

**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: March 28, 2022 11:30 AM – 1:00 PM  
 Location of Meeting: Zoom Teleconference  
 Subject of Meeting: New Mix PAC Meeting No. 3A

**Attendees:**

<b>PAC Members</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
David Simpson	City of Waterbury Department of Public Works
Clifford Brammer III	City of Waterbury Planning Department
Robert Nerney	City of Waterbury Planning Department
Maria Vaccarelli	CTtransit Waterbury
Martin Begnal	Friends of Riverside Cemetery
Brian Peterson	Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
Erik Hazelton	Housatonic Valley Association
Julia Rogers	Housatonic Valley Association
John DiCarlo	Main Street Waterbury
Rajendra Kasbawala	Metro-North Railroad
Mark Nielsen	Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG)
Ken Stanco	Office of the Mayor
Kevin Zak	PAL River Brigade
Stephanie Valickis	Saint Mary's Hospital
Kevin Taylor	Waterbury Bridge to Success
Thomas Hyde	Waterbury Development Corporation
Arthur Denze Sr.	Waterbury Neighborhood Council
Rosh Maghfour	Waterbury Public Schools
Martin Spring	Waterville Community Club
Tomas Olivo Valentin	Working Cities Challenge

<b>Project Team</b>	
<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Michael Calabrese	Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT)
Nilesh Patel	CTDOT
Scott Roberts	CTDOT
Jonathan Dean	CTDOT
Joe Belrose	CTDOT
Carlo Leone	CTDOT
Kevin Fleming	CTDOT
<b>Consultant Team</b>	
Jacob Argiro	HNTB
David Schweitzer	HNTB
Christopher Fagan	HNTB
Naomi Hodges	HNTB
Katie Theis	HNTB

**Distribution:** All Attendees

## **1. Meeting Purpose**

The New Mix Project Team (Project Team) recapped key elements of Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting No. 2C, presented a visualization of existing conditions, and introduced the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study's (the Study) Universe of Alternatives (UOA): No-Build, Travel Modes, and Rehabilitation Alternatives.

## **2. New Mix PEL Study Project Advisory Committee Meeting Presentation**

### **A. Project Advisory Committee Meeting No. 3A Summary**

- a. Review of PAC Meeting No. 2C, PAC poll results, and comment exercise cards.
- b. Presented a visualization video of the existing conditions including the constraints, considerations, and challenges for the New Mix.
  - i. Reviewed the natural conditions; built/human conditions; previous, ongoing, and planned projects/studies; and potential funding.
  - ii. Provided an overview of the urban design approach for developing the UOA.
- c. Introduced the UOA.
  - i. Presented the No-Build, Travel Modes, and Rehabilitation Alternatives.
- d. General Questions and Discussion.

### **B. Questions and Comments on the Presentation and New Mix**

The following questions and comments were received during the PAC Meeting No. 3A presentation.

- Erik Hazelton (Housatonic Valley Association, Southern Valley Conservation Projects Manager) asked when the meeting minutes for the previous two PAC meetings were to be posted online. He explained that the minutes are critical for sharing information and discussions from these PAC meetings with other stakeholders and community members. Ms. Hodges responded that the Project Team was in the process of finalizing the internal review of the PAC meeting minutes and would upload the documents to the website as soon as possible upon completion of the review process.
- Brian Peterson (Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church) asked for clarification regarding the I-84 Rehabilitation with Bypass Repurposed as Frontage Road Alternative, asking if it would keep tractor-trailers and through traffic on the highway, while locals could use the frontage road for intracity travel. David Schweitzer (HNTB, Deputy Project Manager) noted that the I-84 Rehabilitation with Bypass Repurposed as Frontage Road alternative includes the construction of a new bridge (bypass) south of the existing stacked I-84 structure. The traffic of I-84 would be temporarily placed on the bypass while the existing stacked I-84 would be rehabilitated. Once the rehabilitation of the stacked structures is completed, traffic would return to its original configuration and the bypass would be repurposed as a frontage road, replacing the I-84 Eastbound Exit 21 (Meadow Street) and Exit 22 (South Main Street) for downtown access. Mr. Peterson asked if the

frontage road would be a separate road from what tractor-trailers and through traffic would use, allowing for local road users to bypass the Mixmaster through use of the frontage road to access downtown. Mr. Schweitzer responded that locals would not be bypassing the Mixmaster and would only need to travel with through traffic for a short amount of time. This alternative requires the removal of the I-84 Eastbound entrance ramp at Highland Avenue and users of the local roadway would be able to utilize the Chase Parkway on-ramp to I-84 Eastbound to access a new auxiliary lane that would transition to the frontage road for downtown access.

- Mark Nielsen (NVCOG, Director of Planning/Assistant Director) referred to the Travel Modes Alternative and noted that he had not seen local roadway improvements listed, but that there are a number of local roadway improvements that could be implemented that could address issues with the local roadway network. Mr. Nielsen asked if the Project Team was considering local roadway improvements. Mr. Schweitzer responded that there are many deficiencies within the existing local roadway network and reiterated the challenges and constraints that exist within the Study Area such as the limited crossings of the Naugatuck River, Waterbury's topography, the railroad, and large tracts of land occupied by past/current industries. Mr. Schweitzer emphasized that while the Travel Modes Alternative is for transit-related alternatives, improvements to the local roadway network are a high priority for the New Mix Project. Analysis performed for an origin and destination study revealed that approximately 35% of vehicles using the Mixmaster begin and end travel within the PEL Study Area. Thus, improvements to the local roadway network could potentially reduce traffic volumes on the Mixmaster by creating a better performing and more desirable local road network for intracity travel.
- Mr. Nielsen noted that improvements to the local road network would be expensive and the City of Waterbury (the City) would likely need to seek State or Federal funding. As such, Mr. Nielsen asked if the improvements would be included in the New Mix Project and thus be given higher priority when the State prepares programming plans such as the Capital Improvement Plan or Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan. Mr. Nielsen stated that, while the New Mix Project's long-term solution would be slated for 2045, there is a need to evaluate potential improvements to traffic flow through Waterbury more immediately, making it valuable to identify these opportunities as a way to alleviate congestion in the near future. Mr. Schweitzer responded that the early action projects would look to address local roadway improvements that could help improve traffic flow through the city and encourage more use of the local road network for intracity travel. However, an early action project must not influence the favorability of any long-term project alternatives. The CTDOT, in conjunction with the Project Team, are identifying projects that meet these desires and criteria, and more early action projects would be presented in a future PAC meeting.
- Ken Stanco (Office of the Mayor, Project Liaison) added mention of an early action project where an auxiliary lane is proposed to be extended along I-84 Westbound, from the Union Street entrance ramp to Exit 21 (Meadow Street and Bank Street), which he believes would help motorists better access downtown. Mr. Stanco added that he also

believes this project would improve safety conditions within the area and that the construction is ongoing. Mr. Schweitzer noted that the mentioned early action project was identified through the analysis performed during the Study thus far and was put forward to CTDOT senior management who found it to be favorable. This early action project is to be incorporated as a change order to the ongoing Mixmaster Rehabilitation Project and the work is scheduled to begin construction this spring/summer. Mr. Stanco later added that while the new lane being built on I-84 Westbound auxiliary lane addition is not involved with the New Mix program, the project could be seen as a similar improvement in comparison to the I-84 Rehabilitation with Bypass Repurposed as Frontage Road Alternative displayed during the meeting, aiming to highlight how an eastbound frontage road could potentially help motorists get into downtown Waterbury in an easier and safer fashion while traveling on I-84 Eastbound.

- Mr. Hazelton asked for more information regarding the new auxiliary lane on I-84 Westbound adding that there have been concerns about the stormwater runoff produced from the ongoing Mixmaster Rehabilitation Project. Mr. Hazelton asked if there were any opportunities for interested stakeholders to voice concerns and seek further information regarding stormwater runoff and other items. Mr. Schweitzer responded that the aforementioned early action project would not have a public information meeting ahead of construction commencing. Ms. Hodges added that due to the project scope, minimal impacts, and the project taking place entirely within the CTDOT's rights-of-way, an additional public scoping process and public meeting was not necessary. The CTDOT follows State and Federal requirements for public involvement.
- Kevin Zak noted that municipalities must abide by the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Permit (MS4). With this in mind, Mr. Zak asked if projects such as the ongoing Mixmaster Rehabilitation Project have to abide by the same MS4 that towns must adhere to, or if there is a separate CTDOT MS4 that is written differently. Mr. Zak also asked if projects such as the ongoing Mixmaster Rehabilitation Project have to consider the total maximum daily load for discharges into the Naugatuck River or if State projects are exempt. Nilesh Patel (CTDOT, Principal Engineer) responded that MS4 guidance is specific to municipalities, but the CTDOT has separate stormwater quality guidance that it has to meet in accordance with Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection standards. Every project is screened through these stormwater quality requirements, including the ongoing Mixmaster Rehabilitation Project. Mr. Zak asked where he could find the CTDOT stormwater standards and a final report explaining how the ongoing Mixmaster Rehabilitation Project has adhered to and met them. Mr. Schweitzer responded that there was a public information meeting for the ongoing Mixmaster Rehabilitation Project in October 2017 and there are minutes available for the meeting. The consultants responsible for the design of the ongoing Mixmaster Rehabilitation Project designed it in accordance with both CTDOT's Drainage Manual and Stormwater Quality Manual. Mr. Zak asked if links to the manuals utilized and the minutes of the October 2017 meeting could be provided. Mr. Schweitzer responded that he would send Mr. Zak the documents that he requested. A link to the CTDOT's Stormwater Quality Management Program webpage was also sent within the meeting

chat and Ms. Hodges stated that the webpage contains contact information for personnel who could answer questions regarding the CTDOT's MS4 Program.

- Mr. Zak added that in his experience he had not seen or heard of any mitigation efforts regarding the stormwater runoff from the Mixmaster into the Naugatuck River and feels that there is a conflict between what had been said regarding stormwater quality and what he has witnessed over the past decades. Mr. Schweitzer noted that the ongoing Mixmaster Rehabilitation Project has incorporated stormwater best management practices including, but not limited to, deep sump catch basins, discharge energy dissipaters as well as stormwater quality basins for treatment of the stormwater collected from the Route 8 Northbound temporary bypass structure.
- Mr. Hazelton asked when the CTDOT's MS4 Program that the Project would adhere to be made effective. Ms. Hodges noted that the Project Team would adhere to latest version of the CTDOT's MS4 Program, which was made effective on July 1, 2019. Any changes or amendments to the CTDOT's MS4 Program prior to the Project's final design would be required to be incorporated into the Project.
- Martin Begnal (Friends of Riverside Cemetery, President) asked if the Rehabilitation and No-Build Alternatives have already been dismissed and how far along the Replacement Alternatives were. Mr. Schweitzer stated that the Replacement Alternatives would be introduced at the next PAC meeting and that when the screening process begins, all alternatives will be screened through three levels of criteria, similar to the funnel image frequently shown in these PAC meetings. The screening process has not started, and thus no alternatives have been dismissed. While the relative advantages and disadvantages of all alternatives may be noticeable, no alternatives will be dismissed until the screening process is complete.
- John DiCarlo (Main Street Waterbury, Board of Directors) asked if there were any updates available regarding the PAC's input that could be shared with PAC members so that they could share the information with their respective organizations. Ms. Hodges responded that a summary of the PEL Study steps on which the Project Team received input on from the PAC can be provided for members to disseminate to members of their respective organizations. Ms. Hodges added that the majority of input from PAC members has informed initial PEL Study documents such as the draft *Preliminary Purpose and Need Statement* report, which is available on the program website for review and input by both PAC members and the public. The report contains a summary of the New Mix Project's purpose, needs, and goals and objectives, and PAC member input. The Project Team would provide PAC members with a one-page schedule and summary.
- Arthur Denze Sr. (Waterbury Neighborhood Council, President) asked if there have been discussions regarding expanding the footprint of the Mixmaster in regard to both the width and height of the structures, and any land acquisitions that may be required in the future. Mr. Schweitzer noted that in the next PAC meeting, as the Replacement Alternatives are presented, PAC members should be able to see the conceptual impacts to properties and the vertical aspects of the alternatives. Mr. Denze noted that land

acquisitions would have an impact not only to property owners, but also property values and the City's tax allocations. Mr. Schweitzer noted that is something that the Project Team and CTDOT take into consideration, with focus on minimizing impacts. While it could not be said that there would be no impacts, the Project Team and the CTDOT are looking to minimize impacts as they strive to produce a better Mixmaster for the future.

- Martin Spring (Waterville Community Club, President) asked if the PAC would be meeting in-person in the future, adding that if it were to occur, the location should be accessible and within Waterbury. Ms. Hodges responded that meetings would continue to be virtual in alignment with the State of Connecticut's and CTDOT's requirements due to the ongoing pandemic; however, hybrid meeting options may be available in the future. Mr. Spring suggested that the Waterville Fire House would be a reasonable space to hold in-person meetings, should they resume.

Following the question and comments portion of the presentation, Ms. Hodges reminded PAC members that they could comment on both the draft *Preliminary Purpose and Need Statement* report and the *Analysis, Needs, and Deficiencies Report*. Ms. Hodges requested that any comments be sent to the Project Team by May 2, 2022. The Project Team then thanked all PAC members for their attendance and contributions throughout the meeting.

Meeting adjourned.