

## Important Opportunities for Involvement

### What's Next?

Phase 2 of the study (January 2004-August 2004) entails the development and macro-level screening of conceptual improvement alternatives to select a reasonable range of alternatives to carry forward for detailed evaluation. The process of identifying, screening and recommending alternatives to carry forward will be documented in a Rationale Report to be distributed in August 2004.

### Scheduled Events

ATF Meeting, 6:30 pm  
June 23, 2004, Dover City Hall

Public Information Meetings (7:00 pm)  
-- June 20, 2004, Dover City Hall  
-- July 1, 2004, Newington Town Hall

### Project Website

[www.newington-dover.com](http://www.newington-dover.com)

### Advisory Task Force

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### Project Contacts

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## Spaulding Turnpike Improvements Newington-Dover

NHS-027-1 (37), 11238

### Project Status

- ✓ Study initiated January 2003
- ✓ Advisory Task Force formed -- Meetings Held
- ✓ NOI Filed May 5, 2003
- ✓ Seacoast Travel Survey conducted June 2003
- ✓ Scoping Meeting held June 25, 2003 at Newington Town Hall
- ✓ PIM held November 17, 2003 at Dover City Hall
- ✓ Model Update complete
- ✓ Scoping Report published March 1, 2004
- ✓ Next ATF Meeting June 23, 2004 at Dover City Hall
- ✓ Public Information Meetings
  - June 30, 2004 at Dover City Hall
  - July 1, 2004 at Newington Town Hall



### Introduction

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) has initiated engineering and environmental studies to design, permit and implement short-term and long-term traffic operational and safety improvements to the approximately 3.5 mile section of the Spaulding Turnpike that extends northerly from Exit 1 (Gosling Road/Pease Boulevard) in Newington and traverses the Little Bay Bridges to a point just south of the Dover toll plaza. The Spaulding Turnpike is eastern New Hampshire's major limited access north-south highway, serving as a gateway linking the Seacoast Region with Concord, the eastern portion of the Lakes Region, and the White Mountains. The Turnpike is also part of the National Highway System (NHS) and is a major commuter route which ties the growing residential areas of Dover-Somersworth-Rochester with the

industrial and regional commercial centers in Newington, Portsmouth, and northern Massachusetts. It serves as the major artery for freight into and out of the areas north of the Little Bay Bridges, and is the economic lifeline of the region. It also serves as a major tourist route, providing access to the northern reaches of the state from the seacoast and points south of New Hampshire.

Improvement options that include implementing transportation system management (TSM) improvements, reusing the General Sullivan Bridge for local motorized and non-motorized traffic, enhancing rail service, improving bus transit service, and instituting other transportation demand management (TDM) strategies that may reduce vehicle trips along the Spaulding Turnpike will be considered, in addition to upgrading the mainline, Little Bay Bridges, and interchanges.



Traffic volumes on the Little Bay Bridges have steadily increased from approximately 30,000 vehicles per day in 1980 to almost 70,000 vehicles per day in 2001 resulting in high levels of congestion on the bridges and along the Turnpike near and within the interchange areas. Over the next 20 years this average daily volume is expected to

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increase to approximately 100,000 vehicles per day.

Without improvements to the Turnpike or substantial changes in the current mode choice of motorists, congestion levels will spread beyond the typical commuter peak hours encompassing more hours of the day.

A total of 908 reported accidents occurred within the study area from 1997 through 2001, an increase of 58 percent over the previous five years. During the 1997-2001 period, traffic accidents increased at an average annual rate of 11 percent per year, while traffic increased at a rate of approximately 3 percent per year, suggesting a deterioration of study area safety. Due to infrastructure constraints and geographic location, accidents create long delays in an area where there are virtually no viable alternate routes.

The Turnpike has a number of existing study area geometric deficiencies including limited sight distance and substandard shoulder width on the Little Bay Bridges and substandard merge, diverge, and weave areas at the interchanges. Many of the traffic



maneuvers required to enter, exit or change lanes along this section of the Turnpike are capacity constrained under current traffic conditions and contribute to drive discomfort and accidents. Existing acceleration, deceleration and weaving sections along the Turnpike are inadequate by current design standards.

### The NEPA Process

The Spaulding Turnpike Improvements Study is being conducted in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and requires the preparation of an Environmental Impact Study (EIS). This process entails five (5) phases:

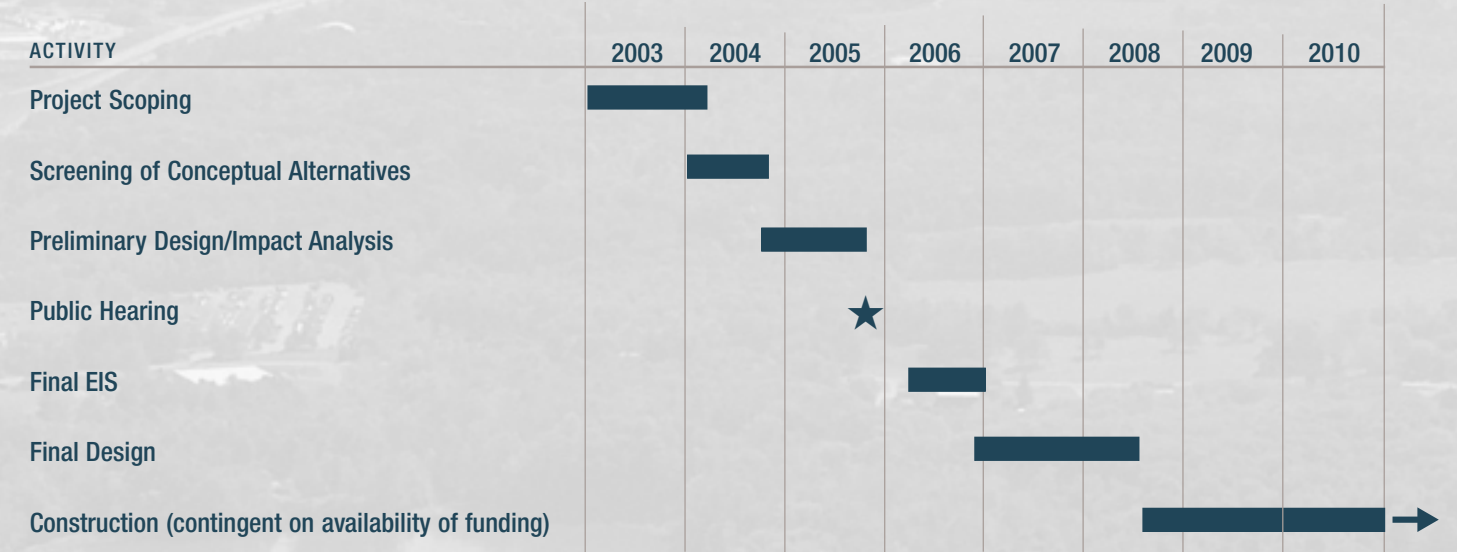
**Data Collection** - Gathering and documentation of the transportation, environmental and socio-economic data on existing conditions within the project area; projection of future travel demands; and identification of a range of improvement alternatives to consider.

This scoping process includes input from the general public, and Advisory Task Force (ATF) comprised of community representatives, representatives of federal and state resource agencies, regional planning officials and local officials. A Scoping Report, summarizing the data collection process, was published on March 1, 2004 and is available on line at [www.newington-dover.com](http://www.newington-dover.com) and at municipal offices and libraries in Dover and Newington.

**Conceptual Alternatives Development and Screening** - Development and macro-level screening of initial improvement alternatives to select alternatives to carry forward for detailed development and evaluation. (January 2004 - August 2004). Analysis, findings and recommendations will be summarized in a Rationale Report.

**Preliminary Design and Impact Analysis** - Detailed design development, refinement and comparative engineering, cost, right-of-way requirements and environmental impact analysis of each alternative. Summary of findings and recommendations to meet Project Purpose and Need documented in Draft Environmental Impact report. (August 2004 - July 2005).

**Public Hearing** - Presentation to Governor's Special Committee of recommended Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative (LEDPA) to meet Project Purpose and Need, and the nature, extent and cost of



the environmental impact mitigation program. (October 2005).

**Final Environmental Impact Statement** - Documentation and response to public comments received at and subsequent to the Public Hearing on the estimated benefits, costs and impacts associated with the recommended improvement alternative and associated environmental mitigation program. (March 2006 - December 2006)

The process requires approximately 41 months to complete, with publication of the Final EIS scheduled for August 2006, and Federal Highway Administration's Record of Decision (ROD) targeted for November 2006. The process is being conducted within a dynamic public participation process. An Advisory Task Force (ATF), representing community stakeholders, has been established and meets regularly to provide input to the NHDOT and the consultant team and to provide a conduit for dissemination of project information to their respective constituencies.

A series of meetings and workshops with local officials, in conjunction with public informational meetings and meetings with state and federal resource agencies are also regularly planned during the course of the project.

This decision-making process is intended to foster the community consensus necessary to uncover the practical, smart, affordable and permittable long-term solution to study area safety problems and mobility needs.

### Schedule

**Phase 1:** Establish Purpose and Need / Assess Existing Conditions / Project Future Travel Demands / Identify a Range of Alternatives (February 2003 - March 2004)

**Phase 2:** Develop and Screen Conceptual Alternatives (January 2004 - August 2004)

**Phase 3:** Preliminary Design / Impact Assessment / Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) (August 2004 - August 2005)

**Phase 4:** Public Hearing (October 2005)

**Phase 5:** Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) (March 2006 - December 2006)

**Final Design** (November 2006 - October 2011)

**Construction** (dependent on the availability of funding) (June 2008 - October 2013)

### Scoping Issues to be Addressed in the DEIS

- ✓ Water Quality
- ✓ Disposition of the General Sullivan Bridge
- ✓ Channel Navigation
- ✓ Floodplains
- ✓ Wetland Resources
- ✓ Vegetation and Wildlife Resources
- ✓ Air Quality
- ✓ Noise
- ✓ Socio-Economic Impacts and Secondary Effects
- ✓ Parks, Recreation Areas and Open Space
- ✓ Cultural Resources
- ✓ Aesthetic and Visual Resources
- ✓ Hazardous Materials
- ✓ Federal and NH Regulatory Consideration
- ✓ Transportation Benefit
- ✓ Construction Impacts
- ✓ Affordability
- ✓ Community Support

## Project Study Area

