

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST**

Date: October 3, 2023

Project Name: Removal of Exit 21 Off-Ramp on Interstate 84 Eastbound

State Project Number: 151-340

Municipality: Waterbury

Staff Contact: Kevin Fleming

This assessment is being conducted in conformance to the Connecticut Department of Transportation's Environmental Classification Document (ECD) to determine Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) obligations.

Project Description:

The purpose of this project is to improve safety, traffic flow, and air quality by reducing traffic congestion on I-84 EB in the vicinity of Exits 19-22 in Waterbury, as well as enhance the local roadway network. Both system movements from Route 8 Northbound (NB) and Southbound (SB) enter I-84 on the right and left, respectively, creating a short four lane weave section (approximately 350 feet long) prior to the Exit 21 off-ramp. The auxiliary lane within the weave section serves as the single lane Exit 21 off-ramp. The project proposes to remove the Exit 21 off-ramp from I-84 EB and extend the auxiliary lane to allow more merge and diverge space for drivers entering and exiting I-84 EB in the vicinity of Exit 22. The on-ramp to I-84 EB from Meadow Street will remain open. The I-84 EB Exit 22 off-ramp will be restriped to two lanes to accommodate the anticipated increase in traffic due to the removal of the Exit 21 off-ramp.

Work will also be done to improve the functionality and safety of the local roadway network, including new traffic signals with improved signal timing and phasing. The project includes streetscape and urban design improvements that are expected to create a safer and more welcoming environment for pedestrians and bicyclists.

This project was scoped in the Environmental Monitor on March 7, 2023; a public scoping meeting was held on March 23, 2023. The public comment period remained open until the close of business on April 10, 2023. During the scoping period CTDOT received comments from one State agency – the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CTDEEP) and thirteen members of the public.

The proposed action is non-site specific, or encompasses multiple sites;	<input type="checkbox"/>
Current site ownership:	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Municipal, <input type="checkbox"/> Private, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>FHWA</u>
Anticipated ownership upon project completion:	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Municipal, <input type="checkbox"/> Private, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <u>FHWA</u>

Locational Guide Map Criteria:

<http://ctmaps.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=ba47efccdb304e02893b7b8e8cff556a>

Priority Funding Area factors:

- Designated as a Priority Funding Area, including Balanced, or Village PFA;
- Urban Area or Urban Cluster, as designated by the most recent US Census Data;
- Public Transit, defined as being within a ½ mile buffer surrounding existing or planned mass transit;
- Existing or planned sewer service from an adopted Wastewater Facility Plan;
- Existing or planned water service from an adopted Public Drinking Water Supply Plan;
- Existing local bus service provided 7 days a week.

Conservation Area factors:

- Core Forest Area(s), defined as greater than 250 acres based on the 2006 Land Cover Dataset;
- Existing or potential drinking water supply watershed(s);
- Aquifer Protection Area(s);
- Wetland Soils greater than 25 acres;
- Undeveloped Prime, Statewide Important and/or locally important agricultural soils greater than 25 acres;
- Storm Surge Inundation Zone(s);
- 100 year Flood Zone(s);
- Critical Habitat;
- Locally Important Conservation Area(s),
- Protected Land (list type): Enter text.
- Local, State, or National Historic District(s).

Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (RCSA) Section 22a-1a-3 Determination of Environmental Significance (Direct/Indirect)

1. Impact on water quality, including surface water and groundwater

Water Quality – No negative impacts are anticipated. All CTDOT projects must conform to the CTDOT Standard Specifications for Roads, Bridges, Facilities, and Incidental Construction Form 818. Section 1.10.03, Environmental Compliance, specifically deals with water pollution control and Best Management Practices (BMP).

Surface Water – No negative impacts are anticipated.

Stormwater – No negative impacts are anticipated as Best Management Practices will be employed regarding stormwater management. Registration under *CTDEEP's General Permit for Discharge of Stormwater and Dewatering Wastewaters Associated with Construction Activities* will be completed if needed. Any CTDOT project that changes impervious area, stormwater drainage or drainage patterns pre to post construction shall meet the requirements of the CTDEEP's General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater from Department of Transportation Separate Storm Sewer Systems (DOT MS4 Permit) and submit a CTDOT MS4 Designer Worksheet.

Groundwater – No negative impacts are anticipated. All CTDOT projects conform to the CTDOT Standards Specifications for Roads, Bridges, Facilities and Incidental Construction Form 818. Section 1.10.03, Environmental Compliance, specifically deals with water pollution control and Best Management Practices. As design progresses, a testing plan will be developed to assess soil and groundwater in any moderate- to high-risk areas within which intrusive construction activities are proposed. Remediation measures will be put in place to mitigate potential impacts if contaminated soils or groundwater is confirmed by the testing.

- 2. Effect on a public water supply system** - No negative impacts are anticipated. The project is not located within a source of public drinking water.

- 3. Effect on flooding, in-stream flows, erosion or sedimentation:**

Flooding – No negative impacts are anticipated.

In-stream flows – No negative impacts are anticipated.

Erosion or Sedimentation – No negative impacts are anticipated. All work will be consistent with the 2002 Connecticut Guidelines for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control.

- 4. Disruption or alteration of an historic, archaeological, cultural, or recreational building, object, district, site or its surroundings** – No negative impacts are anticipated. Qualified staff at CTDOT have reviewed the project and it is anticipated that the project will result in No Adverse Effect to historic properties under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.
- 5. Effect on natural communities and upon critical species of animal or plant and their habitat; interference with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species** – The Natural Diversity Database is a record of state and federal species maintained by the Wildlife Division that may be found in the project area. The project may be close to an NDDDB area. CTDOT will submit a formal application to CTDEEP.
- 6. Use of pesticides, toxic or hazardous materials or any other substance in such quantities as to create extensive detrimental environmental impact** – No negative impacts are anticipated. Land use in the vicinity of the project limits and the potential for excess soil as a result of construction will be considered during project design. Should there be any sites with known contamination issues in the vicinity of the project, additional study will be performed within the project area and/or adjacent right-of-way. As design progresses, a testing plan will be developed to assess soil and groundwater in any high-risk areas within which intrusive construction activities are proposed. Remediation measures will be put in place to mitigate potential impacts if contaminated soils or groundwater is confirmed by the testing. If needed, registration under CTDEEP's *General Permit for Contaminated Soil and/or Sediment Management* (Staging & Transfer) will be obtained, and soil management will be conducted in accordance with the General Permit.
- 7. Substantial aesthetic or visual effects** – No negative impacts are anticipated.
- 8. Inconsistency with (a) the policies of the State Plan of Conservation and Development developed in accordance with Section 16a-30 of the CT General Statutes, (b) other relevant state**

agency plans, and (c) applicable regional or municipal land use plans – This project is consistent with the Statewide Plan of Conservation and Development. CTDOT has adopted a programmatic approach for meeting the requirements of CGS Chapter 297 Section 16a-31(a) and Chapter 297 Section 16a-35(c) and 16a-35(d) for determining consistency of proposed actions with the Statewide Plan of Conservation and Development, as indicated in a memo from CTDOT to OPM. In accordance with that memo, CTDOT has characterized this project type under the category “Renovations with Capacity Improvement”. It is CTDOT’s interpretation that this category of activities is consistent with the Plan through Growth Management Principle (GMP) #1 (Redevelop and Revitalize Regional Centers and Areas with Existing or Currently Planned Physical Infrastructure), specifically the State policy: Ensure the safety and integrity of existing infrastructure over its useful life through the timely budgeting for maintenance, repairs and necessary upgrades. Changes to an existing facility that increase the capacity of the corridor or facility are intended, at least in part, to facilitate growth in areas served by that corridor or facility and therefore meet the definition of a Growth Related Project. The project takes place entirely within a Priority Funding Area.

- 9. Disruption or division of an established community or inconsistency with adopted municipal and regional plans, including impacts on existing housing where sections 22a-1b(c) and 8-37t of the CGS require additional analysis** – No negative impacts are anticipated. This project is not in conflict with any municipal or regional plans.
- 10. Displacement or addition of substantial numbers of people** – No negative impacts are anticipated. This project does not involve the displacement or addition of people.
- 11. Substantial increase in congestion (traffic, recreational, other)** – No negative impacts are anticipated. There will be temporary impacts during construction.
- 12. A substantial increase in the type or rate of energy use as a direct or indirect result of this action** – No negative impacts are anticipated. No new construction of any buildings is proposed. The project is not anticipated to result in any change to land use or traffic conditions that would impact energy use.
- 13. The creation of a hazard to human health or safety** – No negative impacts are anticipated. The project will be reviewed for the potential of having hazardous material constituents in existing infrastructure components. Testing will be performed on any suspect materials. Should the presence of hazardous materials be confirmed through the testing, specifications to properly handle and dispose the hazardous materials will be incorporated into the design to mitigate potential health or safety. Therefore, significant impacts associated with hazardous materials or waste sites are not anticipated.
- 14. Effect on air quality** - No negative impacts are anticipated. The project is located within the boundaries of the portion of the state that has been classified as attainment for carbon monoxide (CO), attainment maintenance for PM 2.5, non-attainment for Ozone, and attainment for PM 10, therefore a project level Air Quality Conformity Determination is not required, This project is included in the TIP/STIP that has been determined to be in conformance meeting regional Air Quality Conformity requirements. Any potential temporary impacts during construction can be avoided or limited by proper operation of construction equipment and adherence to regulations limiting idling of engines.

15. Effect on ambient noise levels - No negative impacts are anticipated. The project was reviewed by CTDOT's Office of Environmental Planning and it was determined that no noise study would be required. Any noise impacts during construction will be temporary and will be minimized to the best extent practicable by compliance with CTDOT Standard Specifications for Roads, Bridges, Facilities and Incidental Construction Form 818 regarding construction noise pollution:

"1.10.05 – Noise Pollution: The contractor shall take measures to control noise intensity caused by his construction operations and equipment, including but not limited to equipment used for drilling, pile driving, blasting, and excavating or hauling. All methods and devices employed to minimize noise shall be subject to continuing approval of the Engineer. The maximum allowable level of noise at the nearest residence or occupied building shall be 90 decibels on the "A" weighted scale (dB(A)). Any operation that exceeds this standard will cease until a different construction methodology is developed to allow work to proceed within the 90-dB(A) limit."

16. Effect on existing land resources and landscapes, including coastal and inland wetlands – No negative impacts are anticipated.

17. Effect on agricultural resources – No negative impacts are anticipated.

18. Adequacy of existing or proposed utilities and infrastructure – No negative impacts are anticipated. Coordination with utility companies will take place as needed.

19. Effect on greenhouse gas emissions as a direct or indirect result of the action – No negative impacts are anticipated. Construction phase impacts on greenhouse gas emissions will be limited. Any potential temporary impacts during construction can be avoided or limited by adherence to regulations limiting idling of engines.

20. Effect of a changing climate on the action, including any resiliency measures incorporated into the action – No negative impact is anticipated. The project is located outside of the coastal boundary and will not be exposed to climate change hazards.

21. Any other substantial effect on natural, cultural, recreational, or scenic resources- No other substantial effects are anticipated.

22. Cumulative effects – This project does not involve any cumulative effects that have the potential for significant effects on the environment.

Conclusion:

After examining any potential environmental impacts and reviewing all comments received, CTDOT has concluded that the preparation of an Environmental Impact Evaluation (EIE) will not be required for the Removal of Exit 21 Off-Ramp on Interstate 84 Eastbound (EB). Publication of this document to the Environmental Monitor shall satisfy the agency's responsibilities under Section 22a-1a-7 of the RCSA. Coordination with CTDEEP will continue, to address comments received, as appropriate.

During the scoping period CTDOT received comments from one State agency – the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CTDEEP) and several members of the public. A report of the public scoping meeting is attached, and below is a synopsis of the comments received from CTDEEP and from the public. Comments are addressed in the appropriate sections above where needed.

Natural Diversity Database

The Natural Diversity Database is a record of state and federal species maintained by the Wildlife Division that may be found in the project area. The project may be close to an NDDB area. CTDOT is required to submit a formal application to the Wildlife Division prior to submitting permit applications.

Remediation

The temporary ramp for the project was built on a site that was a Significant Environmental Hazard, the former Yankee Gas Manufactured Gas Plant site. There are other known contaminated sites on Freight Street. Proper precautions for handling and moving soils should be built into the design plans.

Fisheries

Watercourses potentially impacted by the project are the Naugatuck and Mad Rivers. The Naugatuck River is the largest tributary of the Housatonic River and was once among the most polluted waterways in the nation. Many partnerships and resources spanning decades have been dedicated to restoring this river. Several species of greatest conservation need occur in the project area and there is currently a plan for restoring diadromous fish to this river. Restoring species to the Naugatuck River is expected to benefit the Mad River as well. The Naugatuck River is a Trout Management Area and trout are stocked both upstream and downstream of the project area. It is important that restoration efforts are not undermined. Sediment and toxic runoff remain a significant threat to freshwater fish. At this early stage, preventing erosion, sedimentation, and the introduction of additional pollutants through runoff would be the primary concerns. This can be accomplished through proper stormwater management best management practices. CTDOT and CTDEEP will continue to work together as the project develops.

Stormwater Management

The General Permit for Stormwater and Dewatering Wastewaters from Constriction Activities may be applicable depending on the size of the disturbance regardless of phasing. The general permit applies to discharges of stormwater and dewatering wastewater from construction activities where the activity disturbs more than an acre. The requirements of the current general permit include registration to obtain permit coverage and development and implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Control Plan (SWPCP).

Solid Waste Disposal

The disposal of demolition waste should be handled in accordance with applicable solid waste statutes and regulations. Demolition waste may be contaminated with asbestos, lead-based paint or chemical residues and require special disposal. Clean fill can be used in site or at appropriate off-site locations. Land clearing debris and waste other than clean fill resulting from demolition activities is considered bulky

waste. Bulky waste is considered special waste and must be disposed of at a permitted landfill or other solid waste processing facility.

Construction and demolition debris should be segregated on site and reused or recycled to the greatest extent possible. Waste management plans for construction, renovation or demolition projects are encouraged to help meet the State's reuse and recycling goals. It is recommended that contracts only be awarded to companies who present a sufficiently detailed construction/demolition waste management plan for reuse/recycling.

Special Waste

If abatement is required for asbestos containing materials (ACM), these materials are regulated as a "special waste" and may not be disposed of with regular construction and demolition waste. These materials may only be disposed of at facilities that are specifically authorized to accept ACM.

Air Management

CTDEEP typically recommends the use of newer off-road construction equipment that meets the latest (EPA) or California Air Resources Board (CARB) standards. If that 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.

CTDEEP also recommends the use of newer on-road vehicles that meet either the latest EPA or 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 RCSA limits the idling of mobile sources to three (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 CTDEEP 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 CTDEEP.

Synopsis of Public Comments Received During Scoping Period

Several comments were received at the public meeting on March 23, 2023, and responses to those comments are included in the attached report of meeting. CTDOT also received 13 comments from the public outside of the scoping meeting. Comments received were typical comments submitted to the

CTDOT for proposed projects with the commenter expressing either support or opposition for the project. It appears that many of the comments received that oppose the project misidentified the Exit that will be closed. The project will permanently remove the Exit 21 EB Off-Ramp, which is currently closed and has been for over two years. To provide clarification to those commenters, CTDOT replied with the following response:

Thank you for your comments regarding the Removal of Exit 21 Off-Ramp on Interstate 84 Eastbound (EB) in Waterbury (the Project). The Project Team appreciates your feedback and will document the concerns you cited. The Project Team is developing solutions which improve operations on the local roadway network while also addressing the safety and congestion issues on Interstate 84 in the vicinity of exits 19-22.

The Project proposes to permanently remove the Exit 21 EB Off-Ramp, which has been closed for two years to accommodate the Mixmaster Rehabilitation Project which is currently in progress. Access to Downtown Waterbury is and would continue to be maintained via Exit 22 on I-84 EB which is only 740 feet from Exit 21.

Please note that the Project is not closing Exit 21 Westbound Off-ramp which brings drivers to Field Street and also provides direct access to Downtown Waterbury.

Closing Exit 21 EB will allow the auxiliary lane (the on-ramp entering the highway) to be extended to about 1000 feet, providing a longer and safer distance for merging or weaving. Closing Exit 21 EB will also reduce the need for weaving in the area, improving the overall traffic operations. Were Exit 21 EB to remain open, traffic modeling shows that in eight years (2031) traffic operations on the section of highway in the vicinity of Exits 19-21 would fail due to extreme gridlock, significantly increasing travel times.

To accommodate the additional traffic that will utilize Exit 22, improvements to the local roadway network are included as part of this project. More information regarding the Project can be found on our website at <https://www.newmixwaterbury.com/project-information/#exit-21-project->. You can also watch a recording of the Conceptual Public Meeting where the Project was discussed in greater detail at <https://www.newmixwaterbury.com/public-involvement/#public-meetings>.

All public feedback will be taken into consideration throughout the Project's progression. We encourage you to continue utilizing our comment form with any questions or comments and hope for your continued engagement in the New Mix Project and related breakout projects.



**CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
Division of Highway Design**

MEETING MINUTES

Project No.: 151-340
Project Name: Removal of Exit 21 Off-Ramp on Interstate 84 Eastbound (EB) in Waterbury (the Project)
Date of Meeting: Thursday March 23, 2023, at 6:00 PM
Location of Meeting: Maloney Magnet School, 233 South Elm St, Waterbury, CT 06706
Subject of Meeting: Removal of Exit 21 Off-Ramp on Interstate 84 Eastbound (EB) in Waterbury Conceptual Public Scoping Meeting

Attendees:

Public Members:	
Please see Attachment A.	
Project Team	
Name	Organization
Michael Calabrese	Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT)
Nilesh Patel	CTDOT
Jonathan Dean	CTDOT
Joe Belrose	CTDOT
Consultant Team	
Jacob Argiro	HNTB
David Schweitzer	HNTB
Rudy Franciamore	HNTB
Anna Mariotti	HNTB
Christopher Fagan	HNTB
David Giel	HNTB
Jacqueline Six	HNTB
Cole Ernst	HNTB

1. Meeting Format and Attendance

The Conceptual Public information/CEPA Scoping Meeting took place in person. One meeting time was offered, occurring at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 23rd.

The meeting was live streamed on Waterbury Government Access and on the New Mix YouTube page and will also be shown periodically on both Waterbury Government Access and Waterbury Community Access.

Real-time translation in Spanish was provided for the meeting.

At 6:00 p.m., there was a 30-minute open-house period where attendees were able to view boards with project information and speak one-on-one with the Project Team. At 6:30 p.m., the presentation began and was followed by a question-and-answer session.

Please see Attachment A for a list of meeting attendees.

2. Presentation: Removal of Exit 21 Off-Ramp on Interstate 84 Eastbound (EB)

- A.** The Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA) Overview.
 - a. What is CEPA? Why is the CEPA process occurring?
 - b. What is Scoping under CEPA? What is the public scoping process?
- B.** The New Mix: Overview and Breakout Projects.
 - a. An overview of the New Mix project and the progress so far.
 - b. Overview of the different types of breakout projects and the nature of the anticipated schedule for the Early Action, Near-Term, and Long-Term Projects.
- C.** Removal of Exit 21 Off-Ramp on Interstate 84 Eastbound (EB) in Waterbury: Project Need.
 - a. An overview of the terminology that needs to be understood when discussing this project.
 - b. An overview of the current issues within the project area that illustrate the Need for the project.
 - c. A summary of the Need for the project
- D.** Solutions: Project Purpose and Components.
 - a. An overview of the purpose of the project, and what will be improved by conducting this project.
 - b. An overview of the solution that was identified by the project team to address the purpose and need for the project. The solution is to close Exit 21 EB Off Ramp and lengthen the auxiliary (weave) lane.
 - c. An overview of the improvements that would occur as a result of the project's identified alternative.
 - a. Traffic Improvements
 - b. Urban Design Opportunities
 - c. Bike and Pedestrian Improvements
- E.** Project Benefits.
 - a. An overview of the expected project benefits that include increased safety and a decrease in crashes in the vicinity of Exit 22, improved traffic operations, improved air quality, streetscape and urban design opportunities, improved bike and pedestrian safety and facilities, and improved travel time to key destinations.
 - b. A more detailed overview of the improvements in the travel times to keys destinations based on the route alternatives.
- F.** Project Cost and Timeline.

- a. An overview of the project timeline, including stakeholder outreach, preliminary design, public outreach, design completion, and construction.
- b. A high-level overview of the costs associated with the project.

G. Next Steps and How to Stay Involved.

- a. The attendees were reminded of the 30-day CEPA scoping period that ends on the close of business on April 10, 2023 and were informed of the various ways that they can provide comments and stay informed about the project.
- b. Methods of staying involved with the project: online at newmixwaterbury.com, emailing TheNewMixWaterbury@gmail.com, by phone at 203-805-8018, or by US postal service to 2800 Berlin Turnpike, PO Box 317546, Newington, CT 06131-7546.
- c. An overview of the next steps for the project including a preview of the next public meeting anticipated for June/July 2023.

A. Post-Meeting Question & Answer (Q&A) Sessions

The following is a summary of the questions asked at the public meeting along with the answers that were provided. It has been edited for clarity. Please visit the New Mix website to view the recording of the entire public meeting. The video may be found at: <https://www.newmixwaterbury.com/public-involvement/public-meetings/>

Q: I love this project; I think it should move forward. I live in Town Plot where the Highland Avenue on-ramp has been closed. In terms of road improvements, what are they going to include, what sorts of aspects are going to be input into the new layout of the local road network?

A: Thank you for that question, one thing that we are here for tonight is to understand what the community wants to see. We are expecting to construct pedestrian and bicycle improvements and not just improvements for vehicles. We will be adding standard sized sidewalks, and ADA compliant intersections in addition to new traffic signals. The local roadway network is very constrained in this area, so where possible we would look to add bicycle facilities. We are also looking at street furniture and plantings. Again, we are at such a conceptual level of design with almost a blank slate and we want to understand what the community wants to see.

Q: Thank you for the opportunity to join in this process, I appreciate the motivations that are going into this project and the importance of safety. As someone who has driven the area hundreds of times in my life, I don't really understand the timing shown in getting to key destinations. Also, it will force a lot of traffic through downtown and Grand Street where we have already experienced traffic trouble in the past.

A: The important thing to note here is the amount of time that is spent on Interstate 84. In the year 2031, the models show that the traffic will fail at this point.

Q: One other comment, this ramp is used by a lot of folks coming up Route 8 north to get onto I-84 and using this exit to immediately get off. This is the best way to get to this part of town from Route 8 without having to drive through the local roads, so if you close it you will need to get off one exit earlier from Route 8.

A: Correct, however the congestion won't only be on I-84 eastbound, the analysis shows that traffic congestion will occur on the system ramp from Route 8 northbound as well because of the conflict points. This means people taking the exit from Route 8 northbound to I-84 eastbound will be sitting in traffic and will have longer travel times due to the conflict points and resulting traffic backup. Again, we are looking at the year 2031, and we are looking at other traffic signal improvements as well as the improvement to the highway eliminating these conflict points to get less traffic congestion.

Q: Without access to the modeling systems you have I can't comment on that, but I just wanted to give you my practical experience driving these roads every day.

A: Understood, thank you.

Q: I would like to continue off of what he was saying. My personal experience going from Route 8 to Exit 21 is that there are a lot of problems with the weave area that was described, and I personally don't think there is a big problem with removing Exit 21 as Exit 22 would be able to suffice. It has been closed for three years and hasn't been a huge problem. Continuing on from earlier, will there be elements (such as red-light cameras) in place to ensure safety at the improved intersections, especially for bicycles and pedestrians?

A: At this time red light cameras are not permitted by state law; however, the intersections are designed so that there is a lag time between the red light and when the other light turns green, which is a safety feature.

Q: Hi, I am with the Mattatuck Museum, a cultural institution in Downtown Waterbury. Currently a lot of our visitors coming from that direction are taking Exit 21 and my question is during that two-year construction period, do you have any anticipation on what the effect may be on traffic and congestion when you are working through the construction process.

A: Great question. We always come up with a plan to handle traffic and keep it flowing freely and smoothly during construction. As you noted there will be some work going on with Exit 22 as a part of this project, this may be occurring at nighttime, however we do not know that yet. We will always try to keep traffic flowing during peak hours.

Q: My concern is the 2:51 time you described will more likely be double that, especially if you hit all of the red lights on the cross streets. If you remove the Our Lady of Lourdes church to put the exit for I-84 westbound, then there will need to be another light there as well, so it is hard for me to trust that time. My main concern is the lane closures [referring to the Mixmaster Rehabilitation Project]. I have been having trouble since September taking the interchange from Route 8 south the I-84 east. I have to drive to work at 5:00 a.m. and my exit (Exit 31 southbound) has been closed, so I want to know how much longer I am going to have to deal with this as it adds 20 minutes to my commute driving through the local road network. If this were to occur again during the construction of this

project, I would need to sell my house and move. Additionally, police will sometimes block the traffic getting on to the exit. So, my main concerns are the lane and exit closures.

A: Thank you. We are only looking at removing Exit 21 eastbound right now, not westbound. Our Lady of Lourdes is not going to be impacted by this. In terms of the lane closures you described, I know the Mixmaster Rehabilitation Project, which is separate from the project we are talking about today, is scheduled to be completed this year. After the completion of the Mixmaster Rehabilitation Project, we hopefully will not have to do any additional construction on the mainline until the reconstruction.

Q: Good evening. I am curious if any improvements have been made to Exit 21 in the last two years?

A: I do not believe so, no. Just to note that the Exit 21 bridge was scheduled for rehabilitation to extend its service life, however that has been put on hold while this project [removal of the Exit 21 Off-Ramp on I-84 EB] is in development.

Q: Thank you, this is a project that should be done. A: Thank you.

Q: I'm not sure if this is something that has been talked about, but will the ramp [structure] be removed? Are there any developable opportunities available once the ramp is removed? I also noticed Exit 22 will be expanded to have two lanes, is this really necessary?

A: Yes, the ramp is planned on being removed. We are currently looking at opportunities can be done with this area [the land that the ramp currently occupies] in the future. Having an additional lane on Exit 22 would help the traffic flow on the mainline and the additional traffic that would be using that ramp and would also allow ample space for cars to queue at the signal at the end of the ramp.

Q: I got off Exit 22 today, and I do not believe that it is currently wide enough to support two lanes, so I am not sure if you are planning on widening it or just restriping it. Additionally, from what I have heard you will be reopening the Highland Avenue ramp as well, is that correct?

A: Thank you. The Exit 22 off-ramp is currently wide enough to support two lanes. The shoulders will be narrow, but it will be wide enough to support two lanes. The Highland Ave on ramp is going to be reopened, potentially this spring.

Q: Are there any plans in the future for the Highland Ave on-ramp to be removed or will that stay for good?

A: I will use this opportunity to plug the New Mix Study which looks at the long-term future of the interchange as a whole. The goal overall is to simplify the on and off ramps entering and exiting the highway, there are a lot of different alternatives being considered and many ramp configurations we are looking at. Again, the goal is to simplify and remove some of the ramps coming on and off of the highway.

Q: Can you tell me at this point will the mainline 84 entrance and exit ramps receive improved lighting? Currently it is very dark. Will the completed project have improved lighting throughout?



A: Yes, improved lighting is part of the Mixmaster Rehabilitation Project that is currently ongoing. New LED luminaires will be installed.

Q: Will there be improved lighting for Exit 22 as well? Since there will be more traffic exiting that ramp it will need good lighting.

A: Yes, that will be a part of the project in later stages to look into lighting on Exit 22.

At this point in the meeting, there were no further questions or comments from meeting participants. Jonathan Dean, CTDOT Project Manager, then stated that if something comes to mind after the meeting, individuals can always submit comments and/or questions on the New Mix website NewMixWaterbury.com. In addition, individuals can sign up for Project-related information on both the website and at thenewmixwaterbury@gmail.com. He added that to be documented under the CEPA scoping period, comments must be received by the close of business on April 10th, however the Project Team will still accept comments regarding the Project after that date.

Meeting was adjourned at 7:24 P.M.