



PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING

TUESDAY, APRIL 27, 2010

AT

NEWBURYPORT CITY HALL, AUDITORIUM

**60 PLEASANT STREET
NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS**

6:00 – 8:00 PM

FOR THE PROPOSED

**WHITTIER BRIDGE / I-95 IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT
I-95 FROM EXIT 57 TO EXIT 60
PROJECT 601096**

**BETWEEN THE CITY OF NEWBURYPORT AND
THE TOWNS OF SALISBURY AND AMESBURY**

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**LUISA PAIEWONSKY
ADMINISTRATOR**

**FRANK A. TRAMONTOZZI, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER**



The Massachusetts Department of Transportation's Highway Division

Invites You to a

Public Information Meeting

for the

Whittier Bridge/I-95 Improvement Project

Tuesday, April 27, 2010
6:00 – 8:00 PM

Newburyport City Hall, Auditorium
60 Pleasant Street, Newburyport, MA

The purpose of this meeting is to present an update on the environmental analyses for the highway widening and bridge river crossing alternatives that are being evaluated as part of the Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment process. The evaluation is being performed as part of a joint federal NEPA and state MEPA environmental review process and in accordance with the scope outlined in the Secretary's Certificate for the Environmental Notification Form. Following the presentation, MassDOT staff will lead a discussion to answer questions and gather public comment on the alternatives. Comments received will be carefully considered as the alternatives evaluation moves forward.

The Whittier Bridge/I-95 Improvement Project involves as its centerpiece the replacement of the Whittier Bridge over the Merrimack River. It is one of the most significant projects to be undertaken by MassDOT under the Commonwealth's \$3 billion Accelerated Bridge Program. The completed project will result in four travel lanes, a shoulder adjacent to the high speed travel lane and a breakdown lane in each direction along the length of the project corridor. The project will improve safety and reduce congestion with additional I-95 lane capacity. The project also includes the replacement or reconstruction of four adjacent bridges along I-95 in Amesbury and Newburyport.

If you have questions or would like more information about the project, please contact Mike O'Dowd, MassDOT Highway Division Project Manager, at 617-973-7475. To be added to the project email or US Mail distribution lists, please contact Stephanie Boundy, Public Outreach Coordinator for MassDOT's Accelerated Bridge Program, by phone at 617-973-8049 or by email at Stephanie.Boundy@state.ma.us. The City Hall Auditorium is accessible.





DEVAL L. PATRICK
GOVERNOR
TIMOTHY P. MURRAY
LT. GOVERNOR
JEFFREY B. MULLAN
SECRETARY & CEO
LUISA PAIEWONSKY
DIVISION ADMINISTRATOR



Dear Concerned Citizen:

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) is committed to building and maintaining a transportation infrastructure that is both safe and efficient for all who use our roadways, bridges, bicycle facilities and pedestrian paths, while maintaining the integrity of the environment.

As part of the design process for this project, we are conducting this public hearing to explain the proposed improvements, listen to your comments and answer any questions you may have. At the conclusion of the hearing, MassDOT will review all of your comments and, where feasible, incorporate them into the design of the project.

We recognize that road and bridge construction can create inconveniences for the public. MassDOT places a great deal of emphasis on minimizing the temporary disruptive effects of construction.

MassDOT encourages input from local communities and values your opinions. Please be assured that we will undertake no project without addressing the concerns of the community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Luisa Paiewonsky".

Luisa Paiewonsky
Highway Division Administrator

www.mass.gov/massdot

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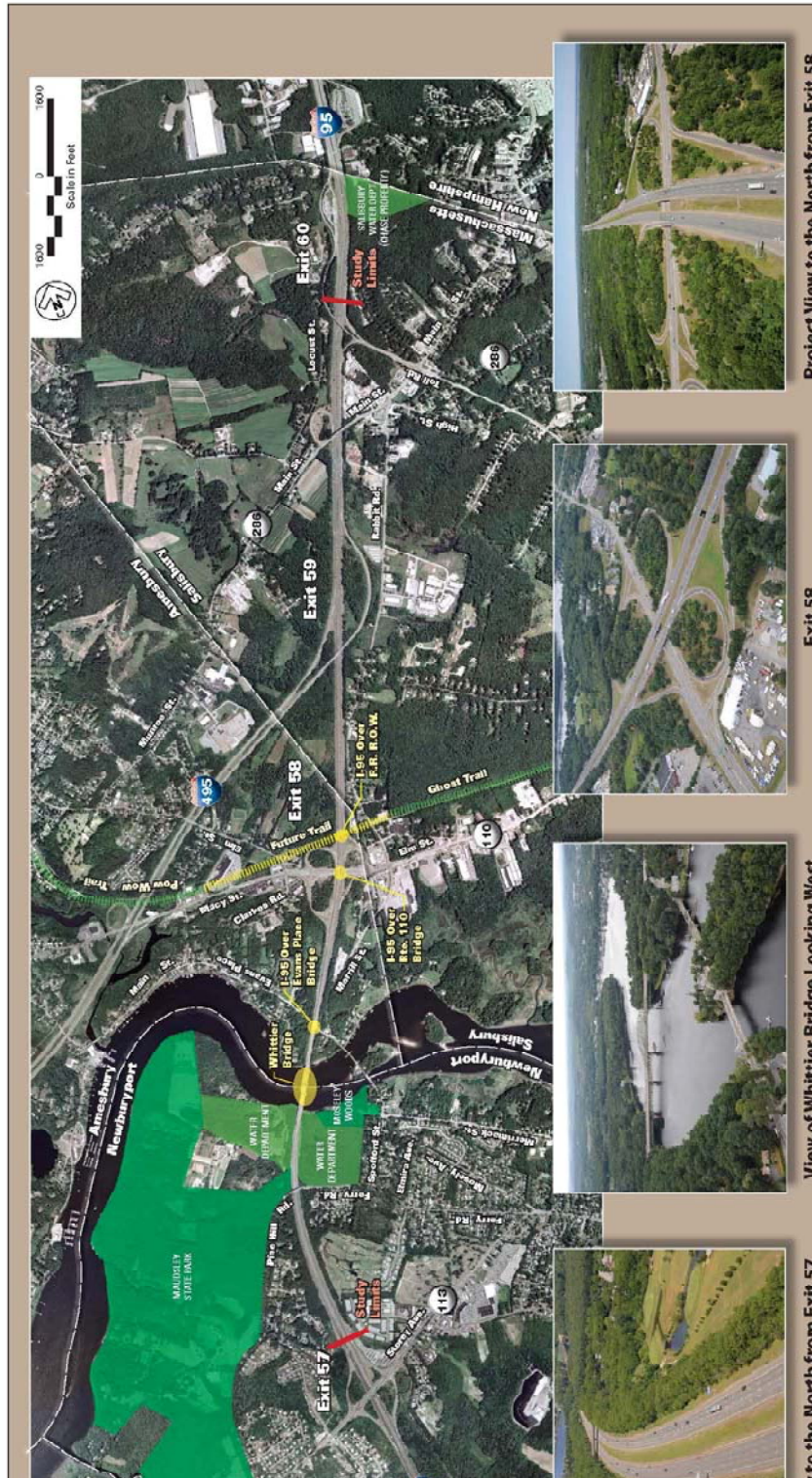


Figure 1:

Site Locus Plan

Newburyport, Amesbury, and Salisbury Massachusetts



Project Location

The project area extends 4 miles along the I-95 corridor from Exit 57 (Route 113/Storey Avenue) in Newburyport to Exit 60 (State Route 286/Main Street overpass and the toll road overpass) in Salisbury and includes the Whittier Bridge over the Merrimack River (**Figure 1**). The Whittier Bridge / I-95 Improvement Project will directly affect the towns of Newburyport, Amesbury and Salisbury.

Purpose

The purpose of the project is to replace the existing six-lane John Greenleaf Whittier Memorial Bridge over the Merrimack River to remedy structural deficiencies and the functional obsolescence of the existing bridge. The project is part of the Commonwealth's Accelerated Bridge Program to repair and replace bridges throughout Massachusetts. In addition, to comply with current Interstate Highway Design standards, the existing three-lane cross section of I-95 would be widened to a four-lane cross section from the I-95 / Route 113 Interchange (Exit 57) in Newburyport to I-495 (Exit 60) in Salisbury.

Existing Conditions

The existing seven-span Whittier Bridge built in 1954 carries six lanes of traffic. The existing bridge is in need of extensive repairs to remain in service and cannot be rehabilitated to accommodate an eight-lane cross section. The bridge does not provide sufficient capacity for current and projected traffic volumes, is the location of an elevated number of accidents, and fails to meet current FHWA Interstate Highway Standards.

Scope of Work

MassDOT has selected a consultant team led by Parsons Brinckerhoff to provide Preliminary Design Services, including a bridge type study, and Environmental Services, including an Environmental Notification Form (ENF), Environmental Assessment (EA), an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) and environmental permits, leading to the development of preliminary construction documents and a Request for Proposal (RFP) package for design-build services.

The Whittier Bridge / I-95 project proposes to replace the existing bridge with a new structure on a parallel alignment. The new structure will have four travel lanes, a high-speed shoulder and a breakdown lane in each direction. The project will provide additional I-95 lane capacity to accommodate projected 20-year traffic volumes and improve safety. It also includes the replacement or reconstruction of four adjacent bridges along I-95 in Amesbury and Newburyport. In addition, the roadway will be widened from the existing six lanes to eight lanes along the 4-mile project alignment from Exit 57 in Newburyport to Exit 60 in Salisbury.

Bridge types under consideration for replacement of the Whittier Bridge include network tied-arch bridge, extradosed bridge, cable-stayed bridge, and box girder bridge. Architects renderings of these bridge types are shown in **Figure 2-Figure 5**.

Environmental Review

MassDOT is committed to the performance of a full environmental review process for this project in compliance with all applicable state and federal regulations. The review will combine state and federal environmental review in a joint

process. The Environmental Notification Form (ENF) was filed on June 1, 2009, which initiated the state review process. Currently, feasible options are being evaluated by the study team and the beneficial and adverse effects associated with each option will be documented in a Draft and Final EA/EIR. As part of this review process, an extensive and comprehensive public participation program is being implemented. This outreach program will keep the public updated on the project's status, seek public input, support the regulatory process, and offer coordinated meetings for elected and municipal officials.

Schedule

The design and construction of the project improvements will be managed and overseen by MassDOT. The project is scheduled to be advertised in Spring 2012. Construction is expected to last approximately 3-4 years depending on the construction methods used. MassDOT intends to implement innovative design and construction techniques to expedite both the design and construction of this project. The project contractor will be required to maintain vehicular traffic over the bridge during construction.

For more information, please visit the project website at <http://whittierbridge.mhd.state.ma.us/>. Or if you have questions or concerns, please contact Stephanie Boundy, Public Outreach Coordinator for the Accelerated Bridge Program at (617) 973-8049.



PROJECT FACT SHEET

Location: The project area extends along the I-95 corridor from Exit 57 (Route 113/Storey Avenue) in Newburyport to Exit 60 (State Route 286/Main Street overpass and the toll road overpass) in Salisbury and includes the Whittier Bridge, which carries I-95 traffic over the Merrimack River (**Figure 1**). The Whittier Bridge / I-95 Improvement Project will directly affect the towns of Newburyport, Amesbury and Salisbury.

Role: The Whittier Bridge is a major component of the regional transportation infrastructure carrying an average of 75000 vehicles per day. The I-95 corridor, the major north-south interstate highway on the eastern seaboard of the United States, serves as an important commuter route to Boston from the North Shore area of Massachusetts, New Hampshire and southern Maine.

Project History: The Whittier Bridge was originally designed to carry only two lanes of traffic in each direction with full breakdown lanes. In the 1960s, it was reconfigured to three lanes in each direction without shoulders. Significant corrosion has occurred to structural elements of the bridge and the bridge is considered to be badly deteriorated. MassDOT has been carrying out structural repairs to the bridge on a regular basis to maintain the bridge in a safe condition until the bridge can be replaced. An analysis of the existing condition of Whittier Bridge concluded that as a result of the extensive deterioration of the existing structure, the temporary nature of the near-term repairs, and the indeterminate nature of much of the structure that rehabilitation of the bridge is not a practical option.

Project Future: MassDOT Highway Division has selected a consultant team led by Parsons Brinckerhoff to provide a bridge type study, 25% design plans, and a 25% design-build procurement package for the Whittier Bridge / I-95 Improvement Project. The existing bridge over the Merrimack River will be replaced with a new bridge on a parallel alignment within the existing right-of-way. The project is expected to cost \$285 million.

Key Dates:

- Final EA/EIR: November 2010
- 25% Design: October 2011
- Design-Build Procurement Package: May 2012
- Completion of Construction: 2016

Process: Replacement of the Whittier Bridge is a major component in Governor Patrick's Accelerated Bridge program. MassDOT Highway Division is committed to completing this and other bridge projects in the shortest amount of time possible with the least amount of disruption to local communities while being environmentally responsible. To speed replacement of the Whittier Bridge, MassDOT Highway Division is planning to use design/build methods and will investigate innovative construction techniques.

Citizen Input: Your input to the project is solicited and appreciated. Wherever possible, MassDOT Highway Division will integrate citizen input into its design and construction of the Whittier Bridge/I-95 Improvement Project. There will be opportunities for you to offer your thoughts throughout the process. For more information, please visit the project web site at <http://whittierbridge.mhd.state.ma.us/>. Or if you have questions or concerns, please contact Stephanie Boundy, Public Outreach Coordinator for the Accelerated Bridge Program, at (617) 973-8049 or at Stephanie.Boundy@state.ma.us.

ARCHITECT'S RENDERING PROPOSED NETWORK ARCH BRIDGE

Figure 2



PROPOSED EXTRADOSED BRIDGE

Figure 3



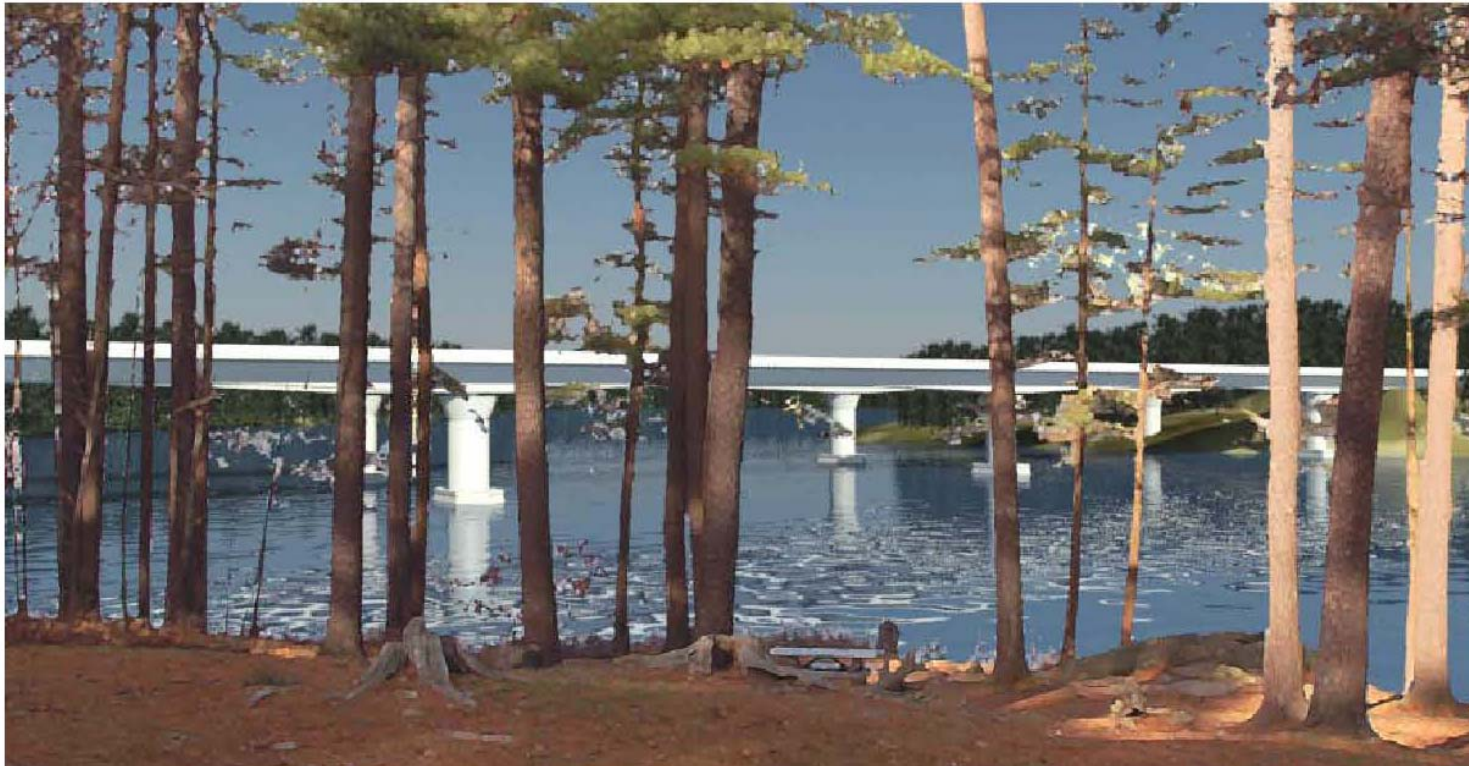
ARCHITECT'S RENDERING PROPOSED CABLE STAYED BRIDGE

Figure 4



ARCHITECT'S RENDERING PROPOSED GIRDER BRIDGE

Figure 5



PLEASE FOLD AND STAPLE

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Frank A. Tramontozzi, P.E., Chief Engineer
Attn: Shoukry Elnahal, P.E.
MassDOT Highway Division
10 Park Plaza, Room 6500
Boston, MA 02116

Re: Public Information Meeting
Whittier Bridge / I-95 Improvement Project
Project File Number: 601096

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