

NHDOT HOOKSETT 29611, X-A004(199)
US ROUTE 3 ALICE AVENUE - MARTINS FERRY ROAD

Hooksett, New Hampshire

DRAFT

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

November 2020

Prepared For:



New Hampshire Department of Transportation
7 Hazen Drive
Concord, NH 03302

Submitted by:



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1.0 BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

The purpose of this Public Involvement Plan (PIP) is to communicate information about how the public will be involved in the preliminary design phase for improvements to US 3 in Hooksett, NH, also identified by the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) as Project #29611. This PIP will:

- Communicate the public outreach approach and process that will be incorporated on the US 3 Hooksett 29611 project;
- Communicate information about the project team;
- Communicate upcoming Working Group (WG) and public information meeting dates; and
- Describe the communication methods that will be implemented to inform the community.

The PIP will be updated periodically to reflect updates to the schedule and other items that change over the course of the project. The PIP will be distributed at the November 2020 WG meeting.

1.2 PUBLIC OUTREACH APPROACH

The US 3 Hooksett 29611 project will incorporate modified principles of Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS). This is a process endorsed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and is defined by FHWA as “a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach that involves all stakeholders to develop a transportation facility that fits its physical setting and preserves scenic, aesthetic, historic and environmental resources while maintaining safety and mobility.” A stakeholder is defined as a person or group affected by and/or with an interest in the outcome of the project. Stakeholders in the US 3 Hooksett 29611 project may include but are not limited to:

- Citizens who live, work and/or travel along US Route 3, NH 28 and 27 and other ancillary roads connected to US Route 3, NH Routes 28 and 27 in Hooksett;
- Municipal, regional, and state government elected and appointed officials;
- Groups with environmental, economic, or other concerns;
- Local utility companies;
- Resource agencies such as the NH Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) and NH Division of Historical Resources (NHDHR);
- NH Department of Safety;
- Federal Highway Administration (FHWA);
- NH Department of Transportation (NHDOT).

The scaled Context Sensitive Solutions approach will focus on helping the project team understand the context of the project area and understand significant community and environmental features.

The US 3 Hooksett 29611 project will establish a WG to provide stakeholder input on the project area and preferred design elements. This working group will incorporate diverse stakeholders. For this project, two public informational meetings will be held in advance of a public hearing. Area businesses and

Qualities of Excellence in Transportation Design

1. The project satisfies the purpose and needs as agreed to by a full range of stakeholders. This agreement is forged in the earliest phase of the project and amended, as warranted, as the project develops.
2. The project is a safe facility for both the user and the community.

3. The project is in harmony with the community, and it preserves the environmental, scenic, aesthetic, historic, and natural resource values of the area.
4. The project exceeds the expectations of both designers and stakeholders and achieves a level of excellence in people's minds.
5. The project involves the efficient and effective use of the resources (time, budget, community) of all involved parties.
6. The project is designed and built with minimal disruption to the community.
7. The project is seen as having added lasting value to the community.

Characteristics of the Process Contributing to Excellence

1. Communication with all stakeholders is open, honest, early, and continuous.
2. A multidisciplinary team is established early, with disciplines based on the needs of the specific project, and with the inclusion of the public.
3. A full range of stakeholders is involved with transportation officials in the scoping phase. The purposes of the project are clearly defined, and consensus on the scope is forged before proceeding.
4. The highway development process is tailored to meet the circumstances. This process should examine multiple alternatives that will result in a consensus of approach methods.
5. A commitment to the process from top agency officials and local leaders is secured.
6. The public involvement process, which includes informal meetings, is tailored to the project.
7. The landscape, the community, and valued resources are understood before engineering design is started.
8. A full range of tools for communication about project alternatives is used (e.g., visualization).

1.3 PROJECT OVERVIEW

The New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT) is evaluating alternatives that will improve the safety and mobility of all users (motorists, non-motorists and transit) along US 3 in Hooksett, New Hampshire. The project area extends from Alice Avenue/West Alice Avenue north for 1.4 miles to the intersection of NH 27 (Whitehall Road) and Martins Ferry Road.

1.4 PROJECT TEAM

The Project Team consists of:

- The Project Lead Team; and
- The US 3 Hooksett Working Group (WG)

The Project Lead Team consists of NHDOT staff representing the anticipated disciplines that will likely be required during the project and the project consultant, WSP.

PROJECT LEAD TEAM			
NAME	ORGANIZATION	E-MAIL ADDRESS	TELEPHONE
Don Lyford, Project Manager	NHDOT	Donald.A.Lyford@dot.nh.gov	603-271-2165
Jason Ayotte, Senior/Lead Project Engineer	NHDOT	Jason.M.Ayotte@dot.nh.gov	603-271-6279
Stephanie Micucci, Roadway Section Group Leader	NHDOT	Stephanie.L.Micucci@dot.nh.gov	603-271-1597

Liviu Sfintescu, WSP Project Manager	WSP	liviu.sfintescu@wsp.com	603-218-5419
Tim Higginson, WSP Deputy Project Manager	WSP	Tim.Higginson@wsp.com	603-218-5442

The WG members are comprised of citizens and others who represent the elderly, school, church, and business interests in the area, along with town officials and representatives. The Southern New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission (SNHRPC) and NHDOT staff will represent regional and state transportation interests.

The WG serves in an advisory role (tasked with making recommendations to the NHDOT) and is anticipated to be involved with the project from the project planning phase through the end of the project's design.

Once the WG is formed, the below table will be completed and will list the WG members, along with their contact information and affiliation.

WORKING GROUP				
NAME	ORGANIZATION	ADDRESS	TELEPHONE	E-MAIL
Captain Jake Robie	Hooksett Police Department	15 Legends Drive Hooksett, NH 03106	603-624-1560 x304	JRobie@hooksettpolice.org
Joseph Stalker	Hooksett Emergency Services (Police/Fire/Rescue)	15 Legends Drive Hooksett, NH 03106	603-623-7272	jstalker@hooksettfire.org
Andre Garron	Town Administrator	35 Main Street Hooksett, NH 03106		agarron@hooksett.org
David Boutin	Hooksett Town Council	35 Main Street Hooksett, NH 03106	603-203-5391	dboutin1465@comcast.net
Lawrence Yassanye	Southern New Hampshire University	2500 North River Road Manchester, NH 03106	603-303-2871	l.yassanye@snhu.edu
Bruce A. Thomas, PE	Community Development/Town Engineer	35 Main Street Hooksett, NH 03106	603-419-4003	BThomas@hooksett.org
Nate Miller	Southern NH Planning Commission	438 Dubuque Street Manchester, NH 03102	603-669-4664	nmiller@snhpc.org
Superintendent Bill Rearick	Hooksett School District	90 Farmer Road Hooksett, NH 03106	603-622-3731	wrearick@sau15.net
Richard Radwanski	NH DOT District 5 Engineer	16 East Point Drive Bedford, NH	603-666-3336	Richard.C.Radwanski@dot.nh.gov

2.0 PROJECT PROCESS

2.1 NHDOT PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

All NHDOT projects, including the US 3 Hooksett 29611 project, are developed through a seven-step project development process illustrated below.

1. Project Scoping / Data Collection / Coordination
2. Preliminary Engineering Studies / Environmental Evaluation
3. Identification of Preferred Alternative / Draft Environmental Documentation
4. Formal Public Hearing Process
5. Selected Alternative / Final Environmental Documentation
6. Final Design (Project Construction Plan Development) / Right-of-Way Acquisition
7. Project Construction

This process is described in more detail in the ‘Project Development making transportation projects a reality’ guide that is available on the Department’s website at the following link:

<https://www.nh.gov/dot/projects/plans.htm> under the Citizens Guide to Transportation Series section. The CSS process seeks to gather critical community-level input into the first three phases of the project development process prior to identifying a “Preferred Alternative” for presentation, as well as requesting layout approval at the formal Public Hearing.

Currently, the project is entering the preliminary engineering phase. The project team will host two public informational meetings to gather public feedback on the design elements and proposed alternatives. The aforementioned will be used in the preferred alternative, as well as, development of the environmental documentation for the project.

Once the “Preferred Alternative” has been identified and draft environmental documentation completed, a formal Public Hearing will be held to procure approval for the project’s layout. The Hearing will be overseen by a Hearing Commission that is comprised of three members appointed by the Governor and Executive Council, whom are tasked to make a decision on the layout of the preferred alternative that has been identified for the project. At the Public Hearing, the Department will make a formal presentation and public testimony will be taken, recorded, and transcribed for the Hearing Commission to determine the occasion for the layout as presented. All issues and/or comments raised at the Public Hearing or during the hearing comment period will be documented and addressed in a report termed the Report of the Commissioner (ROTC). The project team will coordinate with the WG to help address each issue raised at the Public Hearing prior to the finalization of the ROTC. Should the Hearing Commission vote in favor of the project’s layout, then the project will advance to the Final Design / Right-of-Way stage. The Public Hearing and subsequent layout approval represents a major milestone in the project development phase as it solidifies the major aspects and right of way requirements of the project’s design.

2.2 PROJECT MEETINGS

Several types of meetings are planned over the course of this project. They are described in the sections below.

2.2.1 WORKING GROUP (WG) MEETINGS

The purpose of the WG meetings is to obtain input from the team and to facilitate the flow of information and ideas between the project team, community, and public at-large. Presently, six WG meetings are planned over a 15-month period. The first WG meeting is tentatively scheduled for November 2020.

In the event in-person meetings are not possible, virtual WG meetings will be conducted in accordance with NHDOT guidelines.

Anticipated topics of discussion for WG meetings:

- WG Meeting 1 (November 2020)
 - Discuss Public Outreach Approach and Process
 - Discuss WG Roles and Responsibilities
 - Discuss Draft Public Involvement Plan
 - Review the project area
 - Begin Developing a Purpose and Needs Statement and Project Vision Statement
- WG Meeting 2 (January 2021)
 - Review results from Purpose and Needs Statement & Vision Statement input
 - Call for Consensus on Purpose and Needs Statement & Vision Statement
- WG Meeting 3 (May 2021)
 - Discussion of Alternative Rating Criteria
 - Presentation of the four design alternatives and gather input
- WG Meeting 4 (September 2021)
 - Review and share feedback on how four design alternatives were narrowed to two
 - Present two design alternatives and gather input
- WG Meeting 5 (November 2021)
 - Review and share feedback on how two design alternatives were narrowed to one
 - Present preferred design alternative and gather input
- WG Meeting 6 (March 2022)
 - Review and share feedback on how the preferred alternative design is refined
 - Present preferred design alternative refinements and gather input

2.2.2 GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

The WG has an important and challenging task of providing public input to the New Hampshire Department of Transportation in several important areas for the US 3 Hooksett 29611 project: developing a statement of problems and needs, drafting a project vision statement, developing concepts to address the problems and needs to meet the vision, and advising the Department on selecting a preferred alternative for the project design.

Because of the significance and complexity of the issues with which the WG will be dealing, it is important to make the most effective use of our meeting times. Therefore, as a group, we commit to the following guidelines and procedures:

A. How we treat each other:

- Each member has an equal right to speak and ask questions. There are no “dumb questions.”
- Each member is encouraged to share individual viewpoints. Individual opinions are valid whether others agree with them or not.
- We will listen to, respect and seek to understand the views of others, particularly those perspectives that differ from our own.

- Disagreements will be explored, not suppressed. In some instances, however, disagreements may be discussed outside of the WG meetings so that we are not distracted from achieving the purpose of the meetings.
- We will be courteous when addressing other members, staff and consultants.
- We will refrain from interrupting each other, staff, or consultants.
- We will keep our comments relevant to the topic under discussion.

B. How we make decisions:

- The WG will operate by consensus whenever possible. Consensus does not necessarily mean agreement or active support by each member. Those not objecting are not necessarily indicating that they favor, but merely that they can “*live with it.*”
- In the absence of consensus, a supermajority of three-quarters (75%) of the WG members present is required for approval of an action.
- Participation in the decision-making of the WG shall be limited to its members.
- In order to provide continuity in the group’s discussions, members are asked to make every effort to attend all meetings. However, if a member cannot attend, he or she may designate an alternate to attend and participate in discussions of the WG in his or her absence.
- Non-members shall attend as observers and may be invited to offer comments if time allows.

C. How we communicate with those outside the WG:

- As it is NHDOT’s intent that the members of the WG represent the interests of a wide cross-section of citizens who live and work in the project area, WG members are encouraged to report on project issues to others who live and work in this area, particularly to groups or organizations to which they belong, and to bring input to WG meetings that reflect the interests of these individuals and groups.
- It will be helpful if WG members explain to others the process being used to develop the project concepts, so they better understand how the project is progressing.

We believe that following these guidelines and procedures will help us to develop advice that is fully considered and will be well received by the Department, the public, and the appropriate Federal, State, and local government leaders and agencies whose support is essential for carrying out our recommendations.

2.2.3 PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETINGS

Two public information meetings will be held to engage with the public and stakeholders during the project design process.

Public meetings are tentatively scheduled for:

- Public Meeting 1 (June 2021)
 - Project overview
 - Gather Public Input on Purpose and Needs Statement, Vision Statement
 - Preliminary discussions on design alternatives
- Public Meeting 2 (October 2021)
 - Review and share feedback on how four design alternatives were narrowed to two
 - Present two design alternatives and gather input

The objective of the public information meetings is to review the Purpose and Needs and Vision statements, review the rating criteria, and receive feedback on the project alternatives that are acceptable to the community and the public.

The meetings will be widely advertised within the community with notices posted in prominent public places and on the Town of Hooksett website. Meeting advertisements will be included in local and regional newspapers. E-mail invitations will be sent to stakeholders who may be impacted by the project. E-mail invitations will be sent to local, regional, and state officials, as well as to environmental and other interest groups.

In the event in-person meetings are not possible, virtual public meetings will be conducted in accordance with NHDOT guidelines.

The public information meetings are intended to be an afternoon/evening session to discuss the various aspects of the project and gather input from the community regarding the alternatives that they feel will help to solve the project problems and needs and fit with the community's vision for the project.

2.2.4 PUBLIC HEARINGS

A Public Hearing will be held to formally present the project to the public and abutters. The Public Hearing will be held within the Town of Hooksett. The Public Hearing will be widely advertised within the community with notices posted in prominent public places and on the Town's website. Hearing notices will be advertised in local and regional newspapers. E-mail invitations will be sent to stakeholders who may be impacted by the project. E-mail invitations will be sent to local, regional, and state officials, as well as to environmental and other interest groups.

The Public Hearing and subsequent layout approval represents a major milestone in the project development phase as it solidifies the major aspects and right-of-way requirements of the project's design. The conclusion of a successful Public Hearing phase, which represents the project at a 30% completion stage, allows the project to proceed to final design and right-of-way procurement.

2.3 PROJECT SCHEDULE

A project schedule is attached. These are approximate and subject to change. Additional interim meetings may be necessary to reach a consensus on certain items prior to proceeding to the next step.

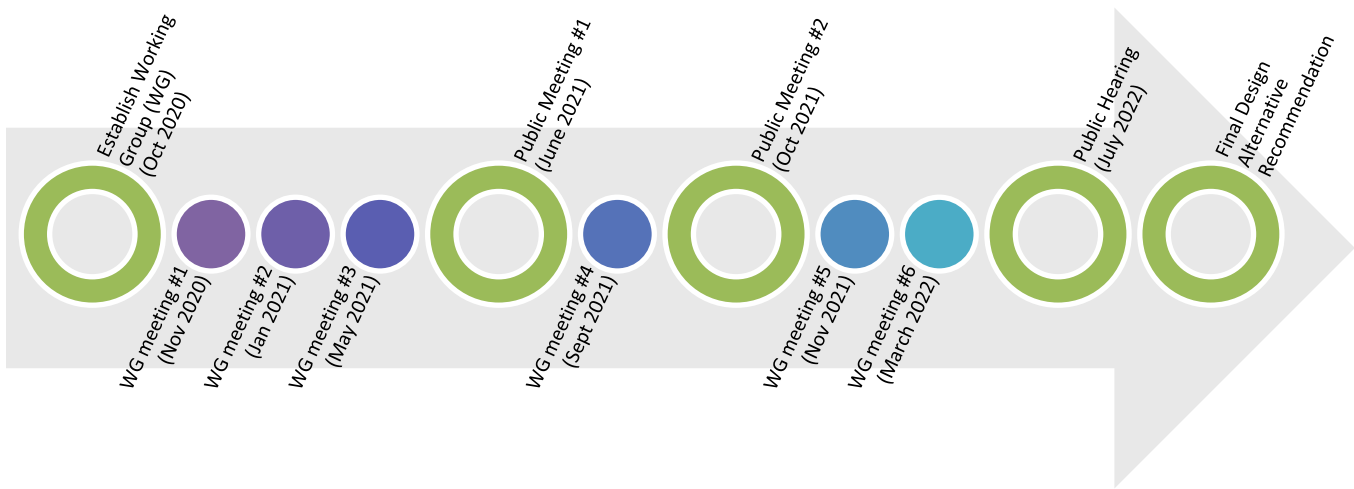
2.3.1 DESIGN SCHEDULE

- Preliminary Design (CSS Process)
- Public Hearing
- Layout Approval
- Final Design & ROW Procurement
- Construction

2.3.2 MEETING SCHEDULE

The purpose of the WG meetings is to obtain input from the Project Lead Team and to facilitate the flow of information and ideas between the Team, community, and the public. Presently, public involvement, including six WG meetings, two public information meetings and one Public Hearing, are planned over 20 months. A tentative meeting timeline is on the following page.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT TIMELINE



The first WG meeting is tentatively slated for November 2020. This meeting will serve as an orientation session as well as a project kick-off meeting. At the meeting, members of the WG will be provided a brief history of the project, an overview of CSS, an explanation of how the CSS process would be implemented for the project as well as developing a problem statement.

All subsequent meetings will focus on developing consensus on a problem statement, meeting to reach consensus on a vision statement, meeting to develop and concur on screening criteria, meeting to brainstorm and screen alternatives and meeting to reach consensus on a Preferred Alternative. Once a preferred alternative has been identified, a formal Public Hearing to procure approval for the project layout would be held.

3.0 COMMUNICATION METHODS

3.1 NHDOT WEBSITE

As an element of the NHDOT Public Interest webpage, the US 3 Hooksett 29611 project will be added and used to post pertinent project information, meeting agendas, and meeting summaries or notes. The webpage can be accessed via <https://www.nh.gov/dot/projects/hooksett29611/index.htm>. The purpose of the website is to keep the public informed about the project and provide another way for the public to provide input. The website content will be updated at project milestones and, as necessary, after project meetings. For questions or comments on the material posted on the website, please contact the NHDOT Project Manager:

- Don Lyford, NH DOT Project Manager, at dlyford@dot.state.nh.us or (603) 271-2165

3.2 TOWN WEBSITE

A link will be provided on the Hooksett town websites. <https://www.hooksett.org/> to the project's web page on the NHDOT website.

3.3 E-MAIL

A primary method of communication for the WG will be via e-mail. Individual e-mail addresses for WG members will be added to this PIP once the WG is established. Meeting agendas, meeting notes, and other pertinent project information will be disseminated to the WG via this method of communication. According to NH RSA 91-A, WG members should not communicate via e-mail with one another on substantive issues of the WG.

A project stakeholder e-mail list will be developed at the beginning of the project by the public involvement consultant. This list will be used to distribute e-mail notifications for public meetings and the Public Hearing. Stakeholders include but are not limited to, area businesses, residents, municipal officials, emergency services and educational institutions. Members of the public who are interested in project updates will be added to this stakeholder distribution list.

3.4 MEETINGS

WG meetings, public information meetings and the Public Hearing will be used to disseminate and discuss pertinent information regarding the US 3 Hooksett 29611 project related information.

Materials for these meetings will be coordinated between NHDOT, the WG and the project information consultant. Visual materials will support project information sharing for the public. Drone footage will be provided to incorporate images into meeting materials.

3.5 MEDIA

In order to help maximize the distribution of meeting notices for the WG meetings, Public Workshops, public information meetings, and Public Hearing, news releases and/or meeting notices will be provided to local and regional news outlets.

- New Hampshire Union Leader
 - Publication Frequency: Daily
 - Distribution Area: Greater Manchester
 - Address: 100 William Loeb Drive Manchester, NH 03109
 - Phone: (603) 668-4321
 - Fax: (603) 352-9700
 - E-mail: news@unionleader.com
 - Website: www.unionleader.com

- WMUR
 - Broadcasts: Daily
 - Distribution Area: New Hampshire
 - Address: 100 South Commercial Street Manchester, NH 03101
 - Phone: (603) 669-9999
 - Fax: (603) 641-9005

- E-mail: breakingnews@wmur.com; News Director, Alisha McDevitt:
amcdevitt@hearst.com
- Website: www.wmur.com

- **Concord Monitor**
 - Publication Frequency: Daily
 - Distribution Area: Greater Manchester
 - Address: 1 Monitor Drive Concord, NH 03301
 - Phone: (603) 224-5301
 - Fax: 603-224-8120
 - E-mail: news@cmonitor.com; communitynews@cmonitor.com
 - Website: <https://www.concordmonitor.com/>

3.6 SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media posts will be created for the US 3 Hooksett 29611 project to post pertinent project information on NHDOT managed social media accounts. The Public Involvement Team will provide social media posts in a word document along with photos or graphics. The social media posts will coincide with project milestones, including:

- Public meeting #1 notification
- Public meeting #2 notification
- Public hearing announcement
- Public hearing comment period closure
- Final design selection notification

Existing NHDOT social media accounts include:

- Facebook - @NHDOT
- Twitter - @NewHampshireDOT

Social media postings will be created in a consistent, expository style. Because all users of the social media accounts must consider its associated risks, including the conflation of personal and professional communications, spreading malware, disclosing sensitive information, and responding to crisis, NHDOT will remain the final approver of all content and are responsible for all postings on their respective social media accounts. NHDOT will be responsible for responding to and managing any comments or questions posted on their respective social media postings related to the projects.

3.7 INTERACTIVE TOOLS

Through the Federal Highway Administration Everyday Counts Initiative 5, an allowance has been established to encourage virtual public involvement throughout the project. Interactive tools may include MetroQuest, an online public engagement tool that utilizes game-like planning techniques to create compelling, interactive and educational surveys; and Poll Everywhere, an interactive, real-time polling tool that allows participants to vote on multiple-choice and open-ended questions through text, web browsing, or through the Poll Everywhere app.