



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

MEETING MINUTES

Project No.: 151-331
 Project Name: Reconstruction of Interstate 84/CT Route 8 Interchange (the Project)
 Date of Meeting: Tuesday January 31, 2023, at 12:00 PM and again at 6:00 PM
 Location of Meeting: Virtual via Zoom
 Subject of Meeting: New Mix Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study, Public Meeting No. 3

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
Naomi Hodges	HNTB
Anna Mariotti	HNTB
Christopher Fagan	HNTB

1. Meeting Format and Attendance

The third New Mix public meeting took place via Zoom. Two meeting times were offered, one at 12 noon and the other at 6 p.m. Please see Attachment A for lists of attendees.

Real-time translation in Spanish and in Portuguese were provided for both meetings.

2. Presentation: New Mix Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study

- A.** The New Mix Project Purpose Overview.
 - a. What is the New Mix? Why is it occurring?
- B.** Early Planning for the New Mix: What is the PEL Study.
 - a. An overview of the PEL Study process, and the progress so far.
- C.** Screening the Universe of Alternatives: Evaluations to find a Range of Reasonable Alternatives.
 - a. An overview of the evaluation criteria and conceptual alternatives was provided.
 - b. The results of the Level 1 screening were presented.



D. Getting to New Mix Construction: The Process and Anticipated Schedule.

- a. A high-level overview of the proposed timeline and composition of projects occurred describing the nature and anticipated schedule for the Early Action, Near-Term, and Long-Term Projects.

E. Learn More, Provide Input and Stay Involved with the New Mix.

- a. The public was reminded about the various ways they can stay informed, sign up to receive Project email updates, leave comments, and ask questions, including on the Project website at NewMixWaterbury.com, via email to theNewMixWaterbury@gmail.com, or by phone at 203-805-8018.
- b. The New Mix team will have informational tables set up at various community events such as locations such as schools and libraries.
- c. Preview of upcoming public meetings.

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&A for the 12:00 p.m., January 31, 2023, Public Meeting

Q: Town of Prospect Mayor Robert Chatfield: Were some of the recent smaller projects for local Waterbury infrastructure, like the Jackson Street extension project, associated with the New Mix?

A: The referenced project was a separate project the city of Waterbury (The City) undertook using a Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant to improve Jackson Street and extend it to Freight Street. For the New Mix Project, we intend to improve the highway interchange and the associated local road network. As smaller breakout projects are identified and mobilized, the intention is to reduce re-work and to not interfere with the Long-Term Projects for the New Mix.

Q: Catherine D’Vileskis: When will the Interstate-84 Westbound (I-84) system ramp to Route 8 Southbound be available for public use?

A: The system ramp that is presently closed is anticipated to reopen in the spring.

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. Nilesh Patel, CTDOT Transportation Supervising Engineer, concluded the meeting by announcing a public meeting that will be scheduled in the near future. The public meeting will present an overview of an Early Action Project, the Removal of I-84 Eastbound Exit 21 Off-Ramp.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:35 P.M.

B: Q&A for the 6:00 p.m., January 31, 2023, Public Meeting

Q: Patrick DiSarro: Is there any possibility for an alternate route to the south of the city?

A: Yes, the South City Bypass is an alternative that has been identified for this study. This alternative would propose relocating the I-84 through traffic to an alignment that is close to the towns of Middlebury and Naugatuck, tying back into I-84 around Exit 23. Included in this alternative is the construction of a business route that would take the place of the existing I-84 roadway as access to Waterbury and Route 8 will need to be maintained. This alternative is being evaluated in the same manner as the other alternatives. More information about this and the other alternatives and be found on the Project Alternatives page on the Website.

David Schweitzer, HNTB Deputy Project Manager, relayed a question that had been frequently asked during previous community meetings: Will any of the Project alternatives impact the Freight Street District?

A: There are alternatives that propose to move the interchange to the east or take Route 8 through the Freight Street District. In the Level 1 alternatives screening, we evaluated for safety and fatal flaws. Alternatives that impact the Freight Street District ended up passing the Level 1 screening; however, they will be further evaluated during the Level 2 screening. Alternatives will then be evaluated based on their ability to meet the Project goals and objectives, which includes minimizing community and economic impacts. In the Level 2 screening, alternatives that impact the community, properties, and the economy would score lower because they do not meet the Project's goals and objectives.

Jonathan Dean emphasized the importance of the Freight Street District redevelopment efforts and the economic growth that is expected to follow. These are all considerations that the Project Team has taken into account.

Q: Jonathan Dean: Most of the public feedback we have received so far about the New Mix alternatives has been related to highway safety or potential property impacts. Can you comment on whether the alternatives that are advancing past this Level 1 screening differs significantly in either of those categories?

A: When we lay out these alternatives, we need to look at everything. We start with highway safety, that falls into fatal flaw area. As far as the rights-of-way impacts, we had to look at a lot of alternatives and aimed to avoid property impacts. The community has communicated to the Project Team the importance of the tax base and the proposed economic development projects in the Study Area and around the interchange. The Project Team has been conscientious of these factors in the development of the alternatives. Alternatives that pass the first level of screening will then evaluated for how well they meet the Project's goals and objectives, including potential impacts on the community. We are trying to minimize right of way impacts as much as possible.

Q: *John DiCarlo*: Are there options that would address the fact that the interchange serves as a major local roadway, for example a primary route of intracity traffic?

A: That is something that we found in our traffic analysis. Approximately 35% of the trips that began in the Study Area were using the highway to get somewhere else within Waterbury. So, the strategy, universal to most of the alternatives, aims to reconnect Waterbury's local road network where possible. This can be seen on the Project website. Many alternatives include frontage roads that would run parallel I-84 to improve the intracity traffic flow. Currently, a north-south frontage road exists parallel to Route 8. New frontage roads would be designed as complete streets, meaning that they would not be designed just to get as many cars through as possible. These roads would accommodate other modes of transportation, such as bicycles and pedestrians. The Project Team is also looking to develop a fifth crossing of the Naugatuck River, opposite approximately to Sunnyside Avenue. This fifth crossing would help connect east-west travel.

Q: *Gary Hychko*: Suggest safety improvements such as and potentially installing signage to alert vehicles to slow down as they approach the Mixmaster.

A: CTDOT acknowledged and thanked Gary for the input about safety.

A demonstration of the Project Alternatives webpage on the Project website was provided. It was recommended that users provide feedback about individual experience using the application:

<https://www.newmixwaterbury.com/project-information/#project-alternatives>

Q: *Suschna*: The closing of the Route 8 Southbound Exit 19 off-ramp is dangerous and is making everyone get off Route 8 Northbound. What is the future goal of that exit?

A: The Route 8 Southbound Exit 19 off-ramp is still under construction as part of the ongoing Mixmaster Rehabilitation Project. The intent is to reopen the exit this spring.

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.

Meeting was adjourned 6:45 P.M.

Attachment A

Public Attendees, New Mix Public Meeting No. 3

New Mix Public Meeting No. 3, 12 p.m.
Ben Cadwell
Beverly Strileckis
David Ferraro
Louis Glick
Maria Vaccarelli
Michelle West
Patricia Wright
Robert Chatfield, Town of Prospect
Viviani Oliveira
Gabriela Saenz
Martin DeFlorio
John DiFederico
Ken Stanco, City of Waterbury
Joe McGrath, City of Waterbury
Dave Ferraro, CTDOT
Martin Spring
Alec Slatky
Kalyn McCullough
Catherine D'Vileskis
Rich Hamel
Roberto Barbery
Ryan Casman, Office of U.S. Representative Jahana Hayes
Thomas Wamser
Nicole Weymouth
Ken Tasch
Kevin Taylor
Patrick McGrath
Norm Berg
Linda Sinkler
Carlo Leone, CTDOT
Brian Batista
Joe Balskus



New Mix Public Meeting No. 3, 6 p.m.
Viviani Oliveira
Ben Cadwell
Roberto Barbery
Mark O'Brien
Gabriela Saenz
Maria Vaccarelli
Kate Gage
David Simpson, City of Waterbury
Anson Davis
Diane Betkoski
Patrick DiSarro
Greg Chere
Suschna
Michael Ference
Matt Verry, CTDOT
Larry Rifkin
Allen Fossbender
Marc Capizzi
Gary Hychko
Kim Lesay, CTDOT
John DiCarlo