality Certificate will also be required from DEEP pursuant to section 401 of the Clean Water Act. For further information, contact the Land and Water Resources Division at 860-424-3019. A fact sheet regarding 401 Water Quality Certification is available online at 401 Certification.</p> <p><u>Inland Fisheries:</u> DEEP Fisheries staff are working with the City of Norwalk and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to remove the Flock Process Dam located on the Norwalk River in the next 12 months. Removal of the dam will restore diadromous fish to upstream portions of the watershed. The Flock Process Dam impounds water upstream to the bridge labeled as "E" on the map provided by DOT. DOT project planners should coordinate with DEEP Fisheries Division because the water level will change once the dam is removed, and the project boundaries of the dam removal are located within the DOT project boundaries. Any instream work must protect stream morphology and habitat quality. DEEP Fisheries will work with the DOT during the permit review process to ensure fisheries resources and habitats are protected. Time of year restrictions and mitigation will be considered if there is direct in-stream work. DEEP Inland Fisheries can be contacted at 860-424-3474.</p> <p><u>Stormwater Discharge During Construction:</u> Stormwater discharges from construction sites where one or more acres are to be disturbed, regardless of project phasing, require an NPDES permit from the Permitting & Enforcement Division. The General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater and Dewatering Wastewaters Associated with Construction Activities (DEEP-WPED-GP-015) will cover these discharges. Stormwater treatment systems must be designed to comply with the post-construction stormwater performance management requirements of the permit. These include post-construction performance standards requiring retention of the water quality volume and incorporating control measures for runoff reduction and low impact development practices. For further information, contact the division at 860-424-3018. The construction stormwater general permit registrations can now be filed electronically through DEEP's e-Filing system known as ezFile. Additional information can be found on-line at: Construction Stormwater GP.</p> <p><u>Threatened and Endangered Species:</u> DEEP Wildlife Division maintains the Natural Diversity Database (NDDB) maps. These maps represent the approximate locations of species listed by the State, pursuant to section 26-306 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as endangered, threatened or special concern. The maps are a pre-screening tool to identify potential impacts to state listed species. The applicant may be required to submit a Request for Natural Diversity Data Base (NDDB) State Listed Species Review Form (DEEP-APP-007) and all required attachments, including</p>

					<p>maps, to the NDDDB for further review. Additional information concerning NDDDB reviews and the request form may be found on-line at: NDDDB Requests.</p> <p><u>Air Quality:</u> DEEP Air Bureau typically recommends the use of newer off-road construction equipment that meets the latest EPA or California Air Resources Board (CARB) standards. If newer equipment cannot be used, equipment with the best available controls on diesel emissions including retrofitting with diesel oxidation catalysts or particulate filters in addition to the use of ultra-low sulfur fuel would be the second choice that can be effective in reducing exhaust emissions. The use of newer equipment that meets EPA standards would obviate the need for retrofits. DEEP also recommends the use of newer on-road vehicles that meet either the latest EPA or California Air Resources Board (CARB) standards for construction projects. These on-road vehicles include dump trucks, fuel delivery trucks and other vehicles typically found at construction sites. On-road vehicles older than the 2007-model year typically should be retrofitted with diesel oxidation catalysts or diesel particulate filters for projects. Again, the use of newer vehicles that meet EPA standards would eliminate the need for retrofits. Additionally, Section 22a-174-18(b)(3)(C) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (RCSA) limits the idling of mobile sources to 3 minutes. This regulation applies to most vehicles such as trucks and other diesel engine-powered vehicles commonly used on construction sites. Adhering to the regulation will reduce unnecessary idling at truck staging zones, delivery or truck dumping areas and further reduce on-road and construction equipment emissions. Use of posted signs indicating the three-minute idling limit is recommended. It should be noted that only DEEP can enforce Section 22a-174-18(b)(3)(C) of the RCSA. Therefore, it is recommended that the project sponsor include language similar to the anti-idling regulations in the contract specifications for construction in order to allow them to enforce idling restrictions at the project site without the involvement of DEEP.</p> <p><u>Hazardous and Solid Waste:</u> DEEP staff determined that it is likely that there are hazardous or solid waste related concerns due to the historic nature of the site. Any project that has the potential for excavation contaminated soil must adhere to DEEP's laws, regulations, and policies governing such media. A site-specific hazardous materials management plan should be developed prior to commencement of construction and a health and safety plan for construction workers should also be prepared. The Development plans in urban areas that entail soil excavation should include a protocol for sampling and analysis of potentially contaminated soil. Soil with contaminant levels that exceed the applicable criteria of the Remediation Standard Regulations, that is not hazardous waste, is considered to be special waste. The disposal of special wastes, as defined in section 22a-209-1 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (RCSA), requires written authorization from the Waste Engineering and Enforcement Division prior to delivery to any solid waste disposal facility in Connecticut. If clean fill is to be segregated from waste material, there must be strict adherence to the definition of clean fill, as provided in Section 22a-209-1 of the RCSA. In addition, the regulations prohibit the disposal of more than 10 cubic yards of stumps, brush or woodchips on the site, either buried or on the surface. A fact sheet regarding disposal of special wastes and the authorization application form may be obtained at: Special Waste Fact Sheet.</p> <p><u>Flood Management:</u> Portions of the proposed project site are located within FEMA defined floodway and floodplain, Zone AE, on the community's Flood Insurance Rate Map. The project must be certified by DOT as being in compliance with flood and stormwater management standards specified in section 25-68d of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) and section 25-68h-1 through 25-68h-3 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (RCSA). The DOT project team should coordinate with DEEP to be made aware of the design constraints under the Flood Management Statutes and National Flood Insurance Program regulations. For assistance on the program and additional information, contact the Land and Water Resources Division at 860-424-3019. A fact sheet regarding Flood Management Certification is available online at Flood Management Certification. Thank you for the opportunity to review this project. These comments are based on the reviews provided by relevant staff and offices within DEEP during the designated comment period. They may not represent all applicable programs within DEEP. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions concerning these comments.</p> <p>cc: Robert Hannon, DEEP/ OPPD</p>
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Topic	Date	Comment Type	Organization	Name	Comment
Environmental	16-Nov-17	Letter	Norwalk Valley River Trail Steering Committee	Jim Carter	<p>From: Norwalk Valley River Trail Steering Committee To: ConnDOT</p> <p>The Steering Committee of the Norwalk River Valley Trail (NRVT) strongly supports the accommodation of the NRVT in the new, planned 7/15 interchange. The NRVT is a 38 mile Regional Trail Network traversing Fairfield County from Norwalk to Danbury and is identified in Gov. Malloy's 5 year transportation plan as <u>a trail of regional significance</u>. Portions of the trail are now complete in Norwalk and Wilton and active design and construction is currently underway in both communities. These projects will bring the NRVT to the Merritt Parkway Corridor -- the only barrier to a viable alternative transportation artery and valuable recreational and tourist resource.</p> <p>The 7/15 Interchange project comes into contact with the NRVT in three locations -- the NRVT West Branch follows the Eversource powerlines and will cross the Merritt near Perry Ave; the NRVT East Branch follows Glover Ave. and will cross under the Merritt near Main Ave (or TBD). The West Branch also will cross the reconfigured Grist Mill interchange near Belden Hill Rd. Completion of each of these three trail intersections is crucial to public safety. Otherwise, pedestrians, cyclists, commuters and tourists coming from the north and south will encounter abrupt dead-ends and be forced onto dangerous stretches of busy commercial thoroughfares.</p> <p>To summarize, the NRVT Steering Committee respectfully request ConnDOT complete these three essential trail accommodations to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A) improve connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists on an existing and expanding regional trail network for commuting, tourism, and recreational use; B) improve public safety; C) satisfy the goal of ConnDOT to improve multi-modal transportation options in urban areas; D) enhance both commercial and residential property values along the trail as well as further leverage the state and federal investment in the trail, redevelopment projects and incentives to businesses in proximity to the trail; and E) comply with FHWA's policy of accommodating all users in federally funded projects [reference 23 U.S.C. 217 (e) (g)] <p>Thank you,</p> <p>Jim Carter Norwalk Representative Norwalk River Valley Trail Steering Committee</p>

Topic	Date	Comment Type	Organization	Name	Comment
Environmental	20-Nov-17	Letter	Department of Public Health	Lori Mathieu	<p>November 16, 2017 Mr. Andy Fesenmeyer, P.E. Department of Transportation, 2800 Berlin Turnpike, P.O. Box 317546, Newington, CT 06131-7546 Re: Notice of Scoping for Route 7/15 Interchange Project Dear Mr. Fesenmeyer: In April of 2017, the Department of Transportation provided a Draft of the Purpose and Need Statement for the above noted project to the Department of Public health (DPH) for review and comment. The purpose and need statement was reviewed by the Drinking Water Section Source Assessment and Protection Unit and the attached comments were provided for your consideration. The DPH thanks you for the opportunity for early input into this process. At this time, the DPH has no additional comments to offer. If you have any questions, please contact Pat Bisacky of my staff at 860-509-7333 or via email at Patricia.Bisacky@ct.gov. Sincerely, Lori J. Mathieu, Public Health Section Chief, Drinking Water Section -----July Comments-----</p> <p>July 11, 2017 Mr. Andy Fesenmeyer, Transportation Supervising Engineer State of Connecticut Department of Transportation, Bureau of Engineering and Construction 2800 Berlin Turnpike, P.O. Box 317546, Newington, CT 06131-7546 Re: Draft Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Evaluation Route 7/Route 15 Interchange, Norwalk, Connecticut State Project No. 102-358; DPH Project No. 2017-0166 Dear Mr. Fesenmeyer, The Department of Public Health (DPH) Drinking Water Section (DWS) is in receipt of the Draft Purpose and Need Statement for the subject EA /EIE. The proposed project area is partially within the Level A Aquifer Protection Area (APA) of the Kellogg Deering Wellfield, a source of public drinking water for the customers of the Norwalk First Taxing District. Planning, construction and long-term maintenance of the proposed interchange improvements should take into consideration protection of the source of public drinking water. Please consider addressing the following items in the EA/EIE</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. During the planning phase the following should be addressed: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. The Norwalk First Taxing District should be consulted to provide the delineation of the Level A APA and specific source protection recommendations. b. The storm water system should be designed to minimize impacts to the water quality of the source of public drinking water. 2. Construction should be conducted in accordance with the DPH's "General Construction Best Management Practices for Sites within a Public Drinking Water Supply Area " 3. Long-term maintenance of the proposed project should include measures that protect the long-term purity of the public drinking water source of supply. Such measures include but may not be limited to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Utilizing mechanical means to control vegetation rather than applying pesticides, b. Reducing application rates of de-icing chemicals to the road surfaces in the winter in a manner that balances the needs for public safety with the potential public health impacts resulting from increasing sodium and chloride concentrations in the source water for public drinking water supplies. c. Maintaining the storm water system in accordance with the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's "General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater from Department of Transportation Separate Storm Sewer Systems". <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide early and put into this draft document. Sincerely, Lori J. Mathieu, Public Health Section Chief, Drinking Water Section</p>

Topic	Date	Comment Type	Organization	Name	Comment
Financing	19-Oct-17	Website	Resident	Jackie Slaker	To save money, consider not having the exit from southbound Merritt to Rt 7 north. Road ends shortly
Financing	13-Nov-17	Website	Resident	William Langley	project does not seem necessary after all this time. Better to save the money.
Financing	13-Nov-17	Website	Resident	Leroy Staib	This state is broke no more borrowing
Purpose and Need	19-Oct-17	Website	Resident	Jackie Slaker	This was not presented yet, but I can see if happening. The Merritt has done very well without lighting. There is no need to put lights all around the intersections. Does not help safety. Just an electric company sales pitch. Not fair to the neighboring country communities.
Purpose and Need	7-Nov-17	Website	Resident	Celeste Burton	Any politician supporting this project will never get the votes of my family again. Any business that supports this project will never get the support of my family again. Any person or entity that interferes with the environment that protects the flora and fauna in this area should be run out of our community.
Purpose and Need	7-Nov-17	Website	Resident	Art Petrone Jr.	This is a must have! It will promote a safer road and accelerate passenger car movement.
Purpose and Need	7-Nov-17	Website	Resident	Jim Depasquale	It is well over do! The minimal impact on a few residence should not supersede the major need of a much larger portion of the community. Commerce, safety and the overwhelming benefit to Fairfield county should come first!
Purpose and Need	7-Nov-17	Website	Resident	Holly Mazzeo	I work at 801 Main Avenue. This whole corridor is problematic for cars
Purpose and Need	13-Nov-17	Website	Resident	Donald Sauvigne	The interchange must be upgraded to the original intent of proper entrance and exit ramps from all directions to support the traffic patterns on Rt 15 and Rt 7. This is very important to the improved flow of traffic, reducing accident prone area, and enhancing the economic competitiveness of Connecticut and Fairfield country for attractive work environments---which need quality road networks with ease of access. Thank you.
Purpose and Need	13-Nov-17	Website	Resident	Martin Katz	This project will never improve traffic until you solve the mowing problem! The Merritt is congested daily Spring, Summer, and Fall with delays due to lane closures for mowing. Why not save money and make commuters happy by eliminating mowing efforts/expense and spread grass killer down. Building a new 7/15 interchange will make travel on Merritt any better. Fix the mowing problem and help everyone out!

Topic	Date	Comment Type	Organization	Name	Comment
Purpose and Need	14-Nov-17	Website	Resident	Frank Taylor	If/When any work is done, it should maintain the "Merritt Parkway" look for design vs the industrial/freeway look of the current rt7/15 bridge or the rt 8/Merritt bridge. Before spending time and money on what is a bad design originally, money and time should be spent actually finishing projects that seem to be under construction for months/years or are significant safety maintenance issues. I95 east of New Haven and in Fairfield Cty seem to be continually under construction - barriers, cones and signs up but it can be stretches of months at a time when there is no apparent work actually being done. When work is done, please cleanup all of the signs, etc. about construction vs leaving them for months after work is complete. On RT 53 in Redding there are still construction ahead signs when work has been apparently complete for months.
Purpose and Need	14-Nov-17	Website	Resident	Craig Esslinger	PLEASE. PLEASE. Finish this project as it was intended. I have been commuting from CT to Long Island for 30 years. This has turned into a quality of life issue. The Merritt Parkway Historical Society does not represent the users of this major thru fare. They should not hold us hostage. Finish the interchange. Make the parkway accessible going North and South from Route 7. Make it a legitimate choice to go Northbound from I-95/exit 15 when things are not moving. The Grist Mill area is a disaster. Route 7 should be extended into Wilton (Wolfpit Rd).
Purpose and Need	20-Nov-17	Email	Resident	Frank Agostino	<p>Andy,</p> <p>I attended one of the City Hall meetings related to the Route 7-15 proposed work that is under review. Thank you for taking the time to answer some of my questions.</p> <p>I am a resident of Lakewood Drive and very concerned about the outcome of this project. I see the good, but I am also worried about the surrounding impact. I realize there is compromise in most of the decisions we make and this project is no different. There is always the challenge of satisfying the want, versus the need. I hope that the needs are addressed properly and the wants do not drive an incorrect outcome.</p> <p>I reviewed the "Landscape Master Plan for the Merritt Parkway" document. It shares a vision with expectation that the designer wanted allowing the cars passing along to have a beautiful driving experience. I believe that the people who live along the Merritt Parkway desire that same grand vision just from a different perspective.</p> <p>Attached is a representation of my thoughts/inputs related to the Route 7-15 project showing a concept that may satisfied everyone.</p> <p>Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my comments.</p>

Topic	Date	Comment Type	Organization	Name	Comment
Traffic & Transportation	19-Oct-17	Website	Resident	Marilyn Slaker	The Route 7 expressway should remain as such. Adding traffic signals does not make any sense. If you add traffic signals, the road becomes like the existing route 7 main ave. The purpose of the expressway is to avoid the traffic signals. Traffic signals will create further back-up which already exists at certain hours at the grist mill exit.
Traffic & Transportation	26-Oct-17	Website	Resident	Kevin Karl	Stoplights on the connector is ridiculous. We need normal free flowing ramps between the two highways.
Traffic & Transportation	26-Oct-17	Website	Resident	Michael Stenger	As a resident of the area impacted by the currently-faulty 7-15 interchange, I feel the time is finally right to correct the deficient exit situation once and for all. I would strongly discourage the addition of any traffic lights along Route 7; at rush hour, traffic is bad enough, and the Grist Mill terminal is backed up significantly for over an hour most nights. Essential to the completion of a cohesive and modern interchange is the expansion of Route 7 itself. I have read that there is a proposal to extend Route 7 up into Wilton; that would significantly alleviate local traffic and the entire 7/15 interchange project make much more sense. Placing traffic lights on Route 7 would only further increase congestion on Main Ave., West Rocks Road, and other auxiliary north-south streets in that area of the city. Please take the future into consideration; as Norwalk continues to add apartment buildings and its population increases at a rapid rate, we need to be able to keep our transportation system modern, effective, and efficient for Norwalk's citizenry.

Topic	Date	Comment Type	Organization	Name	Comment
Traffic & Transportation	3-Nov-17	Email	PAC	Sue Prosi	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Route 7 and 15 interchange project . As a south western CT regional transportation planner who worked to identify transportation system deficiencies and evaluate and advance projects to improve transportation system efficiency, connectivity, safety, operations and mobility choices for decades, the Route 7 & at project is essential and long overdue.</p> <p>Given the uncertainty of funding for any of the currently proposed build options, I recommend that additional alternatives be added to the NEPA and CEPA analyses that promote improvements to the Route 123-Route 719-Route 7 corridor. Any of these strategic improvements will provide benefits to the traveling public, the economy and the environment. Mobility for the public and safety responders will be enhanced. Regardless of which build option is funded and constructed in the future, the identified alternatives are needed and are not “throw away” investments.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Corridor safety and operational improvements and enhancement of pedestrian, bicycle and transit accommodations between Route 123 at Riverside (Norwalk) to Route 719 and Route 7 at Route 33 (Wilton); and Route 7 Gristmill improvements. 2. Corridor safety and operational improvements and enhancement of pedestrian, bicycle and transit accommodations between Route 123 at Riverside Avenue (Norwalk) to Route 719 at Route 7 and Gristmill (Norwalk); and Route 7 Gristmill improvements. 3. Improvement of Route 7 and Gristmill intersections and transitions to Route 7 north of Gristmill, Route 719 south of Gristmill, and Gristmill west to Belden Hill and its intersection with Belden Hill. <p>In addition, a commuter parking lot on property owned by the state in the vicinity of Route 7 and Gristmill should be included in all designs. Proponents of extension of the Norwalk River Trail and the Route 7 expressway north should realize that the commuter parking lot will not be an obstruction to either the multiuse trail or future expressway. A public commuter lot will provide a location for parking for users of the Norwalk River Trail, rideshare and transit users in the interim period before the multiuse trail is extended or gaps filled. Extension of the Route 7 expressway requires extensive environmental assessment and mitigation as well as significant funding and reversal of the political sentiment of corridor towns and people north of Norwalk who oppose extension of the expressway.</p> <p>Would you please add my name to the project contact list so I may keep up with the project progress? Also, please confirm receipt and disposition of my comments. Merritt Parkway Exit 40, Glover and Creeping Hemlock, should be evaluated and upgraded to the maximum extent possible if the full interchange project (#102-358) is not selected as the preferred alternative.</p>

Topic	Date	Comment Type	Organization	Name	Comment
Traffic & Transportation	7-Nov-17	Email	Resident	Mike Armstrong, IIDA	<p>Hi.</p> <p>I understand you are taking comments regarding the potential road construction project. I work at FactSet in Merritt 7 so I drive the area frequently.</p> <p>I'm sure you've heard most of these already:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The traffic backing up onto the Merritt parkway from people trying to get off during rush hour is a big problem. These ramps have to be expanded and improved (including the route 33 exit southbound) 2. The route 7 connector currently goes from 4 lanes down to 2 and then opens back up to three at the stop light. I never understood the pinch down. 3. I agree that the connector should be attached to the Merritt parkway for northbound access as well as the current southbound. 4. Seems like there could be another exit near the end of the route 7 connector that swings down to Glover ave. Maybe feeding onto Glover southbound only. Maybe an entrance to the connector from Glover as well...up and over. That might help all the congestion at the grist mill stop light.
Traffic & Transportation	7-Nov-17	Website	Resident	Adolph Neaderland	<p>The current expressway 7 was designed to siphon traffic (especially trucks) away from Main Ave.</p> <p>Even though not completed thru Wilton, it did.</p> <p>If traffic lights are added at the 15/main ave/7 (to save money), the incentive will be compromised. and traffic on Main Ave will increase. A lost cause!</p> <p>That intersection design should revert back to the community approved design of a couple of years ago - all without traffic lights.</p>
Traffic & Transportation	7-Nov-17	Website	Resident	Janet Trifero	<p>YES, WE NEED A EXIT FOR MERRITT NORTH, AND EXIT FROM MERRITT TO CONNECTOR. ALSO, THE LITE FROM THE STREET WHEN EXITING NORTH FROM THE MERIT 44? AND CROSS OVER TO MERRITT 7 OFFICES NEEDS TO BE COORDINATED WITH THE NEXT LITE WHEN YOU TAKE A LEFT TO SILVERMINE! IT MAKES NO SENSE TO WAIT A VERY LENGTHY TIME THEN MAKE THE LEFT, ONLY TO HAVE A RED LITE AGAIN! PLSE FIX!!</p>
Traffic & Transportation	7-Nov-17	Website	Resident	Cathleen Lesko	<p>I agree that the Rt to Merritt Parkway project is very needed. I oppose the installation of light poles on the Merritt Parkway. I believe it is unnecessary and may lead to higher speeds.</p>
Traffic & Transportation	7-Nov-17	Website	Resident	Roma Stibravy	<p>The interchanges should be completed, taking into account the MINIMAL impact on the abutting Silvermine neighborhoods.</p> <p>Also, the Route 7 Expressway should be completed to Danbury over the objections of Wilton and Ridgefield. If a survey were taken today you would get many more YES votes from these two towns.</p>

Topic	Date	Comment Type	Organization	Name	Comment
Traffic & Transportation	7-Nov-17	Website	Resident	Maureen DeNunzio	Norwalk definitely needs a connection from Rt 7 N directly to Merritt Parkway N, and same for South. Too much congestion. Need better traffic flow, less frustration and road rage.
Traffic & Transportation	8-Nov-17	Website	Resident	John Bradley	This project is decades overdue. I fully support the addition of access points for Routes 7
Traffic & Transportation	8-Nov-17	Website	Resident	Elsa Obuchowski	The Route 7 / Merritt Parkway interchange should be a regular full cloverleaf. I heard they were talking about adding stop lights on Route 7, which would be counterproductive. Just make it a full cloverleaf. Thank you.
Traffic & Transportation	11-Nov-17	Website	Resident	Frank Hennessy	i agree rt 7 north should connect to Merritt north and Merritt south should connect to rt 7 south
Traffic & Transportation	13-Nov-17	Email	Resident	Steve Pond	Hello,The Merritt Pkwy/Route 7 interchange should be completed with access to north and southbound from both directions. I believe it could be and should be done WITH adequate oversight so that the environmental impact is lessened as much as possible. the DOT CERTAINLY has the capability to figure out how to do this project and at the same time keep the environmental impact to a minimum AND maintain the aesthetic qualities of the parkway.Let us reason together! The benefits of doing so will be well worth the extra budget needed by the project so that the concerns are addressed.
Traffic & Transportation	13-Nov-17	Website	Resident	Frederic Chiu	Reducing traffic between 15/Exit 40 and 7/Exit 2 would allow safer turns out of commercial driveways onto 123, particularly left turns. i.e. exiting South out of McDonalds, or exiting North out of Citgo. Currently, one can wait many minutes before being able to exit/turn left.
Traffic & Transportation	14-Nov-17	Email	Resident	Martin Katz	Gentlemen: I have commuted on Merritt Parkway for 40 years and unsure this Project has any value to commuters! Since you live out of area and have not commuted in morning and afternoon rush hours, I don't believe you have any reality of the real problems with traffic! I would advise you and the rest of the Project Team to spend one week traveling south on the Merritt at 7:30 am from Trumbull to Greenwich, and north at 5:15pm from Greenwich to Trumbull. Also, please travel any week day during Spring, Summer, and Fall mid day and explain why the State mows the parkway and closes lanes causing massive traffic delays? Why this expense in labor and equipment to mow Merritt Parkway? Why not spread grass killer down in spring and reduce traffic delays on Merritt? The 7/15 Interchange will not improve anything and you cannot understand unless until you experience commuting on Merritt Parkway!
Traffic & Transportation	15-Nov-17	Website	Resident	Karen Murray	We need a way to connect Rt 7 N with RT 15 N. Difficult for commuting each day!!!

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Appendix C
Website Comments, Individual Letters, Agency Letters and Emails

Website Comments

Alternatives

First: Jeremy

Last: Frost

Email: jeremyfrost@mac.com

Home Zip: 06890

Work Zip:

Comment: I think the "boulevard plan" seems the most practical solution to the needs at hand.

Alternatives

First: joanne

Last: Ferrera

Email: tippyfer@aol.com

Home Zip: 06850

Work Zip:

Comment: I prefer 21 or 21C alternatives. In my opinion, 26C will create a great deal of noise, unwanted lighting and air pollution in a residential neighborhood due to the traffic signals that will be installed. There is also the potential for more accidents.

Alternatives

First: Michael

Last: Fetterer

Email: michaelfetterer@gmail.com

Home Zip: 06850

Work Zip: 10604

Comment: Thank you for taking public comment for this project. Appreciate how you are taking the time to get this right. I want to see this project move forward and be as successful as possible.

From the intersection of Routes 7 and 15, I live a short distance away, to the northwest. If you adopt the boulevard approach in Alternative 26, I am hoping / requesting you will do a full study on how quickly traffic may flow during peak hours. I would be curious about Rt 7 southbound traffic approaching the intersection to the north of Rt 15. If traffic backs up during peak periods, I would be concerned about air quality in the surrounding area, especially on summer afternoons when air quality sometimes gets into unhealthy levels.

Financing

First: Leroy
Last: Staib
Email: Staibleroy@sbcglobal.net
Home Zip:
Work Zip:
Comment: This state is broke no more borrowing

Financing

First: Jackie
Last: Slaker
Email: slakerj@hotmail.com
Home Zip: 06851
Work Zip:
Comment: To save money, consider not having the exit from southbound Merritt to Rt 7 north. Road ends shortly

Financing

First: william
Last: langley
Email: wlangley@optonline.net
Home Zip: 06903
Work Zip:
Comment: project does not seem necessary after all this time. Better to save the money.

Purpose and Need

First: Donald
Last: Sauvigne
Email: Dhsauvigne@aol.com
Home Zip: 06897
Work Zip: 06897
Comment: The interchange must be upgraded to the original intent of proper entrance and exit ramps from all directions to support the traffic patterns on Rt 15 and Rt 7. This is very important to the improved flow of traffic, reducing accident prone area, and enhancing the economic competitiveness of Connecticut and Fairfield country for attractive work environments---which need quality road networks with ease of access. Thank you.

Purpose and Need

First: Martin

Last: Katz

Email: Katzmartin@yahoo.com

Home Zip: 06897

Work Zip:

Comment: This project will never improve traffic until you solve the mowing problem! The Merrit is congested daily Spring, Summer, and Fall with delays due to lane closures for mowing. Why not save money and make commuters happy by eliminating mowing efforts/expense and spread grass killer down. Building a new 7/15 interchange will make travel on Merrit any better. Fix the mowing problem and help everyone out!

Purpose and Need

First: Frank

Last: Taylor

Email: fjtaylor@tayloredbizsolutions.com

Home Zip: 06896

Work Zip: 06829

Comment: If/When any work is done, it should maintain the "Merritt Parkway" look for design vs the industrial/freeway look of the current rt7/15 bridge or the rt 8/merritt bridge. Before spending time and money on what is a bad design originally, money and time should be spent actually finishing projects that seem to be under construction for months/years or are significant safety maintenance issues. I95 east of New Haven and in Fairfield Cty seem to be continually under construction - barriers, cones and signs up but it can be stretches of months at a time when there is no apparent work actually being done.

When work is done, please cleanup all of the signs, etc about construction vs leaving them for months after work is complete. On RT 53 in Redding there are still construction ahead signs when work has been apparently complete for months.

Purpose and Need

First: CRAIG

Last: ESSLINGER

Email: CKSLINGER@MAC.COM

Home Zip: 06883

Work Zip: 01597

Comment: PLEASE. PLEASE. Finish this project as it was intended. I have been commuting from CT to Long Island for 30 years. This has turned into a quality of life issue. The Merrit Parkway Historical Society does not represent the users of this major thru fare. They should not hold us hostage. Finish the interchange. Make the parkway accessible going North and South from Route 7. Make it a legitimate choice to go Northbound from I-95/exit 15 when things are not moving. The Grist Mill area is a disaster. Route 7 should be extended into Wilton (Wolfpit Rd).

Purpose and Need

First: Jackie

Last: Slaker

Email: slakerj@hotmail.com

Home Zip: 06851

Work Zip:

Comment: This was not presented yet, but I can see if happening. The Merritt has done very well without lighting. There is no need to put lights all around the intersections. Does not help safety. Just an electric company sales pitch. Not fair to the neighboring country communities.

Purpose and Need

First: Celeste

Last: Burton

Email: celestebur@optonline.net

Home Zip: 06850

Work Zip:

Comment: Any politician supporting this project will never get the votes of my family again. Any business that supports this project will never get the support of my family again. Any person or entity that interferes with the environment that protects the flora and fauna in this area should be run out of our community.

Purpose and Need

First: Art

Last: Petrone Jr

Email: artpetrone@yahoo.com

Home

Zip: 06851

Work Zip: 06851

Comment: This is a must have! It will promote a safer road and accelerate passenger car movement.

Purpose and Need

First: Jim

Last: Depasquale

Email: jimdepasquale@optonline.net

Home Zip: 06854

Work Zip: 06854

Comment: It is well over do! The minimal impact on a few residence should not superceed the major need of a much larger portion of the community. Commerce, safety and the overwhelming benefit to Fairfield county should come first!

Purpose and Need

First: Holly
Last: Mazzeo
Email: holly.mazzeo.mls@gmail.com
Home Zip: 06612
Work Zip: 06851
Comment: I work at 801 Main Avenue. This whole corridor is problematic for cars

Traffic & Transportation

First: Marilyn
Last: Slaker
Email: slakerm@hotmail.com
Home Zip: 06851
Work Zip:
Comment: The Route 7 expressway should remain as such. Adding traffic signals does not make any sense. If you add traffic signals, the road becomes like the existing route 7 main ave. The purpose of the expressway is to avoid the traffic signals. Traffic signals will create further back-up which already exists at certain hours at the grist mill exit.

Traffic & Transportation

First: Kevin
Last: Karl
Email: Kkarl97@optonline.net
Home Zip: 06850
Work Zip:
Comment: Stoplights on the connector is ridiculous. We need normal free flowing ramps between the two highways.

Traffic & Transportation

First: Michael
Last: Stenger
Email: stengerm93@gmail.com
Home
Zip: 06851
Work Zip: 06851

Comment: As a resident of the area impacted by the currently-faulty 7-15 interchange, I feel the time is finally right to correct the deficient exit situation once and for all. I would strongly discourage the addition of any traffic lights along Route 7; at rush hour, traffic is bad enough, and the Grist Mill terminal

is backed up significantly for over an hour most nights. Essential to the completion of a cohesive and modern interchange is the expansion of Route 7 itself. I have read that there is a proposal to extend Route 7 up into Wilton; that would significantly alleviate local traffic and the entire 7/15 interchange project make much more sense. Placing traffic lights on Route 7 would only further increase congestion on Main Ave., West Rocks Road, and other auxiliary north-south streets in that area of the city. Please take the future into consideration; as Norwalk continues to add apartment buildings and its population increases at a rapid rate, we need to be able to keep our transportation system modern, effective, and efficient for Norwalks citizenry.

Traffic & Transportation

First: Adolph

Last: Neaderland

Email: aneaderand@gmail.com

Home Zip: 06850

Work Zip:

Comment: The current expressway 7 was designed to siphon traffic (especially trucks) away from Main Ave. Even tho not completed thru Wilton, it did.

If traffic lights are added at the 15/main ave/7 (to save money), the incentive will be compromised. and traffic on Main Ave will increase. A lost cause!

That intersection design should revert back to the community approved design of a couple of years ago - all without traffic lights.

Traffic & Transportation

First: Janet

Last: Trifero

Email: jkteachtutortest@gmail.com

Home Zip: 06850

Work Zip:

Comment: YES, WE NEED A EXIT FOR MERRITT NORTH, AND AND EXIT FROM MERIT TO CONNECTOR. ALSO, THE LITE FROM THE STREET WHEN EXITING NORTH FROM THE MERIT 44? AND CROSS OVER TO MERRIT 7 OFFICES NEEDS TO BE COORDINATED WITH THE NEXT LITE WHEN YOU TAKE A LEFT TO SILVERMINE! IT MAKES NO SENSE TO WAIT A VERY LENGTHY TIME THEN MAKE THE LEFT, ONLY TO HAVE A RED LITE AGAIN! PLSE FIX!!

Traffic & Transportation

First: Cathleen

Last: Lesko

Email: cathylesko@optonline.net

Home Zip: 06850

Work Zip: 06850

Comment: I agree that the Rt to Merritt Parkway project is very needed. I oppose the installation of light poles on the Merritt Parkway. I believe it is unnecessary and may lead to higher speeds.

Traffic & Transportation

First: roma
Last: stibravy
Email: rstibravy@yahoo.com
Home Zip: 06850
Work Zip:

Comment: The interchanges should be completed, taking into account the MINIMAL impact on the abutting Silvermine neighborhoods.

Also, the Route 7 Expressway should be completed to Danbury over the objections of Wilton and Ridgefield. If a survey were taken today you would get many more YES votes from these two towns.

Traffic & Transportation

First: Maureen
Last: DeNunzio
Email: milano3031@yahoo.com
Home Zip: 06854
Work Zip: 00000

Comment: Norwalk definitely needs a connection from Rt 7 N directly to Merritt Parkway N, and same for South. Too much congestion. Need better traffic flow, less frustration and road rage.

Traffic & Transportation

First: John
Last: Bradley
Email: jbradley@karldirect.com
Home Zip: 06840
Work Zip: 06840

Comment: This project is decades overdue. I fully support the addition of access points for Routes 7

Traffic & Transportation

First: Elsa
Last: Obuchowski
Email: epltd@earthlink.net
Home Zip: 06851
Work Zip: 06851

Comment: The Route 7 / Merritt Parkway interchange should be a regular full cloverleaf. I heard they were talking about adding stop lights on Route 7, which would be counterproductive. Just make it a full cloverleaf. Thank you.

Traffic & Transportation

First: frank
Last: hennessy
Email: phennessy48@gmail.com
Home Zip: 06850
Work Zip: 06901
Comment: i agree rt 7 north should connect to merritt north and merritt south should connect to rt 7 south

Traffic & Transportation

First: Frederic
Last: Chiu
Email: vote@fredericchiu.com
Home Zip: 06880
Work Zip: 06880
Comment: Reducing traffic between 15/Exit 40 and 7/Exit 2 would allow safer turns out of commercial driveways onto 123, particularly left turns. i.e. exiting South out of McDonalds, or exiting North out of Citgo. Currently, one can wait many minutes before being able to exit/turn left.

Traffic & Transportation

First: Karen
Last: Murray
Email: karen.murray@diageo.com
Home Zip: 06850
Work Zip: 06851
Comment: We need a way to connect Rt 7 N with RT 15 N. Difficult for commuting each day!!!

Emailed Comments

Alternatives

From: Martin Weimer <mailto:mweimer@optonline.net>
Sent: Sunday, October 22, 2017 2:52 PM
To: Fesenmeyer, Andy A.
Subject: 7/15Norwalk Project

My comment for 7/15 Norwalk Project concerning completion of the Merritt Pkwy and the Rt.7 Connector:

- Complete this important Rt.7 Connector interchange ASAP.

My comments for 7/15 Norwalk Project concerning the Merritt Pkwy and the Main Ave. interchange (exits 40A-40B):

- The 40A-40B interchange will be redundant and should be removed.
- The 40A-40B interchange has a high accident rate.
- The 40A-40B interchange is no longer necessary because the Rt.7 Connector currently provides an interchange at New Canaan Ave and also access at Grist Mill Rd., both about (1) mile from the 40A-40B interchange.

I believe that if you were to “reverse engineer” these interchanges, in other words, if you already had the 7/15 interchange fully completed along with the current Rt.7 Connector interchanges at New Canaan Ave. and Grist Mill Rd.; you could not justify building the current 40A-40B interchange.

If my above comments are implemented, the 7/15 Norwalk project becomes less complex and could be completed more quickly and at a much lower cost.

Also, there will be no need to modify the Merritt Pkwy bridge over Main Ave. since the volume of traffic on Main Ave will be significantly lower and not need to be widened as proposed.

C. Martin Weimer

Alternatives

From: Leigh Grant cartellino@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, November 7, 2017 1:28:26 PM
To: Andy.Fesenmeyer@ct.gov; Ken Livingston
Subject: Public Scoping Reply

At the end of the day, I favor "no build." However, in separate project, reengineer the cloverleaf at 40A and B as it is so outdated and dangerous. Originally, because the boulevard design was much less intrusive and costly, I was in favor of it. But it has become evident that the boulevard design will bring development with it - which I am not in favor of. 26 is far too costly and overbuilt for what it is meant to achieve if this highway is never continued to Danbury. It is a waste of money that Connecticut doesn't have.

Purpose and Need

From: frank agostino <mailto:abf3@optonline.net>

Sent: Thursday, November 16, 2017 12:48 PM

To: Fesenmeyer, Andy A.

Subject: Route 7-15 Comments for your review

Andy,

I attended one of the City Hall meetings related to the Route 7-15 proposed work that is under review.

Thank you for taking the time to answer some of my questions.

I am a resident of Lakewood Drive and very concerned about the outcome of this project. I see the good, but I am also worried about the surrounding impact. I realize there is compromise in most of the decisions we make and this project is no different. There is always the challenge of satisfying the want, versus the need. I hope that the needs are addressed properly and the wants do not drive an incorrect outcome.

I reviewed the "Landscape Master Plan for the Merritt Parkway" document. It shares a vision with expectation that the designer wanted allowing the cars passing along to have a beautiful driving experience. I believe that the people who live along the Merritt Parkway desire that same grand vision just from a different perspective.

Attached is a representation of my thoughts/inputs related to the Route 7-15 project showing a concept that may satisfied everyone.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my comments.

Frank Agostino

NOTE: The following two pages are a PowerPoint presentation sent as an attachment to the email from Frank Agostino, November 16, 2017

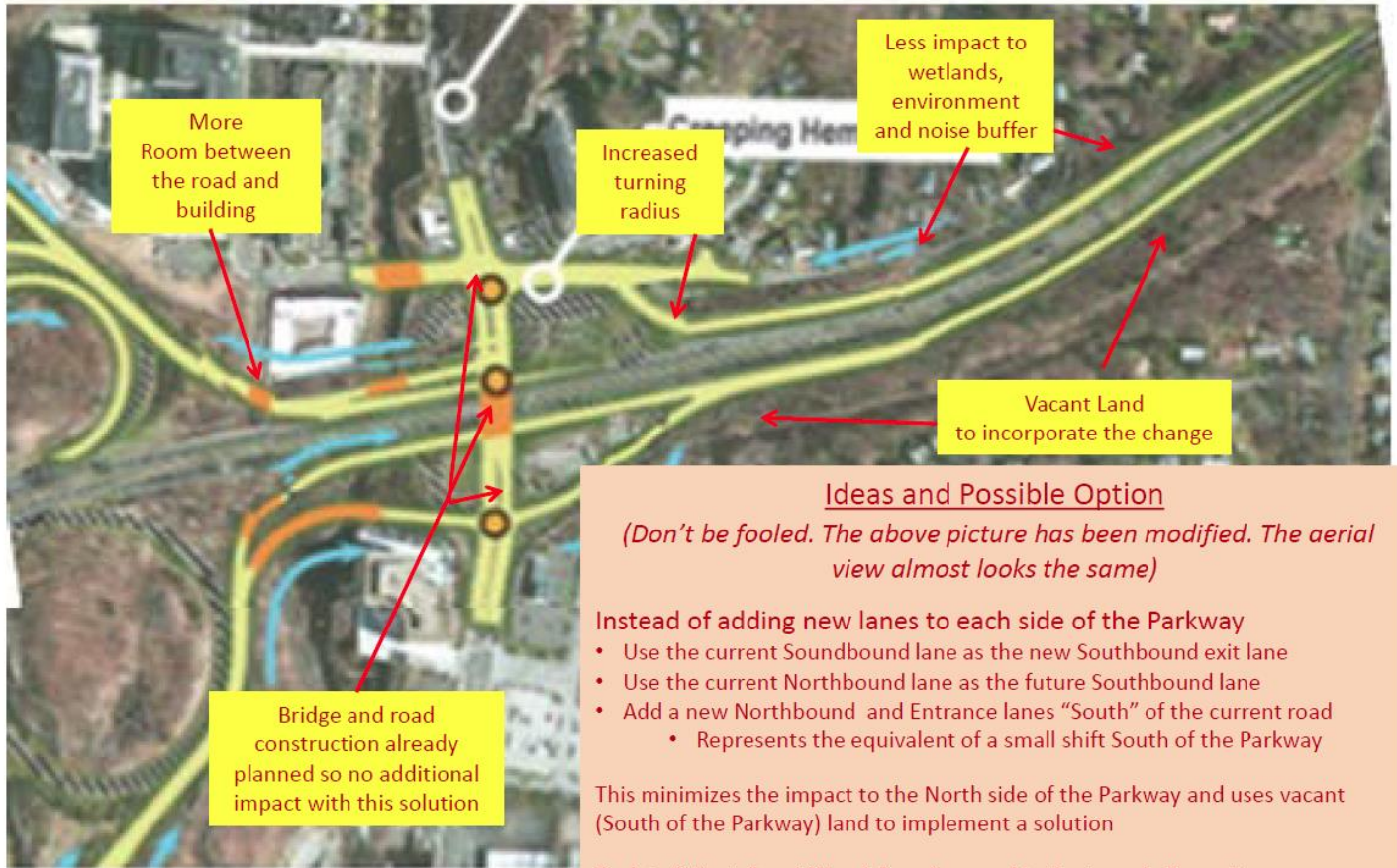
Route 7/15 Norwalk Solution Offering

11-16-2017



Current Picture was provided at the Town Hall meeting showing 1-proposed option hat capture the intent of most solutions

Offered Solution "4U"



Ideas and Possible Option

(Don't be fooled. The above picture has been modified. The aerial view almost looks the same)

Instead of adding new lanes to each side of the Parkway

- Use the current Southbound lane as the new Southbound exit lane
- Use the current Northbound lane as the future Southbound lane
- Add a new Northbound and Entrance lanes "South" of the current road
 - Represents the equivalent of a small shift South of the Parkway

This minimizes the impact to the North side of the Parkway and uses vacant (South of the Parkway) land to implement a solution

Back to "Wants" and "Needs" as discussed in the town hall meetings

- A solution that solves the problem with minimal impact to the surrounding environment

Modified View (using current picture with proposed alterations)

Traffic & Transportation

November 7, 2017

From: Mike Armstrong IIDA

Hi.

I understand you are taking comments regarding the potential road construction project. I work at FactSet in Merritt 7 so I drive the area frequently.

I'm sure you've heard most of these already:

1. The traffic backing up onto the Merritt parkway from people trying to get off during rush hour is a big problem. These ramps have to be expanded and improved (including the route 33 exit southbound)
2. The route 7 connector currently goes from 4 lanes down to 2 and then opens back up to three at the stop light. I never understood the pinch down.
3. I agree that the connector should be attached to the Merritt parkway for northbound access as well as the current southbound.
4. Seems like there could be another exit near the end of the route 7 connector that swings down to Glover ave. Maybe feeding onto Glover southbound only. Maybe an entrance to the connector from Glover as well...up and over. That might help all the congestion at the grist mill stop light.

Thanks...

Mike

Michael Armstrong IIDA

Project Manager, Workplace Design

FactSet (NYSE, NASDAQ: FDS)

Office: 203-810-2349

marmstrong@factset.com

www.factset.com

Traffic & Transportation

From: Sue Prosi sueprosi@gmail.com

Date: Fri, Nov 3, 2017 at 11:07 AM

Subject: Route 7 and 15 Interchange Comments

To: projectteam@7-15norwalk.com

Re: Comments on Route 7 & 15 Interchange Project

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Route 7 and 15 interchange project . As a south western CT regional transportation planner who worked to identify transportation system deficiencies and evaluate and advance projects to improve transportation system efficiency, connectivity, safety, operations and mobility choices for decades, the Route 7 & at project is essential and long overdue.

Given the uncertainty of funding for any of the currently proposed build options, I recommend that additional alternatives be added to the NEPA and CEPA analyses that promote improvements to the Route 123-Route 719-Route 7 corridor. Any of these strategic improvements will provide benefits to the traveling public, the economy and the environment. Mobility for the public and safety responders will be enhanced. Regardless of which build option is funded and constructed in the future, the identified alternatives are needed and are not “throw away” investments.

1. Corridor safety and operational improvements and enhancement of pedestrian, bicycle and transit accommodations between Route 123 at Riverside (Norwalk) to Route 719 and Route 7 at Route 33 (Wilton); and Route 7 Gristmill improvements.
2. Corridor safety and operational improvements and enhancement of pedestrian, bicycle and transit accommodations between Route 123 at Riverside Avenue (Norwalk) to Route 719 at Route 7 and Gristmill (Norwalk); and Route 7 Gristmill improvements.
3. Improvement of Route 7 and Gristmill intersections and transitions to Route 7 north of Gristmill, Route 719 south of Gristmill, and Gristmill west to Belden Hill and its intersection with Belden Hill.

In addition, a commuter parking lot on property owned by the state in the vicinity of Route 7 and Gristmill should be included in all designs. Proponents of extension of the Norwalk River Trail and the Route 7 expressway north should realize that the commuter parking lot will not be an obstruction to either the multiuse trail or future expressway. A public commuter lot will provide a location for parking for users of the Norwalk River Trail, rideshare and transit users in the interim period before the multiuse trail is extended or gaps filled. Extension of the Route 7 expressway requires extensive environmental assessment and mitigation as well as significant funding and reversal of the political sentiment of corridor towns and people north of Norwalk who oppose extension of the expressway.

Would you please add my name to the project contact list so I may keep up with the project progress? Also, please confirm receipt and disposition of my comments.

Contact information:

Sue Prosi

Email: sueprosi@gmail.com

Traffic & Transportation

From: Steve Pond <mailto:swpond@hotmail.com>

Sent: Monday, November 13, 2017 1:38 PM

To: Fesenmeyer, Andy A.

Subject: Merritt Pkwy - Route 7 interchange

Hello,

The Merritt Pkwy/Route 7 interchange should be completed with access to north and southbound from both directions. I believe it could be and should be done WITH adequate oversight so that the environmental impact is lessened as much as possible. The DOT CERTAINLY has the capability to figure out how to do this project and at the same time keep the environmental impact to a minimum AND maintain the aesthetic qualities of the parkway.

Let us reason together! The benefits of doing so will be well worth the extra budget needed by the project so that the concerns are addressed.

Thank you,

Steve Pond

11 Getner Trail

Norwalk

Traffic & Transportation

From: Marty Katz <mailto:katzmartin@yahoo.com>

Sent: Tuesday, November 14, 2017 8:43 AM

To: Andy.Fesenmeyer@ct.gov; Ken Livingston <klivingston@fhiplan.com>

Subject: Rte 7/15 Interchange Project

Gentlemen:

I have commuted on Merritt Parkway for 40 years and unsure this Project has any value to commuters! Since you live out of area and have not commuted in morning and afternoon rush hours, I don't believe you have any reality of the real problems with traffic! I would advise you and the rest of the Project Team to spend one week traveling south on the Merritt at 7:30 am from Trumbull to Greenwich, and north at 5:15pm from Greenwich to Trumbull. Also, please travel any week day during Spring, Summer, and Fall mid day and explain why the State mows the parkway and closes lanes causing massive traffic delays? Why this expense in labor and equipment to mow Merritt Parkway? Why not spread grass killer down in spring and reduce traffic delays on Merritt? The 7/15 Interchange will not improve anything and you cannot understand unless until you experience commuting on Merritt Parkway!

Thank you,

Martin Katz

Mailed Comments



Route 7-15 Norwalk

October 17, 2017

Let Us Know What You Think!

I think the connections proposed at 39A make no sense. To spend all that money so people travel North on the Connector only to reach the end of the connector less than one mile away. People coming from the East can already access the Connector & get down to I-95.

The only connections that need to be made are to allow people heading west access to I-95 via the Connector & people driving from I-95 who want to go West on the Merritt without getting off the highway.

Name: Linda Lee
Email: LINDAMP52@AOL.COM
Address: 6 Rae Lane
Norwalk, CT 06852



Alternatives

Mary D. Campbell
704 Ridgefield Road
Wilton, CT 06897
Meg3057@aol.com
203-858-3569

October 22, 2017

Andy Fesenmeyer
Connecticut Department of Transportation
2800 Berlin Turnpike
Newington, CT 06131

Dear Mr. Fesenmeyer,

I regret I was not able to attend the meeting at Norwalk City Hall on October 17th to share my concerns regarding the Merritt Parkway Route 7 redesign. As a lifetime resident of this area and a frequent user of the Route 7 Connector, I have several objections to the project.

First, Alternate 26, a signalized boulevard, is unacceptable. The Route 7 Connector was built to better move traffic on the Route 7 corridor. Installing traffic signals to allow cars to access the Merritt Parkway from the connector is inefficient and will create a traffic nightmare. Look at how the traffic backs up now in the morning and evening during peak commutation times. Adding traffic signals would impede efficient traffic flow, reminiscent of the old Route 7. While it is unfortunate that the project was not done properly the first time and that the connector has not been built any further north, it has improved the flow of traffic on the north/south Route 7 corridor.

Secondly, given the financial state of Connecticut, it is fiscally irresponsible to spend \$100 - \$200 million dollars on either alternative for this project. Access to the Merritt Parkway and the Route 7 Connector is readily available within a reasonable distance via Main Avenue/Route 7. The state should install proper signage to direct people to the current access point on Main Avenue/Route 7.

Lastly, does the State of Connecticut have any idea how many vehicles would use the new interchange?

Please keep me informed of future meetings and updated information as it relates to this project.

Sincerely,


Mary D. Campbell

Mailed Agency Comments

Environmental



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www.ct.gov/deep

Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer

To: Andy Fesenmeyer, PE, Project Manager
Department of Transportation, 2800 Berlin Turnpike, Newington CT

From: Linda Brunza- Environmental Analyst **Telephone:** 860-424-3739

Date: 11/16/2017 **Email:** Linda.Brunza@ct.gov

Subject: Scoping Notice for Route 7/15 Interchange Project, Norwalk

The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) received the Notice of Scoping for the Route 7/15 Interchange project proposed by the Department of Transportation (DOT). The project is an initiative to provide missing connections between Route 7 and the Merritt Parkway and improve access and safety.

The following comments are submitted for your consideration.

Inland Wetlands and Watercourses

A map of this area shows that portions of the project may be located in or adjacent to wetlands and watercourses. DEEP recommends that a certified soil scientist perform a reconnaissance of the site in order to determine whether it meets the federal definition of a wetland or watercourse as defined in the [1987 Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual and Regional Supplements](#) for the Clean Water Act Section 404 permit program. If the reconnaissance identifies regulated areas, they should be clearly delineated. Any activity within federally regulated wetland areas or watercourses at the site may require a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers pursuant to section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Further information is available on-line at [Army Corps of Engineers, New England District](#) or by calling the Corps Regulatory Branch in Concord, Massachusetts at 978-318-8338. If a permit is required from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, a Water Quality Certificate will also be required from DEEP pursuant to section 401 of the Clean Water Act. For further information, contact the Land and Water Resources Division at 860-424-3019. A fact sheet regarding 401 Water Quality Certification is available online at [401 Certification](#).

Inland Fisheries

DEEP Fisheries staff are working with the City of Norwalk and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to remove the Flock Process Dam located on the Norwalk River in the next 12 months. Removal of the dam will restore diadromous fish to upstream portions of the watershed. The Flock Process Dam impounds water upstream to the bridge labeled as "E" on the map provided by DOT. DOT project planners should coordinate with DEEP Fisheries Division because the water level will change once the dam is removed, and the project boundaries of the dam removal are located within

the DOT project boundaries. Any instream work must protect stream morphology and habitat quality. DEEP Fisheries will work with the DOT during the permit review process to ensure fisheries resources and habitats are protected. Time of year restrictions and mitigation will be considered if there is direct in-stream work. DEEP Inland Fisheries can be contacted at 860-424-3474.

Stormwater Discharge During Construction

Stormwater discharges from construction sites where one or more acres are to be disturbed, regardless of project phasing, require an NPDES permit from the Permitting & Enforcement Division. The *General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater and Dewatering Wastewaters Associated with Construction Activities* (DEEP-WPED-GP-015) will cover these discharges. Stormwater treatment systems must be designed to comply with the post-construction stormwater performance management requirements of the permit. These include post-construction performance standards requiring retention of the water quality volume and incorporating control measures for runoff reduction and low impact development practices. For further information, contact the division at 860-424-3018. The construction stormwater general permit registrations can now be filed electronically through DEEP's e-Filing system known as ezFile. Additional information can be found on-line at: [Construction Stormwater GP](#).

Threatened and Endangered Species

DEEP Wildlife Division maintains the Natural Diversity Database (NDDDB) maps. These maps represent the approximate locations of species listed by the State, pursuant to section 26-306 of the Connecticut General Statutes, as endangered, threatened or special concern. The maps are a pre-screening tool to identify potential impacts to state listed species. The applicant may be required to submit a *Request for Natural Diversity Data Base (NDDDB) State Listed Species Review Form* (DEEP-APP-007) and all required attachments, including maps, to the NDDDB for further review. Additional information concerning NDDDB reviews and the request form may be found on-line at: [NDDDB Requests](#).

Air Quality

DEEP Air Bureau typically recommends the use of newer off-road construction equipment that meets the latest EPA or California Air Resources Board (CARB) standards. If newer equipment cannot be used, equipment with the best available controls on diesel emissions including retrofitting with diesel oxidation catalysts or particulate filters in addition to the use of ultra-low sulfur fuel would be the second choice that can be effective in reducing exhaust emissions. The use of newer equipment that meets EPA standards would obviate the need for retrofits.

DEEP also recommends the use of newer on-road vehicles that meet either the latest EPA or California Air Resources Board (CARB) standards for construction projects. These on-road vehicles include dump trucks, fuel delivery trucks and other vehicles typically found at construction sites. On-road vehicles older than the 2007-model year typically should be retrofitted with diesel oxidation catalysts or diesel particulate filters for projects. Again, the use of newer vehicles that meet EPA standards would eliminate the need for retrofits.

Additionally, Section 22a-174-18(b)(3)(C) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (RCSA) limits the idling of mobile sources to 3 minutes. This regulation applies to most vehicles such as trucks and other diesel engine-powered vehicles commonly used on construction sites. Adhering to the regulation will reduce unnecessary idling at truck staging zones, delivery or truck dumping areas and further reduce on-road and construction equipment emissions. Use of posted signs indicating the three-minute idling limit is recommended. It should be noted that only DEEP

can enforce Section 22a-174-18(b)(3)(C) of the RCSA. Therefore, it is recommended that the project sponsor include language similar to the anti-idling regulations in the contract specifications for construction in order to allow them to enforce idling restrictions at the project site without the involvement of DEEP.

Hazardous and Solid Waste

DEEP staff determined that it is likely that there are hazardous or solid waste related concerns due to the historic nature of the site. Any project that has the potential for excavation contaminated soil must adhere to DEEP's laws, regulations, and policies governing such media.

A site-specific hazardous materials management plan should be developed prior to commencement of construction and a health and safety plan for construction workers should also be prepared. The Development plans in urban areas that entail soil excavation should include a protocol for sampling and analysis of potentially contaminated soil. Soil with contaminant levels that exceed the applicable criteria of the Remediation Standard Regulations, that is not hazardous waste, is considered to be special waste. The disposal of special wastes, as defined in section 22a-209-1 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (RCSA), requires written authorization from the Waste Engineering and Enforcement Division prior to delivery to any solid waste disposal facility in Connecticut. If clean fill is to be segregated from waste material, there must be strict adherence to the definition of clean fill, as provided in Section 22a-209-1 of the RCSA. In addition, the regulations prohibit the disposal of more than 10 cubic yards of stumps, brush or woodchips on the site, either buried or on the surface. A fact sheet regarding disposal of special wastes and the authorization application form may be obtained at: [Special Waste Fact Sheet](#).

Flood Management

Portions of the proposed project site are located within FEMA defined floodway and floodplain, Zone AE, on the community's Flood Insurance Rate Map. The project must be certified by DOT as being in compliance with flood and stormwater management standards specified in section 25-68d of the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS) and section 25-68h-1 through 25-68h-3 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (RCSA). The DOT project team should coordinate with DEEP to be made aware of the design constraints under the Flood Management Statutes and National Flood Insurance Program regulations. For assistance on the program and additional information, contact the Land and Water Resources Division at 860-424-3019. A fact sheet regarding Flood Management Certification is available online at [Flood Management Certification](#).

Thank you for the opportunity to review this project. These comments are based on the reviews provided by relevant staff and offices within DEEP during the designated comment period. They may not represent all applicable programs within DEEP. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions concerning these comments.

cc: Robert Hannon, DEEP/ OPPD

Environmental



Norwalk River Watershed Association, Inc.

New Canaan, Norwalk, Redding, Ridgefield, Weston, Wilton, CT; Lewisboro, NY

October 25, 2017

Andy Fesenmeyer
Project Manager
Rt. 7-15 Norwalk
CTDOT

Dear Mr. Fesenmeyer

I am writing on behalf of the Norwalk River Watershed Association, a non-profit organization that represents over 800 households and works to protect water quality and wildlife habitat in the Norwalk River watershed. We were impressed with the level of diligence and thought that has been given to this project as presented at the scoping presentation on October 17, and we wish you continued success.

We realize public scoping is the initial stage of the project, and we appreciate the chance to offer input at this point before the environmental assessment has been done. Any work in the proposed design areas will impact the Norwalk River. Our main concerns are the effects on water quality and wildlife habitat of any construction done in or near the river and wetlands and of storm water runoff both during the construction process and after. We are especially concerned about threats to water quality because this is one of several large projects planned in the watershed.

The Norwalk River is listed as a class B river, an impaired waterway, and the DOT has in the past used that classification as the starting point for claiming that no impact in water quality will result from its projects. While parts of the river are indeed impaired, it is important to understand that organizations like NRWA, Harbor Watch, Trout Unlimited and Norwalk River Watershed Initiative have been working for the last 20 years to improve water quality in the river. These groups use as a guide the Norwalk River Watershed Action Plan, which was written in 1998 and updated in 2011. Three years ago, these organizations and their volunteers were credited by the EPA with helping to remove two sections of the river from the impaired waterways list. As the EPA report stated, "the watershed approach has improved the river."

The EPA report credits our work, citing how, "Countless volunteers have participated in efforts to monitor water quality, identify pollution problems on the river, restore streamside buffers, and enhance trails and access points." The goal of our work has been and remains to remove more sections of the river from the Impaired Waterways list and to protect the quality of the water entering Long Island Sound. This year alone, NRWA engaged close to 200 volunteers to help improve the watershed. Harbor Watch and Trout Unlimited are larger organizations with even more employees, interns and volunteers.

Harbor Watch has been testing water quality in the river consistently for almost 20 years, so our community has a wealth of data to use as a guide for our work to protect the river as a resource. Additional challenges to water quality from construction or from added storm water runoff from new highway projects in the watershed threaten to set back our community's efforts to improve water quality.

In light of the number of projects in our area, NRWA requests that the CTDOT use a third party independent assessor to conduct its Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Evaluation (EA/EIE) and that it include an assessment of the cumulative effects, including increases in storm water runoff, of the multiple CTDOT projects planned for the Norwalk River Watershed. The combined effect of the current planned projects makes rigorous storm water controls for each one all the more imperative. The current Walk Bridge EA/EIE does not go far enough in assessing impact; it simply states no permanent impact on water quality. The added storm water outlets will result in increased runoff. It is hard to believe there will be no impact. The current EIE states that to manage runoff, "drainage swales may be used and closed deck approach will be used where applicable." We hope the EIE for the Route 7/15 Interchange will include specific plans for capturing runoff as well as a detailed assessment of damage to water quality, wetlands, wildlife, wildlife habitat and aquatic life during construction and from storm water runoff.

We also request that the DOT add requirements for capturing runoff to its plans for the restoration of the Walk Bridge and the Yankee Doodle Bridge. The repair of these bridges and the Route 7 interchange alone present the CTDOT with a unique opportunity to reduce the amount of contaminated storm water runoff that enters the Norwalk River, the harbor, and the Sound. A concrete commitment to capturing runoff from bridges and highways that pass near wetlands and watercourses should be the baseline from which the CTDOT is working. Our community is owed these protections to water quality at the very least since it is bearing the brunt of the negative impact of years of construction on multiple projects. The Route 7/15 EIE should include consideration of the permanent damage that years of temporary impact from construction can cause to water quality, wetlands and aquatic life.

We ask the CTDOT to clearly specify mitigation measures and erosion and sedimentation controls for any listed construction activities in and over the water and wetlands. We would like the DOT to provide information on what best management practices will be employed and who will oversee adherence to those standards, including who will test water quality during construction and how often. NRWA asks CTDOT to consult with Harbor Watch, which currently conducts regular water quality testing in the river, about how best to monitor impact during construction and protect wildlife habitat and water quality as well as the best ways to carry out mitigation efforts during and after construction.

We hope to see very specific plans for protections to the wetlands and the river during construction. NRWA has had concerns about the effects on water quality and the severe damage to the riverbank at the site of repair work on the Perry Avenue Bridge. Protections of the riverbank vegetation and attempts to avoid compacting the soil are important to

protecting the river from harmful runoff both during construction and after. Neither has been done at the Perry Avenue site.

We hope the DOT will take this opportunity to improve the methods it uses to safeguard the river and surrounding wildlife habitat during construction projects. We also hope this project will be used as an opportunity to improve the mechanisms for capturing runoff from the intersection before it enters wetlands. We were very disappointed that such improvements were not included in the plans to repair the Yankee Doodle Bridge.

Finally, NRWA fully supports the plans for including pedestrian and bike connections to the Norwalk River Valley Trail (NRVT). We see the NRVT as a vital way to connect the community to the Norwalk River and natural resources our community has to offer.

Thank you for considering NRWA's concerns.

Sincerely,

Louise Washer, President
Norwalk River Watershed Association

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



Raul Pino, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner

Dannel P. Malloy
Governor
Nancy Wyman
Lt. Governor

Drinking Water Section

November 16, 2017

Mr. Andy Fesenmeyer, P.E.
Department of Transportation
2800 Berlin Turnpike
PO Box 317546
Newington, CT 06131-7546

Re: Notice of Scoping for Route 7/15 Interchange Project

Dear Mr. Fesenmeyer:

In April of 2017, the Department of Transportation provided a Draft of the Purpose and Need Statement for the above noted project to the Department of Public Health (DPH) for review and comment. The purpose and need statement was reviewed by the Drinking Water Section Source Assessment and Protection Unit and the attached comments were provided for your consideration.

The DPH thanks you for the opportunity for early input in this process. At this time, the DPH has no additional comments to offer. If you have any questions, please contact Pat Bisacky of my staff at 860-509-7333 or via email at Patricia.Bisacky@ct.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lori J. Mathieu".

Lori J. Mathieu
Public Health Section Chief
Drinking Water Section

Cc: Dominick Di Gangi, P.E., Norwalk First Taxing District



Phone: (860) 509-7333 • Fax: (860) 509-7359
410 Capitol Avenue, MS#12DWS, P.O. Box 340308
Hartford, Connecticut 06134-0308
www.ct.gov/dph

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STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



Raul Pino, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner

Dannel P. Malloy
Governor
Nancy Wyman
Lt. Governor

Drinking Water Section

July 11, 2017

Mr. Andy Fesenmeyer
Transportation Supervising Engineer
State of Connecticut
Department of Transportation
Bureau of Engineering and Construction
2800 Berlin Turnpike, PO Box 317546
Newington, CT 06131-7546

Re: Draft Environmental Assessment/Environmental Impact Evaluation
Route 7/Route 15 Interchange
Norwalk, Connecticut
State Project No. 102-358
DPH Project No. 2017-0166

Dear Mr. Fesenmeyer:

The Department of Public Health (DPH) Drinking Water Section (DWS) is in receipt of the Draft Purpose and Need Statement for the subject EA/EIE. The proposed project area is partially within the Level A Aquifer Protection Area (APA) of the Kellogg Deering Wellfield, a source of public drinking water for the customers of the Norwalk First Taxing District.

Planning, construction and long term maintenance of the proposed interchange improvements should take into consideration protection of the source of public drinking water. Please consider addressing the following items in the EA/EIE:

1. During the planning phase the following should be addressed:
 - a. The Norwalk First Taxing District should be consulted to provide the delineation of the Level A APA and specific source protection recommendations.
 - b. The storm water system should be designed to minimize impacts to the water quality of the source of public drinking water.



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Mr. Fesenmeyer
July 11, 2017
Page 2

2. Construction should be conducted in accordance with the DPH's "[General Construction Best Management Practices for Sites within a Public Drinking Water Supply Area](#)"
3. Long term maintenance of the proposed project should include measures that protect the long term purity of the public drinking water source of supply. Such measures include but may not be limited to:
 - a. Utilizing mechanical means to control vegetation rather than applying pesticides.
 - b. Reducing application rates of deicing chemicals to the road surfaces in the winter in a manner that balances the needs for public safety with the potential public health impacts resulting from increasing sodium and chloride concentrations in the source water for public drinking water supplies.
 - c. Maintaining the storm water system in accordance with the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's [General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater from Department of Transportation Separate Storm Sewer Systems](#).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide early input into this draft document.

Sincerely,



Lori J. Mathieu
Public Health Section Chief
Drinking Water Section

Cc: Dominick Di Gangi, P.E., Norwalk First Taxing District



Norwalk River Valley Trail

P.O. Box 174
Georgetown, CT 06829
www.NRVT-Trail.com

Statement for The 7/15 Norwalk Project
Public Scoping Comments

From: Norwalk Valley River Trail Steering Committee
To: ConnDOT

The Steering Committee of the Norwalk River Valley Trail (NRVT) strongly supports the accommodation of the NRVT in the new, planned 7/15 interchange. The NRVT is a 38 mile regional trail network traversing Fairfield County from Norwalk to Danbury and is identified in Gov. Malloy's 5 year transportation plan as a trail of regional significance. Portions of the trail are now complete in Norwalk and Wilton and active design and construction is currently underway in both communities. These projects will bring the NRVT to the Merritt Parkway Corridor – the only barrier to a viable alternative transportation artery and valuable recreational and tourist resource.

The 7/15 interchange project comes into contact with the NRVT in three locations – the NRVT West Branch follows the Eversource powerlines and will cross the Merritt near Perry Ave; the NRVT East Branch follows Glover Ave. and will cross under the Merritt near Main Ave (or TBD). The West Branch also will cross the reconfigured Grist Mill interchange near Belden Hill Rd. Completion of each of these three trail intersections is crucial to public safety. Otherwise, pedestrians, cyclists, commuters and tourists coming from the north and south will encounter abrupt dead-ends and be forced onto dangerous stretches of busy commercial thoroughfares.

To summarize, the NRVT Steering Committee respectfully requests ConnDOT complete these three essential trail accommodations to:

- a) improve connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists on an existing and expanding regional trail network for commuting, tourism, and recreational use;
- b) improve public safety;
- c) satisfy the goal of ConnDOT to improve multi-modal transportation options in dense urban areas;
- d) enhance both commercial and residential property values along the trail as well as further leverage the state and federal investment in the trail, redevelopment projects and incentives to businesses in proximity to the trail; and
- e) comply with FHWA's policy of accommodating all users in federally funded projects [reference 23 U.S.C. 217 (e) (g)]

Thank you,

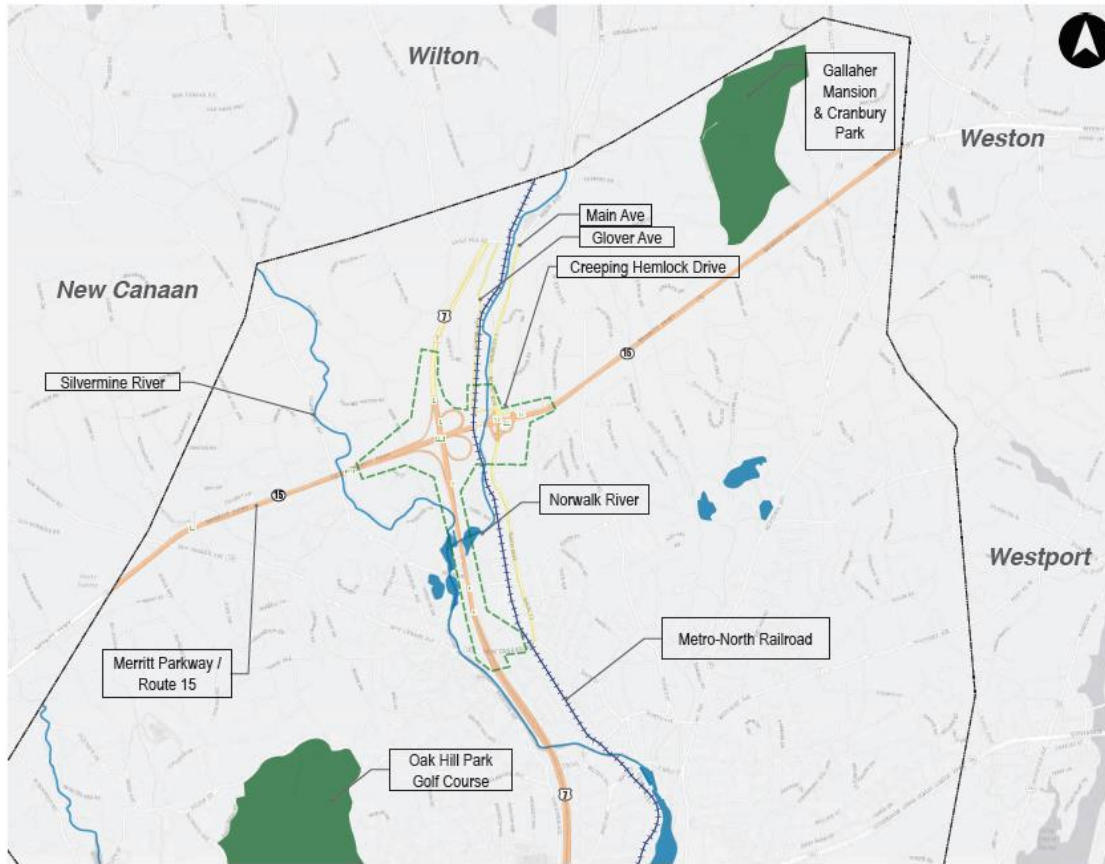
Jim Carter
Norwalk Representative, Norwalk River Valley Trail Steering Committee

Appendix D
Public Scoping Meeting Display Boards



Route 7/15 Norwalk

Project Area



Legend:

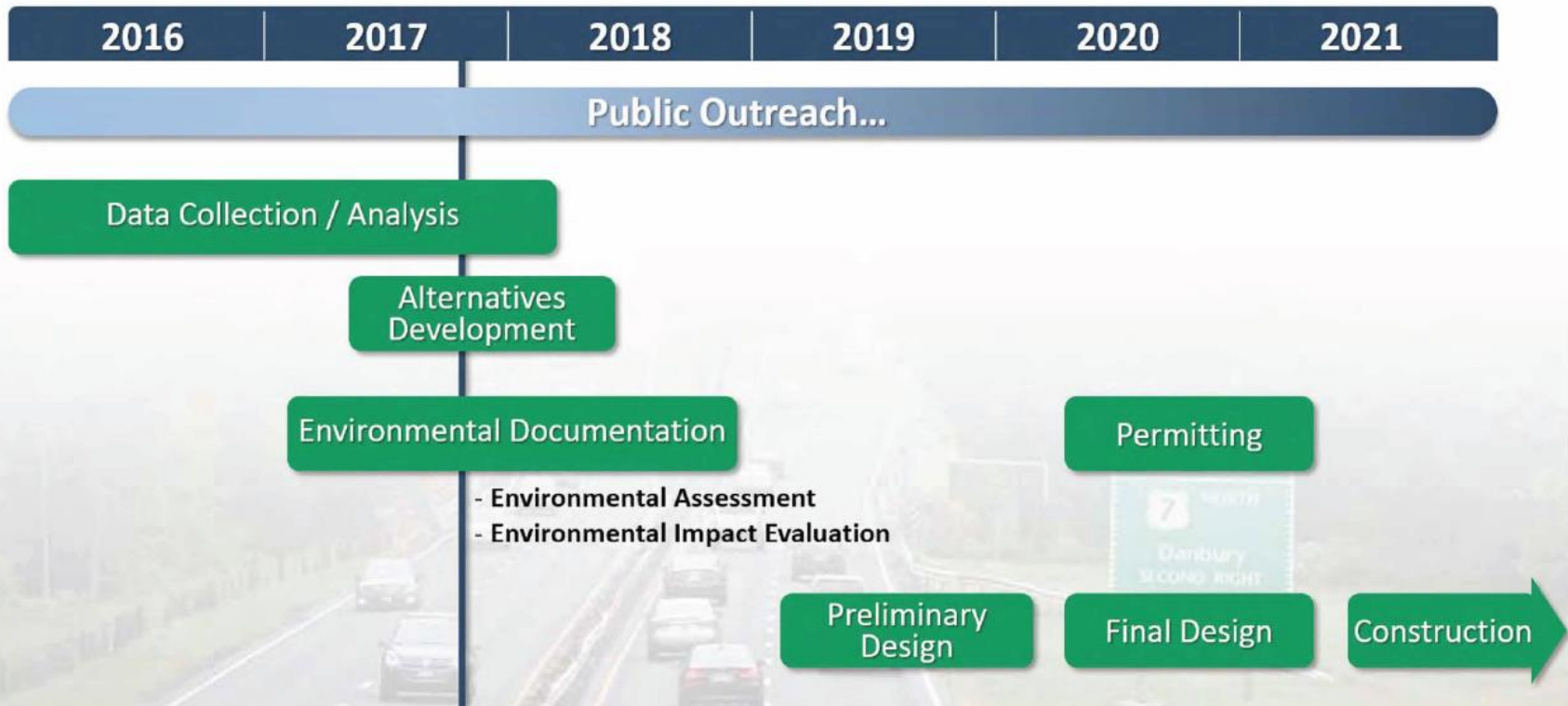
- +++++ Metro North Railroad
- Project Area
- Water Resources
- Local Streets (Main Avenue, Glover Avenue, Route 7 and Creeping Hemlock Drive)
- 7 Route 7
- 15 Route 15
- Exits
- City/Town Boundaries
- Gallaher Mansion Cranbury Park & Oak Hill Park Golf Course

CTDOT State Project #102-358



Route 7/15 Norwalk

PROJECT SCHEDULE

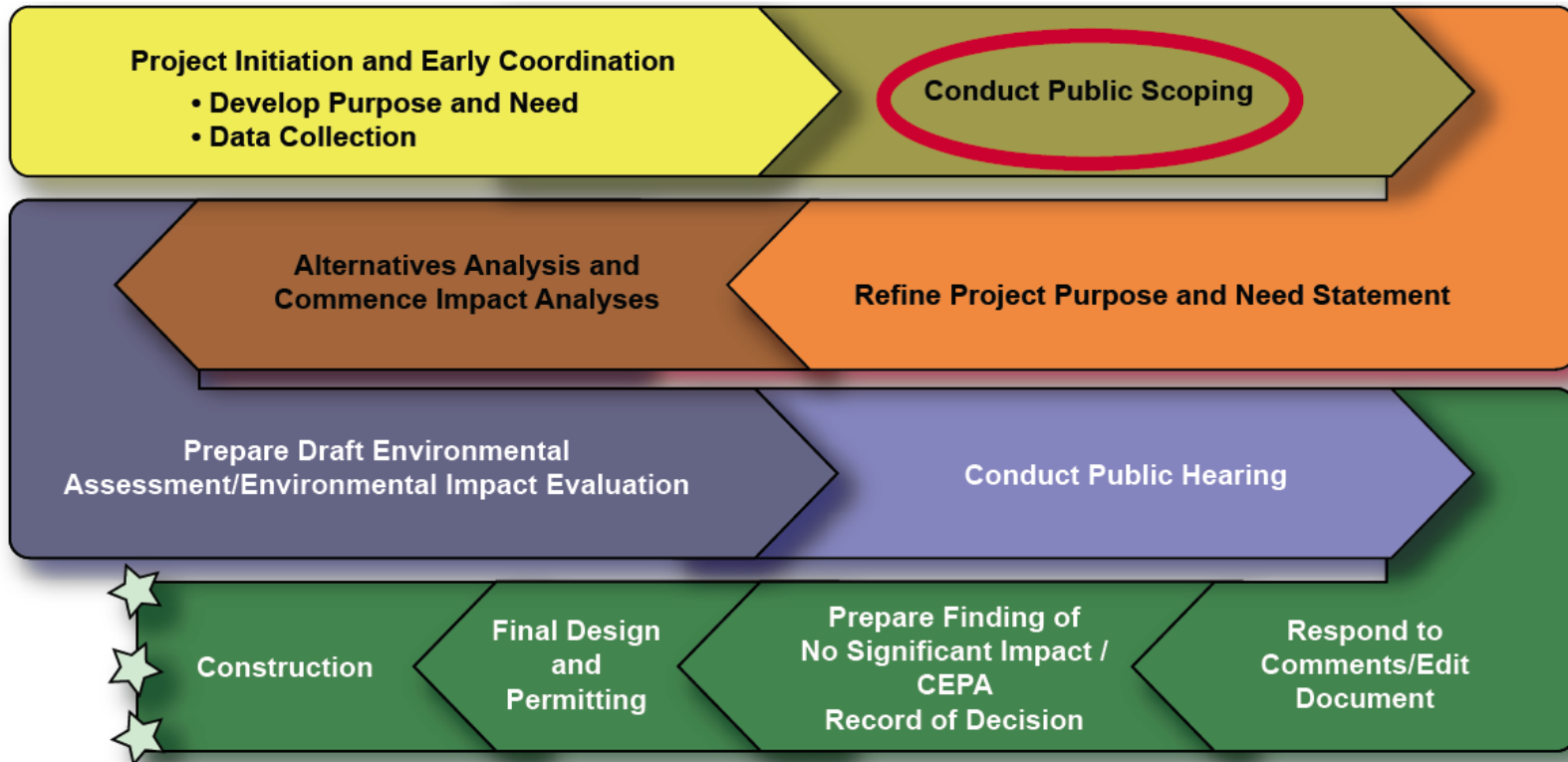


CTDOT State Project #102-358



Route 7/15 Norwalk

NEPA/CEPA PROCESS



Scoping Phase



Data Collection and Documentation Process



Review Phase



Finalization Phase

CTDOT State Project #102-358



Route 7/15 Norwalk

PURPOSE & NEED

ROUTE 7/15 INTERCHANGE PROJECT
NORWALK, CONNECTICUT

DRAFT PURPOSE AND NEED STATEMENT



March 2017

Rev. September 25, 2017

WHY IS THE PROJECT NEEDED?

- Improve system linkage between Route 7 and Merritt Parkway
- Improve mobility for all users (motorists, pedestrians, cyclists) at Merritt Parkway's Main Avenue and Route 7 Interchanges
- Improve safety in the vicinity of these interchanges

WHAT ARE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES?



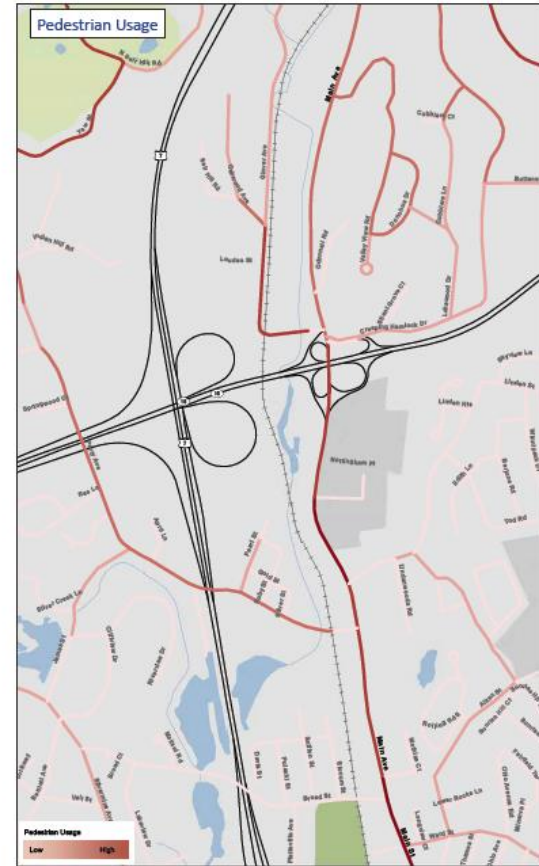
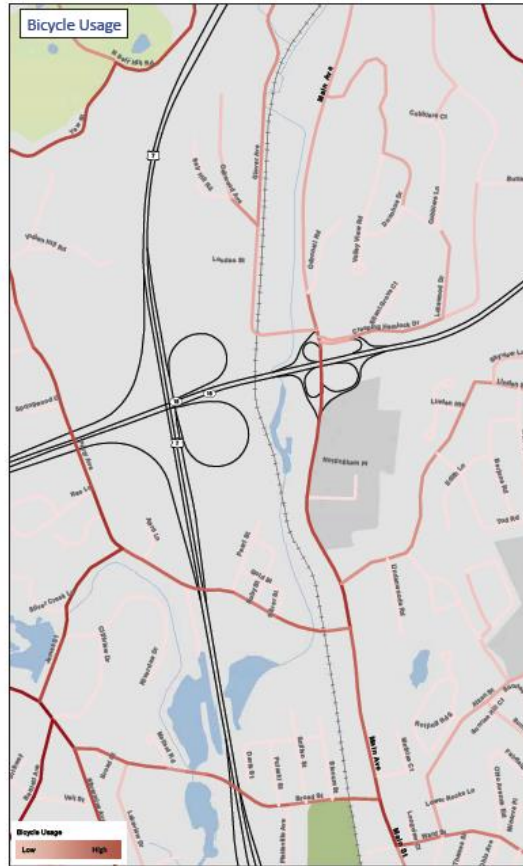
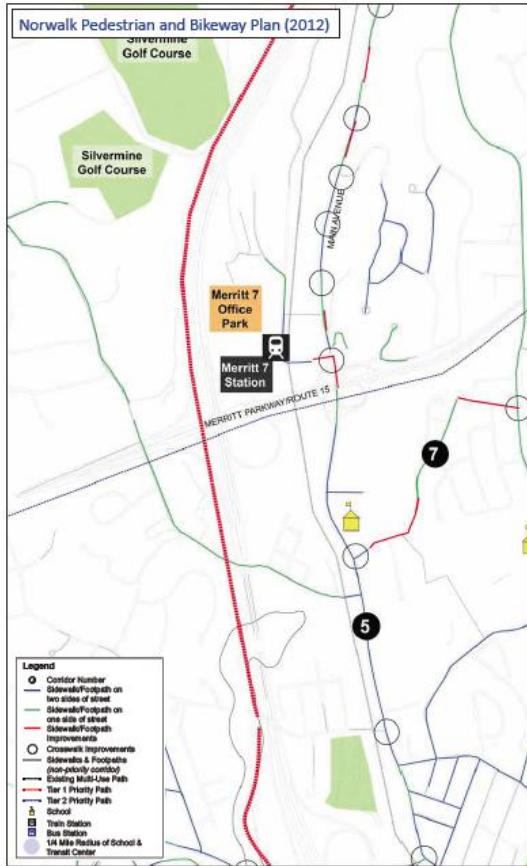
- Ensure long-term serviceability of corridor
- Maximize public investment in corridor
- Ensure better interchange integration with environment & neighborhood context
- Provide pedestrian and bicycle access

CTDOT State Project #102-358



Route 7/15 Norwalk

BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN CONDITIONS

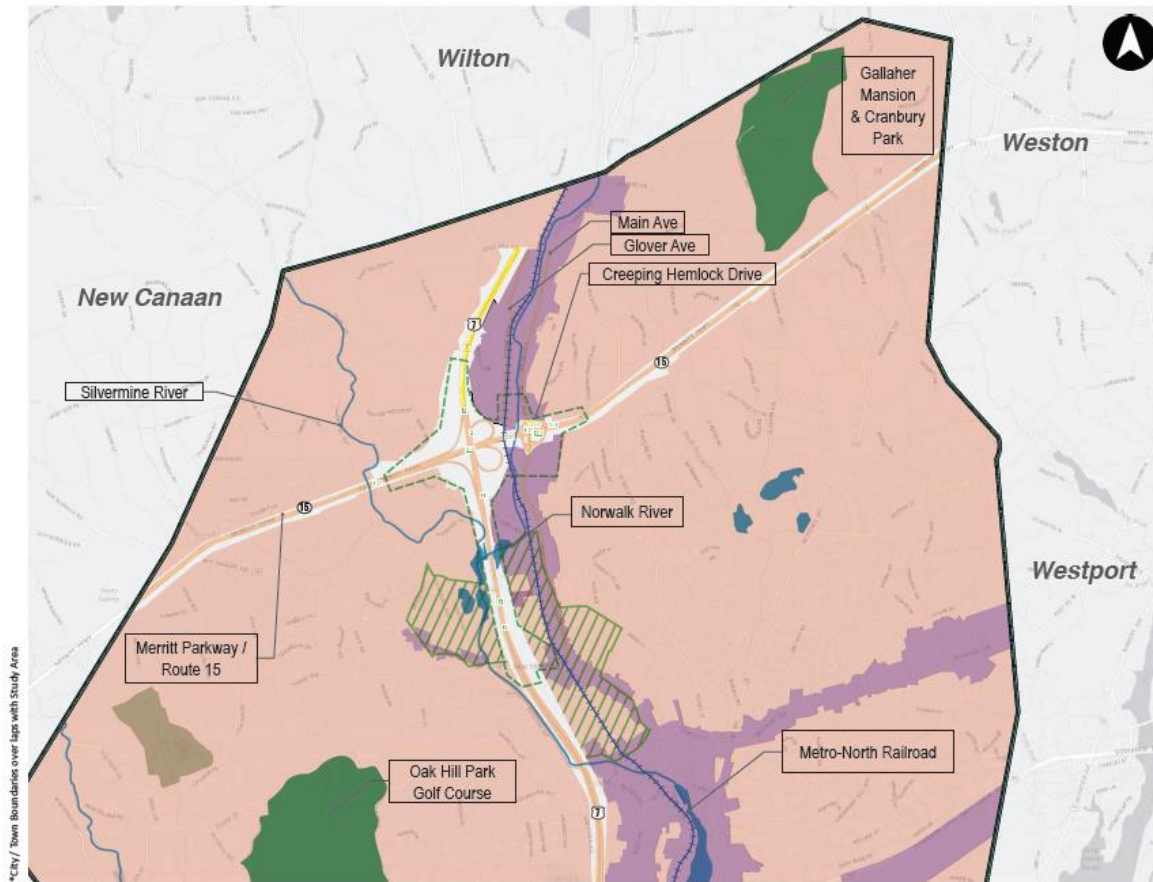


CTDOT State Project #102-358



Route 7/15 Norwalk

Land Use / Socio-Economic Conditions



*City/Town Boundaries overlap with Study Area

Legend:

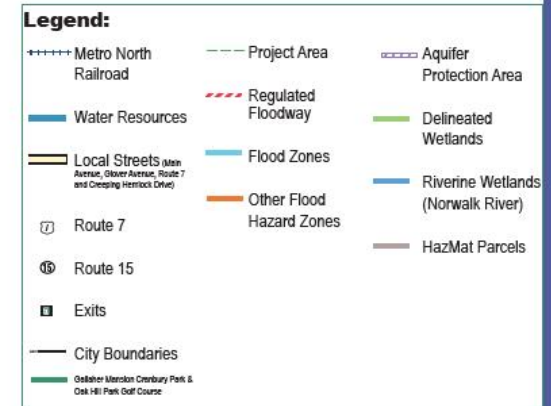
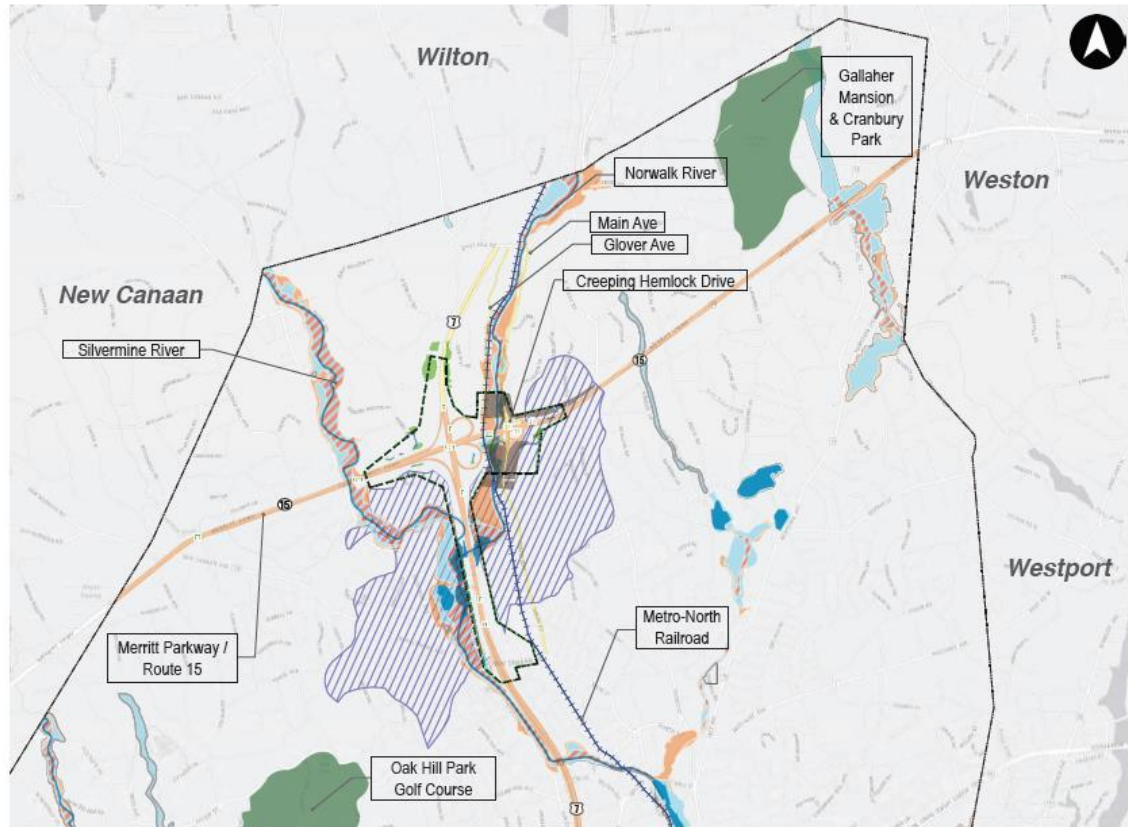
- +++++ Metro North Railroad
- Water Resources
- Local Streets (Main Avenue, Glover Avenue, Route 7 and Creeping Hemlock Drive)
- Route 7
- Route 15
- Exits
- City/Town Boundaries
- Project Area
- Study Area
- Residential
- Business
- Research & Development
- Environmental Justice
- Gallaher Mansion Cranbury Park & Oak Hill Park Golf Course

CTDOT State Project #102-358



Route 7/15 Norwalk

Natural Resources

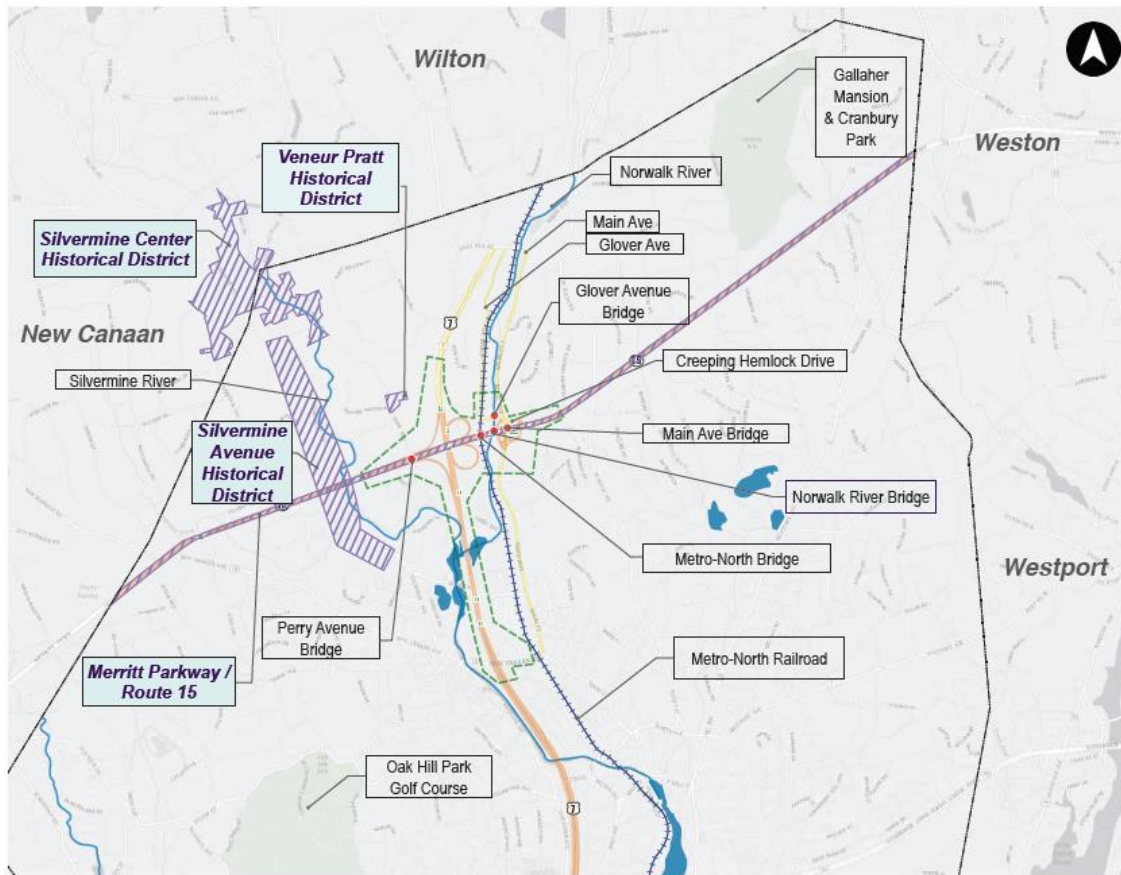


CTDOT State Project #102-358



Route 7/15 Norwalk

Cultural Resources



Legend:

- +++++ Metro North Railroad
- Water Resources
- Local Streets (Main Avenue, Glover Avenue, Route 7 and Creeping Hemlock Drive)
- Route 7
- Route 15
- Exits
- City Boundaries
- Project Area
- Historical Districts
- Historical Bridges

CTDOT State Project #102-358

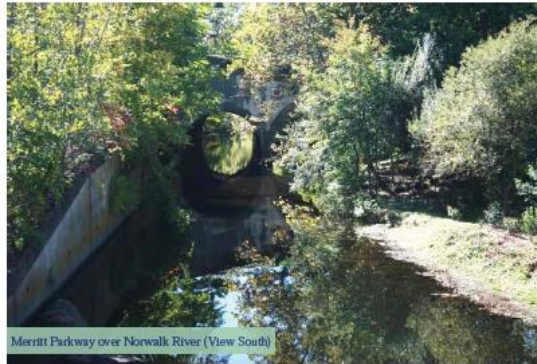


Route 7/15 Norwalk

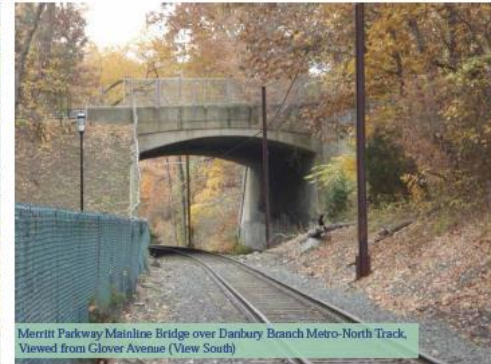
Historic Bridges



Merritt Parkway over Main Avenue (View North)



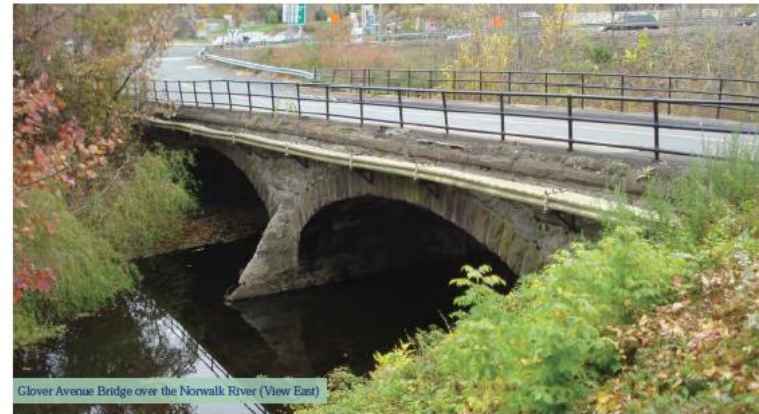
Merritt Parkway over Norwalk River (View South)



Merritt Parkway Mainline Bridge over Danbury Branch Metro-North Track, Viewed from Glover Avenue (View South)



Merritt Parkway Original Mainline Bridge between Ramp Structures over Perry Avenue (View North)



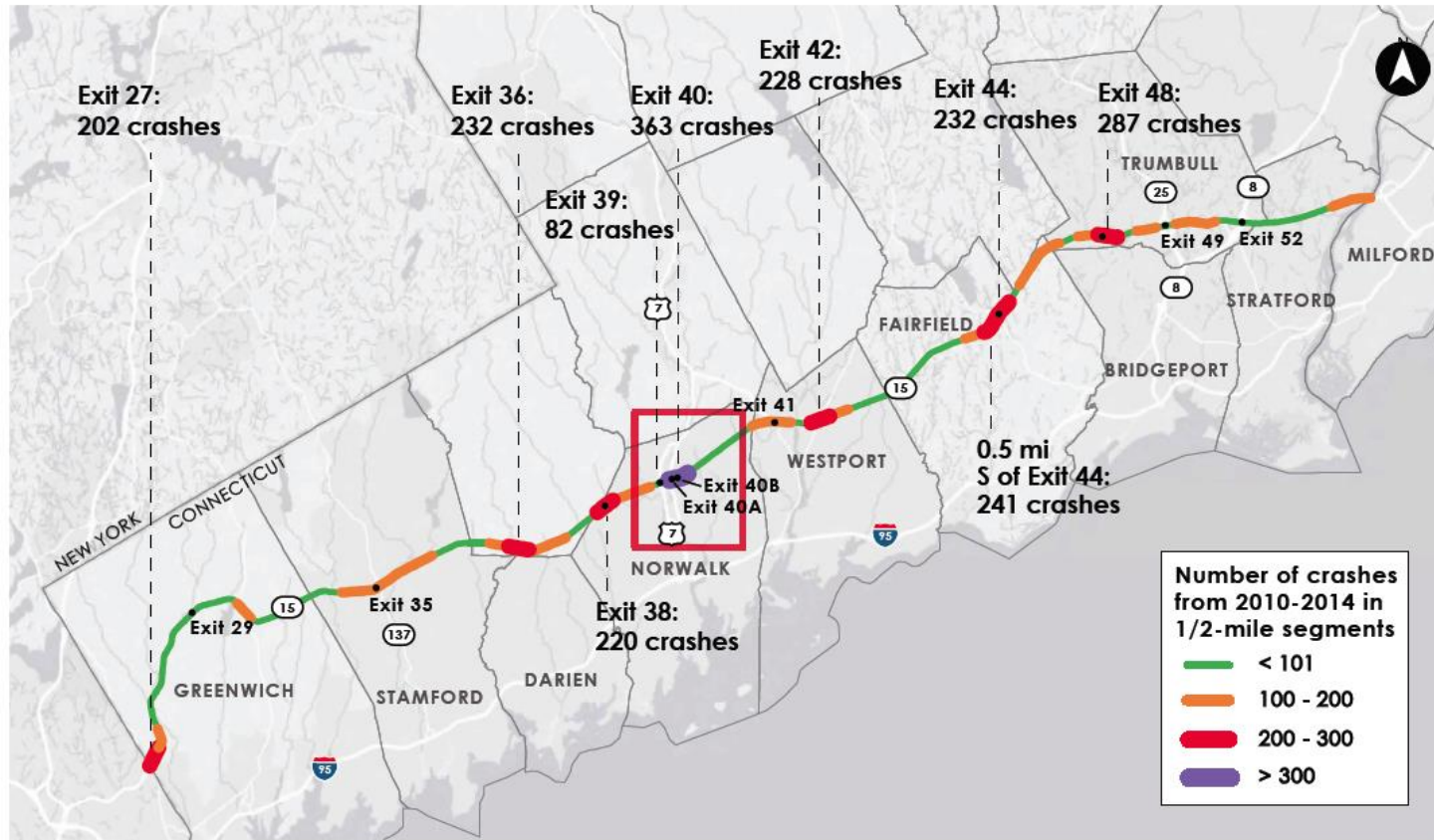
Glover Avenue Bridge over the Norwalk River (View East)

CTDOT State Project #102-358



Route 7/15 Norwalk

2010-2014 Crashes in Merritt Parkway Corridor

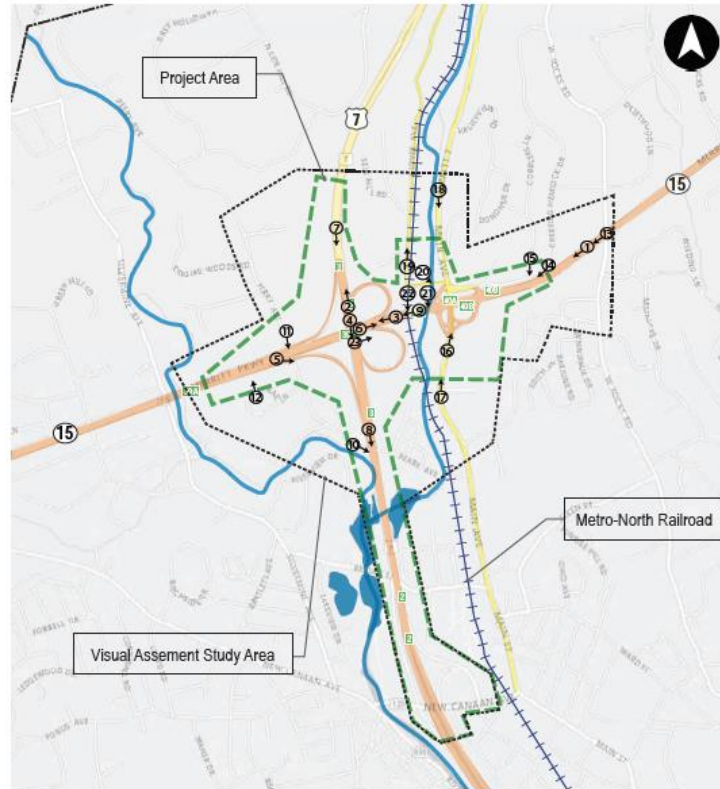
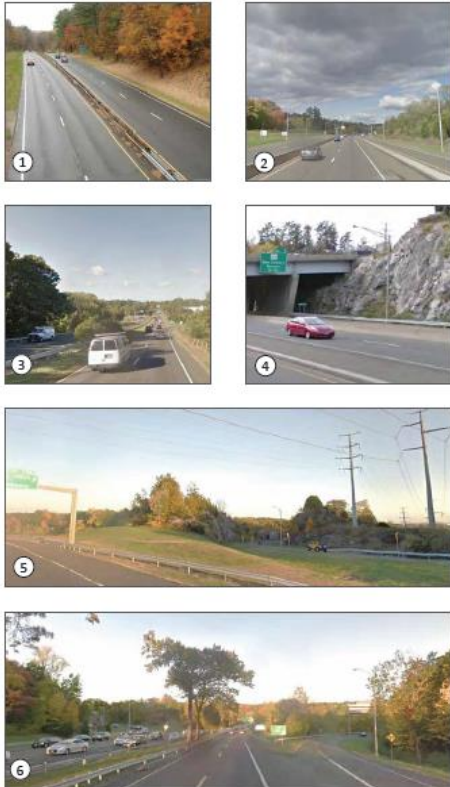


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Route 7/15 Norwalk

Visual Resources



Legend:

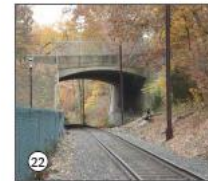
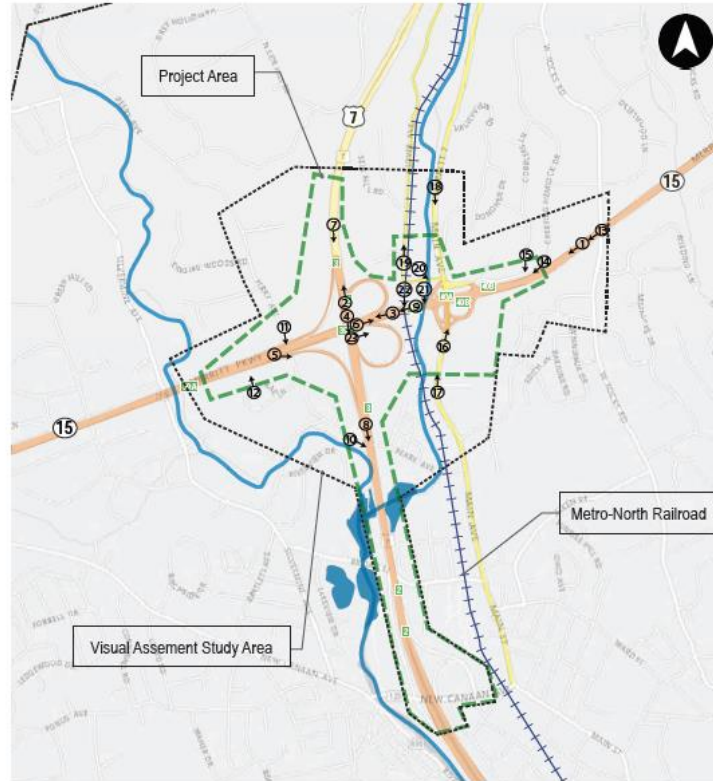
- Metro North Railroad
- Project Area
- Visual Assessment Study Area

CTDOT State Project #102-358



Route 7/15 Norwalk

Visual Resources



Legend:

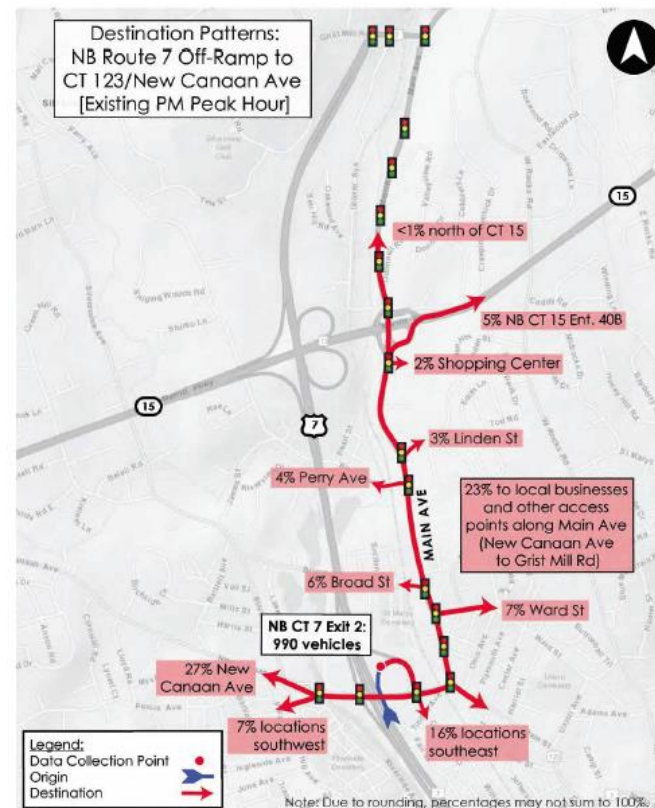
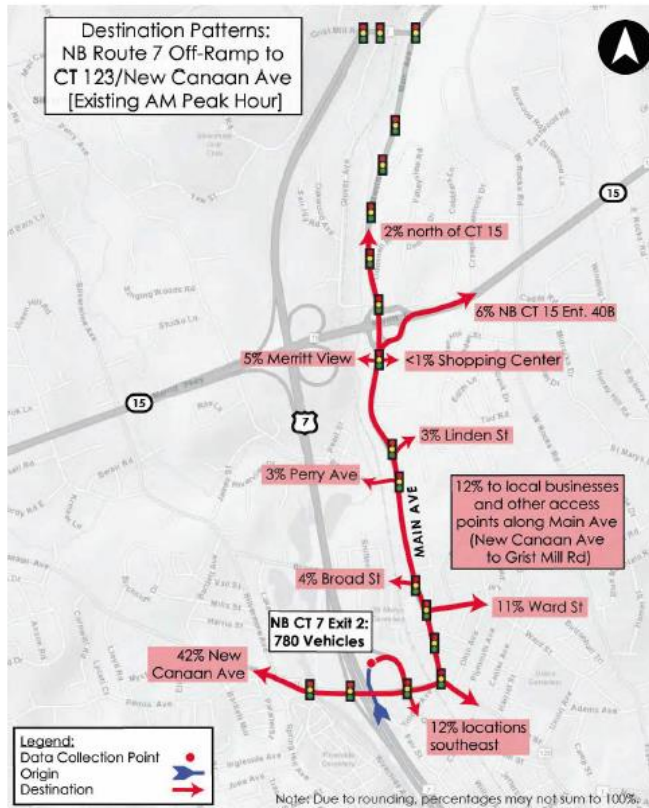
- +++++ Metro North Railroad
- Project Area
- Visual Assessment Study Area

CTDOT State Project #102-358



Route 7/15 Norwalk

Origin / Destination Traffic Patterns

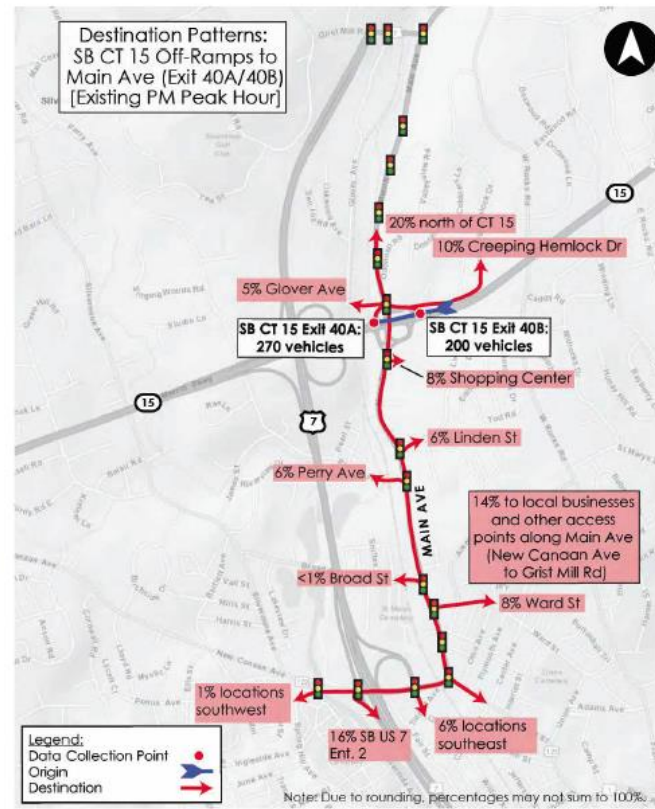
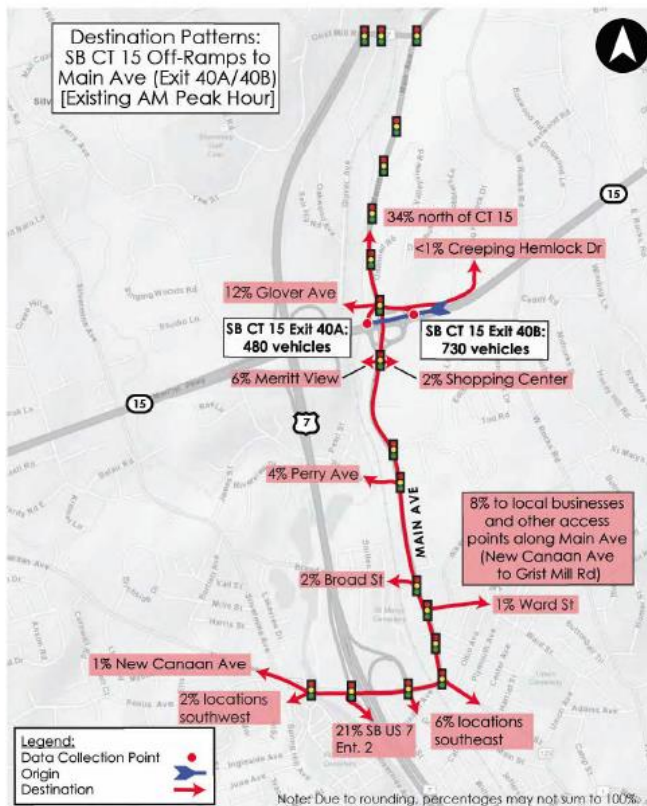


CTDOT State Project #102-358



Route 7/15 Norwalk

Origin / Destination Traffic Patterns

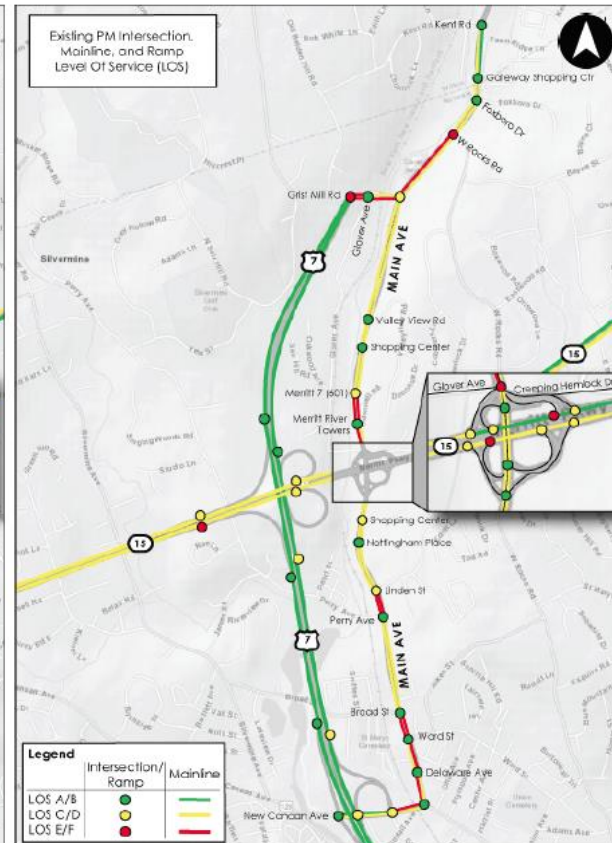


CTDOT State Project #102-358



Route 7/15 Norwalk

Peak Hour Traffic Levels of Service



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
 Best qualities of service
 There are some restrictions in travel speed and mobility is a bit restricted.
 Delays are minimal/acceptable



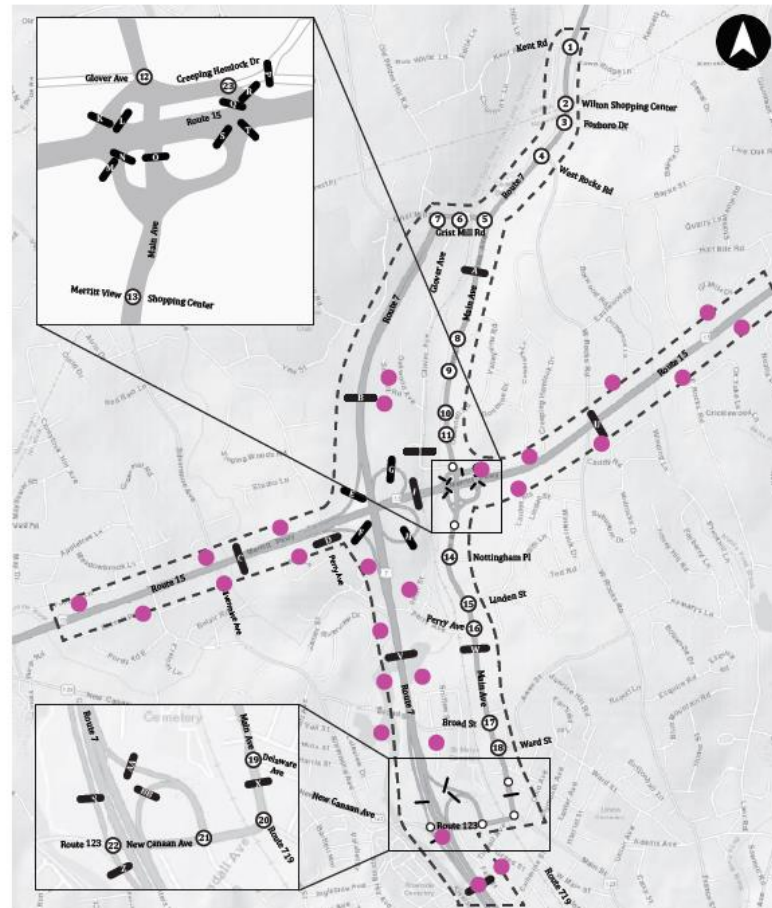
LOS E / LOS F
 Travel speeds decline significantly and mobility is severely restricted. Demand is greater than capacity.
 Delays are significant

CTDOT State Project #102-358



Route 7/15 Norwalk

Data Collection Locations



Legend:

- Automatic Traffic Recording Count Location
- Turning Movement Traffic Count Location
- Noise Monitoring Location

CTDOT State Project #102-358



Route 7/15 Norwalk

Alternative 21C



Legend:

- New Traffic Signal
- Roadway Removal
- New Bridge
- New / Reconstructed Roadway

CTDOT State Project #102-358



Route 7/15 Norwalk

Alternative 26



CTDOT State Project #102-358