Reconstructing the Rhode to Innovation

Safety and Congestion Improvements on Route146 in Rhode Island

RI dot
Driven to get you there

Basic Project Information

What is the Project Name?.....Reconstructing the Rhode to Innovation: Safety and Congestion Improvements on RI-146 in Rhode Island

Who is the Project Sponsor?.....RIDOT

Was an INFRA application for this project submitted previously?.....No

If Yes, please include title .....

Project Costs:

INFRA Request Amount.....$90 million

Estimated Federal Funding (excl. INFRA) .....$30 million

Estimated Non-Federal Funding Anticipated.....$30 million

Future Eligible Project Cost (Sum of previous three rows) .....$150 million

Previously Incurred Costs.....$0.10 million

Total Project Cost (Sum of 'Previously Incurred' and 'Future Eligible') .....$150.10 million

Are matching funds restricted to a specific project component? If so, which one?.....No

Project Eligibility

Approximately how much of the estimated future eligible project costs will be spent on components of the project currently located on National Highway Freight Network (NHFN)? .....$150 million

Approximately how much of the estimated future eligible project costs will be spent on components of the project currently located on the National Highway System (NHS)?.....$150 million

Approximately how much of the estimated future eligible project costs will be spent on components constituting railway-highway grade crossing or grade separation projects? $0

Approximately how much of the estimated future eligible project costs will be spent on components constituting intermodal or freight rail projects, or freight projects within the boundaries of a public or private freight rail, water (including ports), or intermodal facility? $0

Project Location

State(s) in which project is located.....RHODE ISLAND

Small or large project.....Large

Urbanized Area in which project is located, if applicable.....Providence, RI-MA

Population of Urbanized Area..... 1,190,956 (2010 Census)

Is the project located (entirely or partially) in an Opportunity Zone?.....No

Project Programming

TIP? ..... Yes

STIP? ..... Yes

MPO Long Range Transportation Plan? ..... Yes

State Long Range Transportation Plan? ..... No

State Freight Plan? ..... Yes

Date of Submission

February 25, 2020

Contact Information

Peter Alviti, Jr., P.E., Director

Rhode Island Department of Transportation

peter.alviti@dot.ri.gov

Two Capitol Hill, Providence, RI

401.563.4000

Dear INFRA Review Team:

In the last four years alone, Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) has invested $1.6 billion in the state's economy, working hard to significantly move the needle of the state's last-in-the-nation ranking in road and bridge conditions with the passage of the landmark 2016 RhodeWorks law.

This unprecedented volume of work has been largely focused on much-needed bridge repairs in the urban core surrounding Providence. That has left a gap in the rural portions of the state, most notably the heavily traveled and RI-146 corridor in Lincoln and North Smithfield, RI.

Conditions have deteriorated to the point that one year ago, after a heavy rain, a sinkhole developed on the section of RI-146 near the Massachusetts state line, damaging 40 cars and causing major traffic delays.

Nearly 90 percent of the freight moving through Rhode Island goes by truck, and that is forecasted to increase more than 3 percent annually between now and 2030.

More than 15 miles of this critical freight corridor is RI-146, which serves as an important north-south connector to the Massachusetts Turnpike and Western Massachusetts, providing access between Providence, RI and Worcester, Mass. Part of the region's primary freight network, the current State of Rhode Island Freight and Goods Movement Plan identifies this area as a frequent bottleneck.

Five fatalities have been recorded in this portion of RI-146 in the past seven years. The Sayles Hill Road intersection alone averages more than 85 crashes per year.

In addition to bringing this critical freight segment to a state of good repair with improved design at the dangerous Sayles Hill Road intersection, the project will include:

- Full pavement along RI-146 from I-295 interchange to Massachusetts state line
- Extending the weave length for Rt 99 Ramp and RI-146 S
- Improve geometry of I-295 SB offramp to RI-146
- Constructing four lanes on RI-146 over Sayles Hill Road with frontage road for access to local businesses and removing outdated signalization
- Preventing access to RI-146 A and dangerous U-turns using a Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI)
- Guardrail replacement and other safety improvements
- Replacing two bridges along corridor and doing preservation work on four others
- Bus on shoulder and other various traffic safety improvements along RI-146 South into Providence
- Complete new drainage system for the 1-mile frontage road area and work on (extension of) the major culvert crossing and additional drainage features along bus route
- Intelligent Transportation Systems/traffic monitoring for full corridor length
- Fiber/broadband installation throughout corridor

On a larger scale, the project will support opportunities for economic development in that rural part of the state, which is just two miles from the Woonsocket, RI Opportunity Zone.

This $150 million investment has been talked about for many years in Rhode Island, first mentioned in the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) as an "unfunded regionally significant project." The pavement portion alone was in the 10-year plan to begin in 2022, but last summer funding shortfalls prompted it to be moved back two years, prompting an outcry from local stakeholders who noted the economic and safety benefits to adhering to the original project schedule.

Previously, RIDOT has been able to do nothing more than a few design studies to improve the area.

As you can imagine, the magnitude of the project has RIDOT focused more than ever on its mandate of on-budget, on-time delivery, for the livelihood and welfare of some of our most important travelers, those who struggle daily to deliver goods and get to work on time.

RIDOT is focused on integrating best practices for permitting and project delivery and foresees no NEPA impediments. We are excited about the opportunity to complete this innovative and essential project, and we thank you in advance for your careful consideration of our request for INFRA support.

Sincerely,

Director Peter Alviti, Jr., PE

Table of Contents

Table of Figures

I. Project Description

Project Summary

Figure 1 -- Eddie Dowling in 1950

A critical piece of highway infrastructure linking rural areas between two of the larger cities in New England, Rhode Island RI-146 (RI-146) is in dire need of pavement and safety improvements.

The route is known locally as "Eddie Dowling Highway" after a vaudevillian actor, screenwriter, playwright, director, producer, songwriter and composer from nearby Smithfield, RI, who ran unsuccessfully for the United States Senate in 1934.

A decade later, the highway was built. Since then, little has been done by way of maintenance and improvements.

Under the landmark 2016 RhodeWorks law, Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) has begun repairing its bridges, and now turns its attention to the other infrastructure needs in this, one of the most important freight corridors in the state.

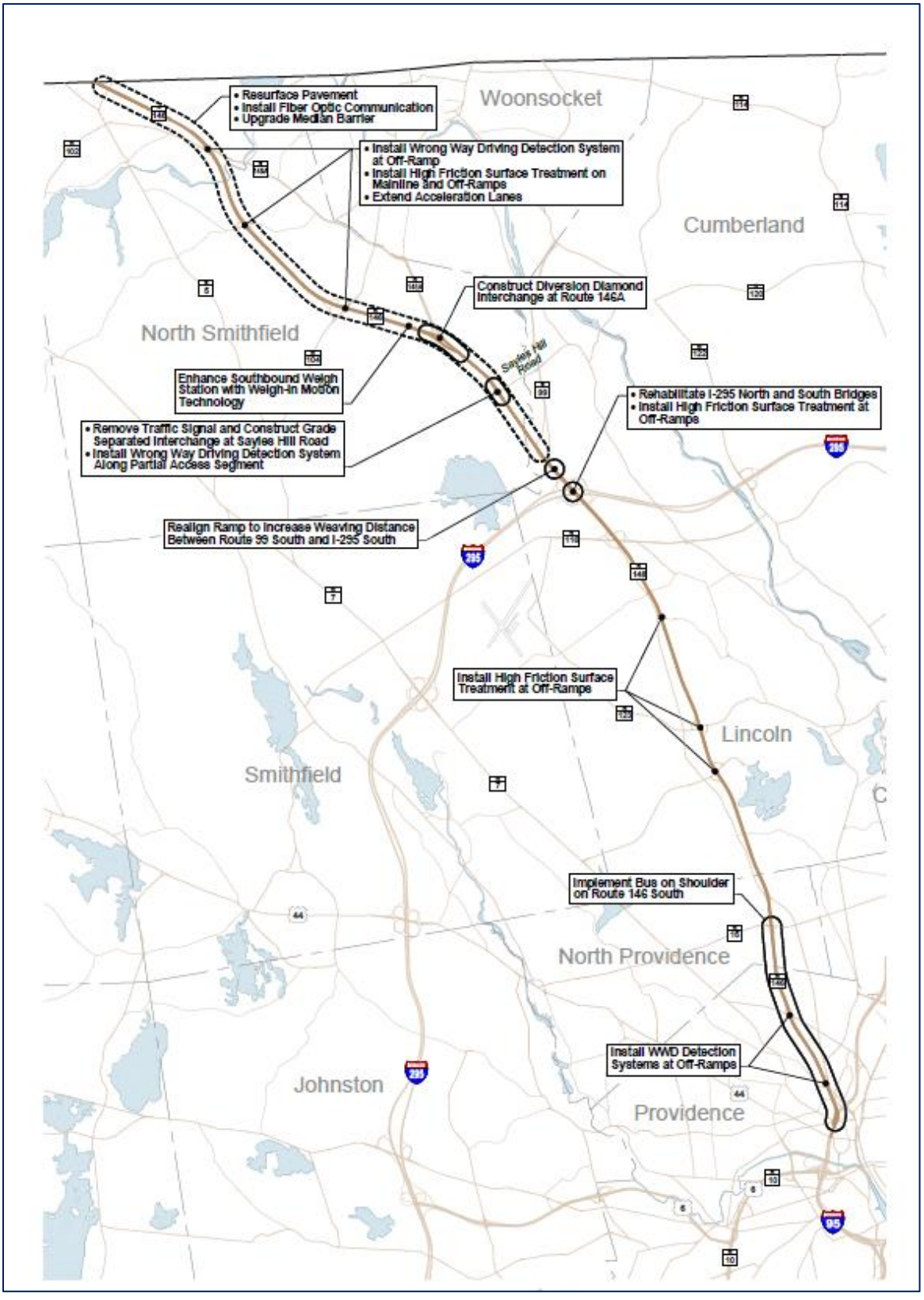
The RI-146/I-295 corridor functions primarily as a limited access freeway that carries more than 171,000 vehicles every day. To preserve and repair this critical freight connector, and improve traffic operation and safety, RIDOT is requesting $90 million in Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Grant support for the $150 million "Reconstructing the Rhode to Innovation: Safety and Congestion Improvements on RI-146 in Rhode Island" project.

This project has several major components, the most important of which is reconfiguring the interchange at RI-146 and Sayles Hill Road in North Smithfield, RI; a limited stretch of the facility in which there is no access control and a major signalized intersection. In addition, this project will eliminte a dangerous weave at the intersection of RI-146 and Route 99, and replace a dangeous U-turn ramp at the intersection of RI-146 and RI-146A with a diverging diamond interchange (DDI), preserving all existing movements while improving traffic flows throughout the corridor.

The preferred alternative presented in this application also calls for repaving 8 miles of RI-146 between I-295 and the Massachusetts State Line. Along the way, three critical highway bridges (074801, 074821, and 044001) will be replaced, and two others (098701, 018801) will be preserved. Lastly, a bus-on-shoulder lane will be created along the southern limits of RI-146 into Providence, to serve the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) 54 line between Providence and Lincoln/Woonsocket.

These improvements will generate significant safety benefits and Value of Travel Time Savings (VTTS) for one of the most important connectors in rural Rhode Island to the urban center in Providence, and address one of the most critical freight needs in the state. **The completion of the Rhode to Innovation Project will transform the RI-146 corridor, bringing essential freight infrastructure up to a state of good repair and improving the movement of people and goods throughout rural Rhode Island and Massachusetts.**

Figure 2 -- Summary of Proposed Improvements



Mitigating Long Queues and Safety Issues

In its current configuration, RI-146 is prone to consistent Northbound and Southbound delays between the Massachusetts State Line and the I-295 interchange. These delays are primarily attributable to a bottleneck at the intersection of RI-146 and Sayles Hill Road in North Smithfield, RI. The meeting point of an interstate highway and a major throughfare linking residential and commercial developments, the RI-146/Sayles Hill intersection is currently managed by traffic signals that disrupt the continuity of traffic in both directions.

Figure 3 -- Northbound backup at Sayles Hill Road intersection

During peak times, traffic queues build with each red light, eventually extending as far as 2 miles away from the intersection in both directions. To address this issue, the Reconstructing the Rhode to Innovation Project will create an overpass to carry RI-146 over Sayles Hill Road, and install a series of collector-distributor (C-D) roads to preserve all existing movements and improve access to local businesses on RI-146 and Sayles Hill Road.

In addition to the congestion issue, most of the 8-mile segment of RI-146 from I-295 to the state line is in need of reconstruction. Pavement conditions range from fair to failed throughout the project area, and as recently as January 2019, RIDOT was forced to close a lane to make emergency repairs when some 40 cars were damaged after heavy rain created a large pothole from groundwater surge.

Because congestion relief and pavement condition improvements will increase the speed of traffic through the corridor, this project also includes safety improvements to reduce conflicting weaves, mitigate roadway departures, and install wrong-way driving detection systems.

Figure 4 -- Delaminated Pavement on RI-146 at Sayles Hill Road

This project – which is contingent on INFRA funding– is essential to RIDOT's asset management approach of "preservation first," as described in RIDOT's Transporatation Asset Management Plan (TAMP), and the avoidance of costly and constant repairs such as the example described above. By repaving the heavily deteriorated RI-146, RIDOT can focus its attention on upkeep and avoid the more-costly process of continual repairs (a "worst first" approach). The effects of a lack of INFRA funding are described in more detail in the "Completion Without Federal Funding" section of this document.

Project Goals

The goals of "Reconstructing the Rhode to Innovation: Safety and Congestion Improvements on RI-146 in Rhode Island" are simple: Improve traffic safety, restore critical infrastructure to a state of good repair, reduce congestion, increase system reliability, and enhance freight movement for economic vitality in the region.

Improving Traffic Safety

In its current configuration, RI-146 has proven to be a safety challenge in many ways. Drivers coming from Interstate 295 Northbound at speeds up to 65 miles per hour have just 2 miles before coming to a stop at the Sayles Hill Road traffic signal. Traveling southbound, high-speed drivers from the Mass Pike and the more rural sections of RI-146 face a split at RI-146A, and the eventual interchange at Sayles Hill Road.

Figure 5 -- RI-146 at RI-146A

As a result, two separate fatal crashes have occurred along RI-146 over the past seven years, resulting in five deaths. Most recently, in the summer of 2017, speed was determined to be a factor when two people were killed along RI-146 near Pound Hill Road. The Sayles Hill Road intersection alone averages more than 85 crashes per year for its nearly 51,000 average daily vehicles.

By reconfiguring both the interchange at Sayles Hill Road and the difficult split at RI-146A, in addition to guard rail and median fixes, intelligent traffic monitoring and state-of-the art communications systems, RIDOT will address safety challenges in this corridor to help eliminate further loss of life.

Restoring Infrastructure Condition

It is no secret that the condition of the pavement and two bridges in the RI-146 corridor are in Poor condition and beyond rehabilitation. This project aims to restore critical components of the corridor to a state of good repair in accordance with the guidance outlined in RIDOT's TAMP.

RIDOT has classified the pavement conditions on RI-146 in both directions as Poor, even Failing in the stretch near Sayles Hill Road. RIDOT has received many complaints on the condition of the roadway, including letters two years in a row – most recently 20 state lawmakers signed on – demanding immediate action. To address this issue, this project will restore more than 8 miles of pavement, staving off a far more costly full-depth reconstruction that RIDOT estimates would become the only option remaining within the next five years.

Bridge conditions are equally bad. Multiple bridges throughout the corridor are in poor condition, including most notably Bridge #074801, Louisquisset Pike North. Structurally deficient since 2013, the 15,731 square foot structure carries I-295 over 146 and connects to ramps linking the

two corridors. With a vertical clearance of 13 feet, 10 inches, the bridge's superstructure has suffered from collision damage for years, particularly on Span 2.

Last inspected in December 2019, the bridge garnered a Poor rating, due mainly to collision damage at girders and deflection and vibration concerns. Despite clearance warning signs south of the bridge, multiple flanges are bent, including Girder H which shows a 40-foot long, 4-inch deep dent.

Its companion bridge, the Louisquisset Pike South Bridge (#074821) was last inspected in October 2019, garnering a Fair rating. However, the superstructure has been rated a 5—the lowest possible "Fair" rating—since at least 1997, and the deck and substructure have steadily deteriorated over the same period. Inspection photos show areas of spalling stretching more than 10 feet across, exposing reinforcing throughout the bridge.

This project will replace both bridges on the same alignment, raising their clearance levels to mitigate collision damage and fully replacing the superstructures of each bridge.

Figure 6 -- Louisquisset Pike North (#074801)

Figure 7 -- Louisquisset Pike South (#074821)

Other bridge work includes preservation on Bridge #098701, which carries Route 99 over RI-146, and preservation work on Bridge #018801, which carries RI-146 over Crookfall Brook. Finally, this project will also fully replace one additional bridge (#044001, which carries RI-146 over RI-146A) and install another (carrying RI-146 over Sayles Hill Road) as part of the traffic mitigation efforts described below.

Reducing Congestion

More than 171,000 vehicles travel within the RI-146 network daily. Rhode Island's Congestion Mitigation Plan, which currently is being developed for final approval in 2020, has identified the Sayles Hill/RI-146 intersection among the worst bottlenecks in the state.

Both automobile traffic and commercial trucking navigating between business hubs in various states face congestion. At peak hours, congestion in the network averages delays of approximately 5 minutes per vehicle, which compounds on-time mandates for freight deliveries. If untreated, by 2055, the delay would stretch to almost 15 minutes per driver for I-295 traffic approaching RI-146, and 7- or 8-minute delays for dedicated 146 traffic.

Figure 8 -- Summary of Project Impacts on Traffic Queues

Route	Existing	2025 No-Build	2025 Build	2055 No-Build	2055 Build
RI-146 North	>1.25 miles (Extends beyond Route 99)	>1.5 miles (Extend to I-295)	<0.07 mi (Minor queue)	>1.5 miles (Extends beyond I-295, blocking ramp system)	<0.07 mi (Minor queue)
RI-146 South	>1.5 miles (Extend beyond RI-146A)	>1.75 miles (Extend beyond RI-146 A)	<0.07 mi (Minor queue)	>2.0 miles (Extends to Route 104)	<0.07 mi (Minor queue)

This delay is almost exclusively during morning and evening peak traffic and occurs in both the northbound and southbound directions. This project will mitigate these congestion issues by:

1. Redesigning the Sayles Hill Road intersection to raise RI-146 over Sayles Hill Road, eliminating conflicting movements and installing C-D roads to preserve access to local businesses;
2. Improving improving pavement conditions throughout the entire project area to improve rideability and reduce long-term maintenance costs for the corridor; and
3. Adding bus-on-shoulder lanes for commuters to Providence, thus taking more cars off the road.

These improvements are phased and described in greater detail in the Project Readiness section.

Increasing System Reliability

Reliability in transportation systems will be improved by design of this project, both through control of vehicle movements, and preparations for contingencies by installing Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) traffic monitoring for the full corridor length. The additional bus-on-shoulder lanes for Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) service into Providence are also expected to positively impact reliability.

Enhancing Freight Movement and Economic Viability

In addition to the immediate region of Sayles Hill Road, business districts in Woonsocket (Opportunity Zone Census Tract 44007018500); North Smithfield; Lincoln; Worcester, Massachusetts; and those reached by I-295 all stand to benefit from these improvements.

More information on the regional economic development benefits are described in the benefit-cost analysis as well as the "Project Location" section of this document.

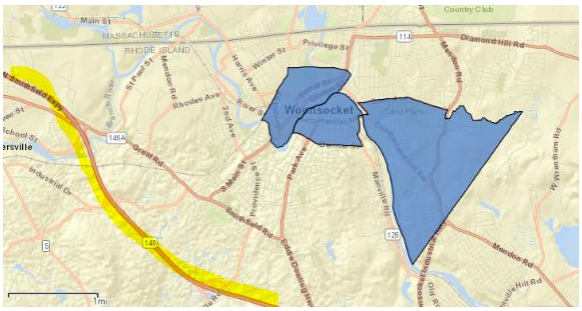


Figure 9 -- Woonsocket Opportunity Zone (Blue) Proximity to Project Location (Yellow)

Currently, multiple projects exist within the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) that pertain to this proposal. Specifically, TIP IDs 1292 and 1293 both allocate future funding to repave RI-146 beginning in 2023. In addition, all five bridges being addressed in this project are currently located in separate bridge groups, so bundling them into one project will result in traffic control, design cost, and other operational efficiencies.

By consolidating projects already scheduled in RIDOT's TIP, including existing resurfacing projects, RIDOT is working to leverage the INFRA grant, and anticipated state funding to bundle these projects, minimizing instances of construction and subsequent closures and providing project-level cost savings.

Also included in the project is installation of new, fiber optic cables underground as part of a plan established by RIDOT's Traffic Management Center (TMC) to support a data-driven approach to monitoring congestion, traffic, and to provide real-time communication to the traveling public, and emerging vehicle communication technologies, all of which greatly improve safety and efficiency. In the future, this fiber system could be monetized through a public-private partnership to help fund the state's infrastructure needs.

Addressing Key USDOT Objectives

This project will transform a critical freight corridor, relieving congestion and improving safety along a stretch of highway that serves the needs of millions of New Englanders. The Rhode to Innovation project also aligns with key INFRA program objectives, and the improvements outlined in this application will:

1. **Support economic vitality at national and regional level** by facilitating both intra- and inter-state commerce for neighboring business districts and the state of Massachusetts and by restoring a State of Good Repair and ensuring the effective and efficient flow of freight;
2. **Leverage federal funding to attract non-Federal sources of infrastructure investment** by committing $30 Million in state match funds to repair a critical freight corridor and improve the Department's ability to collect truck toll revenue from the Farnum Pike Bridge. RhodeWorks Toll Gantry Location 12, located at RI-146 and 104, will eventually help offset program funding with a $6.75 per vehicle rate. The anticipated annual revenue from this location is $2.75 million, which will be used to help support regular maintenance activities throughout the corridor.
3. **Deploy innovative technology systems** by installing new fiberoptic cables along the project section of RI-146 concurrently with paving**,** encourage innovative approaches to project delivery by combining multiple scheduled projects to increase the efficiency of delivery.
4. **Remain accountable for its performance by** reporting the progress of construction in the Department's Quarterly Report, monitoring safety and collision data following the completion of the project, and establishing a detailed maintenance plan with dedicate resources to support diligent asset management of the RI-146 corridor.

II. Project Location

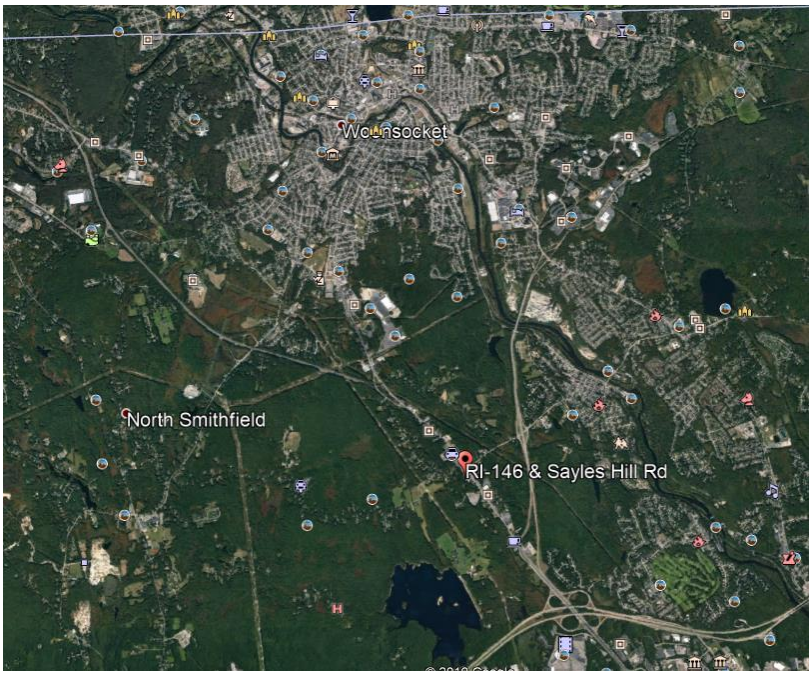


Figure 10 – Google Earth View of Project Limits

The project area of RI-146 is located in Lincoln and North Smithfield, Rhode Island between the intersection with I-295 (41.943° N, 71.476° W) and the Massachusetts state line (42.014° N, 71.587° W). The 8-mile stretch of highway helps facilitate commerce both within Rhode Island and the region as a whole.

With daily traffic volumes of more than 171,000, the RI-146 corridor works to connect employees, customers, and freight to various destinations in and outside Rhode Island. RI-146 connects into to Worcester Massachusetts, the second most populous city in New England according to the 2010 Census. RI-146 also connects vehicles to Interstate-295, helping connect travelers from throughout New England to major business hubs. Within Rhode Island, RI-146 carries traffic to and from a number of towns, business centers, state parks, and other points of interest.

RI-146 directly connects the towns of North Smithfield, Woonsocket, and Lincoln, Rhode Island. This immediate area hosts a population of more than 74,000. This region is also home to the Lincoln Woods State Park, the Blackstone River State Park, and the World War II Veteran Memorial State Park and the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor

The intersection of RI-146 and Sayles Hill Road, at which the new bridge will be constructed, includes various car dealerships and other retail establishments that serve many rural customers from surrounding communities. RI-146 also branches off into RI-146A, which connects directly to the city of Woonsocket, one of Rhode Island's most densely-populated business centers.

III. Project Parties

Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) is the applicant and primary party responsible for this project. RIDOT has extensive experience with federal grant processes and has successfully leveraged federal assistance across range of major transportation infrastructure projects, including the 2019 INFRA Providence Viaduct North support, 2019 BUILD support for The Washington Bridge Rehabilitation and Redevelopment Project, 2018 BUILD for Simple, Smarter Roads for the Newport Innovation Corridor (Newport, RI) project, and 2017 BUILD for Route 37 Safety Sweep (Cranston, RI) projects.

RIDOT will be responsible for administering the grant funds and managing the project, and contact information is provided on both the Standard Form 424 application and the cover page of this project narrative.

Many stakeholders stand to directly benefit from the successful completion of this project. The State of Rhode Island Division of Parks & Recreation, which manages three State Parks along or immediately outside the project area, and regional residents would benefit from the increased accessibility to important, outdoor sites.

Businesses, both small and large, also stand to benefit from decreased commute times for employees and greater accessibility for prospective customers. More details about the commerce benefits of this project are discussed under the Merit Criteria section of this document.

IV. Grant Funds, Sources, and Uses of All Project Funding

Project Budget

Reconstructing the Rhode to Innovation: Safety Enhancements and Congestion fixes on RI-146 in Rhode Island has an estimated all-in cost of $150 million, including the completion of design, construction, soft costs, and contingencies.

Previously Incurred Expenses

RIDOT has committed internal resources to this project since 2019. Professional consultants have been engaged in designing and developing the project. To date, $100,000 has been spent with the majority of cost in design.

Future Eligible Costs

The future eligible cost of the RI-146 Improvements Project is estimated to be $150 million. The existing Rhode Island State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) currently includes seven projects carrying future funds to support the components of the project over federal fiscal years (FFY) 2020-2027, but the majority of funding is concentrated in TIP IDs 1292 and 1293, resurfacing projects which total $13.42 million over three years.

If the full $90 million INFRA Grant requested is awarded, INFRA funds would support 60 percent of this project cost, with the remaining $60 million (40 percent) divided evenly between federal formula funds ($30 million) and state match funds ($30 million).

Figure 11 -- Future Eligible Project Costs

Design								
	INFRA		***Other Federal***		***State Match***		***Total ($M)***	
Consultant	$8.20	5%	$0.05	0.0%	$2.06	1.4%	$10.31	4.12%
RIDOT Staff	$1.40	1%	$0.02	0.0%	$0.35	0.2%	$1.77	0.71%
ROW	$0.00	-	$1.08	0.7%	$0.27	0.2%	$1.35	0.54%
Utilities	$0.00	-	$0.16	0.1%	$0.04	0.0%	$0.20	0.08%
							$13.63	**9.09%**
Construction								
	INFRA		***Other Federal***		***State Match***		***Total ($M)***	
Contractor	$64.00	43%	$0.00	0.0%	$16.00	10.7%	$80.00	32.00%
Consultant	$5.10	3%	$0.00	0.0%	$1.28	0.9%	$6.38	2.55%
RIDOT Staff	$5.00	3%	$0.18	0.1%	$1.29	0.9%	$6.47	2.59%
Police Detail	$0.00	-	$2.48	1.7%	$0.62	0.4%	$3.10	1.24%
Utilities	$0.00	-	$1.71	1.1%	$0.43	0.3%	$2.14	0.86%
Contingency	$5.30	4%	$16.94	11.3%	$5.56	3.7%	$27.80	11.12%
							$125.89	**83.93%**
Other								
	INFRA		***Other Federal***		***State Match***		***Total ($M)***	
Misc. RIDOT	$1.00	1%	$0.12	0.1%	$0.28	0.2%	$1.40	0.56%
Misc. Other	$0.00	-	$7.26	4.8%	$1.82	1.2%	$9.08	3.63%
							$10.48	**6.99%**
Subtotals	**$90.00**	**60%**	**$30.00**	**20%**	**$30.00**	**20%**	**$150.00**	**$0.60**
	Total Future Eligible Costs ($M)						**$150.00**	**100%**

V. Merit Criteria

Criterion #1: Support for National or Regional Economic Vitality

This project will generate considerable benefits, totaling a net present value (NPV) of $578 million over 30 years. The benefit-cost ratio for this project is 4.86, indicating that this project is an efficient and cost-effective investment that will support national and regional economic vitality.

RI-146 serves as a bridge between two states – Rhode Island and Massachusetts – linking Providence to Worcester and all the communities in between. It gets rural citizens to employers in both states and provides access to the beautiful natural amenities in that local area. It's been more than 60 years since a significant project transformed the corridor, deeply affecting livability for those who seek out this less-populated portion of the state to make a home. This project will make significant safety improvements, increase freight and travel time reliability, and advance economic development throughout Northern Rhode Island.

Improving Traffic Safety

The project area currently averages 178 crashes per year, of which 40 typically involve serious or possible injuries. The figure below summarizes the five major safety issues in the project area. This project will generate annual benefits of $5.31 million by reducing crashes in the network by more than 65 percent.

Priority	Issue	Crashes/Yr	Injuries/Yr	Crash Reduction	Annual Savings
1	Roadway Departure, RI-146 @ RI-146A	23.2	5.6	75.90%	$ 3,338,765.10
2	Congestion-Related Crashes, RI-146 @ Sayles Hill	105.4	21.2	58.00%	$ 1,051,621.20
3	Roadway Departure, RI-146 @ RI-246	25	7.4	65.30%	$ 540,292.20
4	Weaving and U-Turns, RI-146 @ RI-146A	24.6	5.6	63.30%	$ 384,547.50
	TOTALS	178.2	39.8	65.63%	$ 5,315,226.00

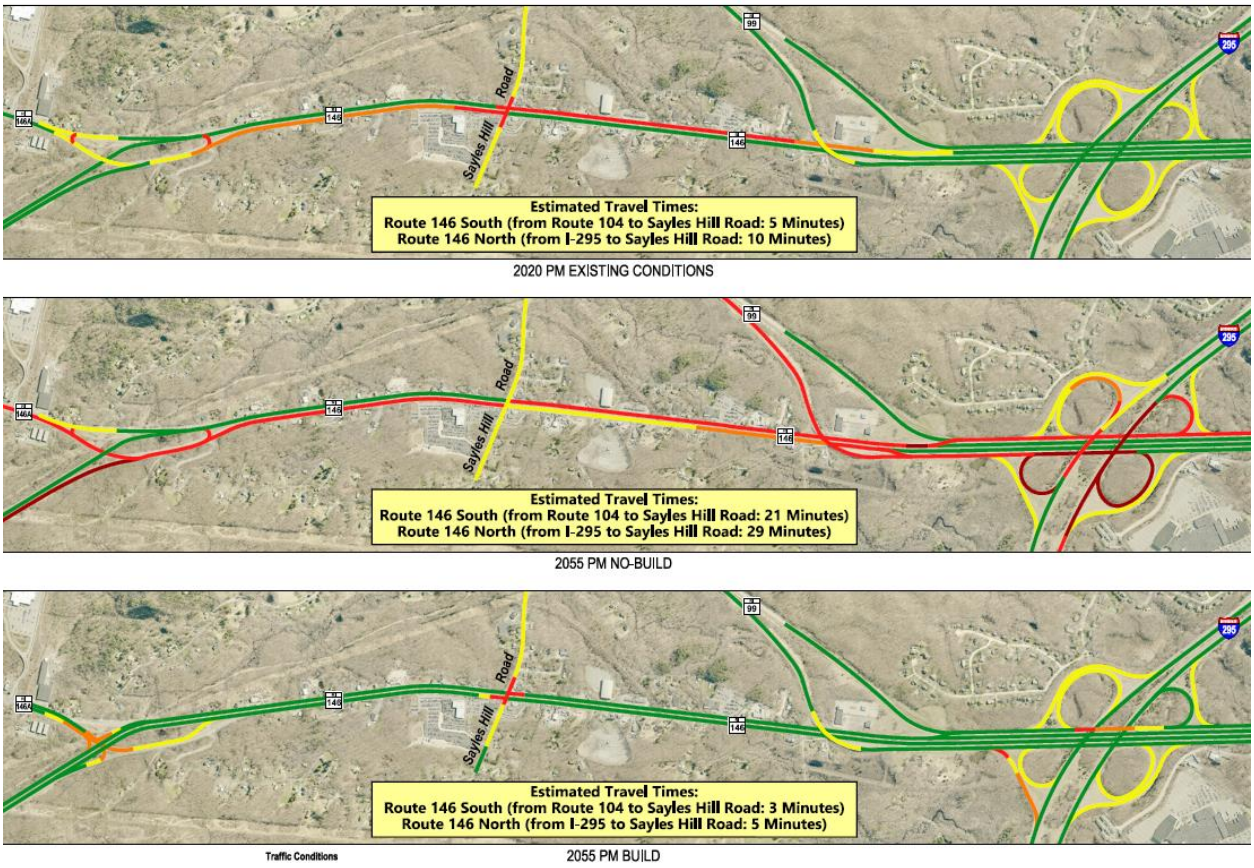
Both intra- and inter-state commerce are deeply affected by the infrastructure conditions on RI-146. Repairing pavement, bridge condition and improvements will ensure the effective and efficient flow of freight throughout the corridor.

Strengthening the Freight Supply Chain

The design improvements included in this project will reduce congestion on RI-146, RI-146A, I-295, and local roads throughout northern Rhode Island. Compared to the no-build alternative, the completion of this project will dramatically improve the peak hour average speeds. With the proposed improvements, traffic on RI-146 will average 43 MPH at peak times, up from 18 MPH today. Annual vehicle hours traveled (VHT) in the traffic network will fall by 21.4 percent.

The RI-146 corridor has been identified as the critical rural freight highway Rhode Island in the RI Freight Plan. For years, improving the intersection of RI-146 and Sayles Hill Road has been a priority for the state. Currently responsible for two of the top 30 bottlenecks in the state, the improvements in the proposed alternative presented here would finally relieve congestion for freight and commuter traffic. The figure on the following page summarizes the anticipated system reliability impacts.

Figure 12 -- Congestion Mitigation and System Reliability Impacts



Restoring a State of Good Repair

This project will restore three critical highway bridges, reconfigure ramps and intersections to improve congestion, and repave 8 miles of pavement in poor condition. The reconstruction of RI-146 will transform the entire corridor, improving rideability, functionality, and reliability.

Advancing Economic Development in Areas of Need

This project reinforces and improves a critical link between Massachusetts and Rhode Island. Connecting various towns, the project will help facilitate freight, commerce, and recreation for a large and diverse region. The project area of RI-146 directly connects the Massachusetts state line and Interstate-295 – both crucial points of interest that facilitate commerce throughout the region.

Outside of the project area, RI-146 continues north to Worcester, Massachusetts. Within Rhode Island, RI-146 helps directly facilitate traffic between the neighboring towns of North Smithfield, Lincoln, and Woonsocket. The congestion reductions and safety improvements in this project will ease the flow of people and goods between these three metropolitan centers and improve access to a myriad of communities in between.

Reducing Barriers Between Workers and Employment Centers

At the Sayles Hill Road intersection alone, there are six car dealerships which receive traffic from the larger geographical region. With a diverse range of businesses in and around the immediate project area, countless stakeholders stand to benefit from reduced congestion and increased safety.

Figure 13 -- Woonsocket Opportunity Zone Census Tract 44007018500

Rhode Island has 15 federally designed Opportunity Zones, including Woonsocket Census Tracts 8000, 7900, and 8500 in the surrounding area of the RI-146 project. The Opportunity Zones program is designed to incentivize patient capital investments in low-income communities nationwide.

With thousands of businesses in the corridor, many stakeholders stand to benefit from investments in the region. Alongside countless small businesses, CVS' Corporate Headquarters is located in the city of Woonsocket. An investment in RI-146 is an investment in the sustainability and growth of this region, which will be well-served by this project's improvements in traffic flows, safety, and linkages to and from major business centers.

In addition, the construction of bus-on-shoulder lanes to the southern portion of RI-146 will reduce travel times for those choosing to take public transit.

Criterion #2: Leveraging of Federal Funding

This project offers an efficient, cost-effective way to maximize the use of public funds to repair RI-146, for **three** key reasons:

First, RIDOT currently has **seven** projects programmed in its Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) that are contained within the scope of this project proposal. Securing this INFRA grant would allow RIDOT to consolidate those individual project components and expand upon them to include necessary safety and mobility benefits, such as the Sayles Hill Road interchange improvements, which is currently labeled as an "Unfunded Regionally Significant Project" in the STIP. By mobilizing one project instead of seven, the Department will reduce overhead costs and mitigate scheduling and coordination conflicts.

Second, the successful completion of this project will pave the way for RIDOT to better utilize a truck toll gantry in the project area. RhodeWorks Toll Gantry 12 is being constructed at the RI-146 bridge over the intersection with Route 104, or Farnum Pike. The subsequent construction of this toll gantry will generate more than $2.75 million in new funds annually to help facilitate a State of Good Repair on various regionally significant projects.

Third, the completion of this project will prevent the need for costly repairs to the assets included in this project in the future, including an estimated $65 Million full-depth replacement of the deteriorating pavement on the corridor and more than $55 Million in other costs just to maintain

the status quo. Without INFRA support, RIDOT cannot guarantee that the in-kind replacement of this corridor can be avoided. By securing INFRA funding, RIDOT would be able to prevent wasteful spending of more than $120 million, instead spending just 25% more in one cohesive project that will dramatically improve the corridor.

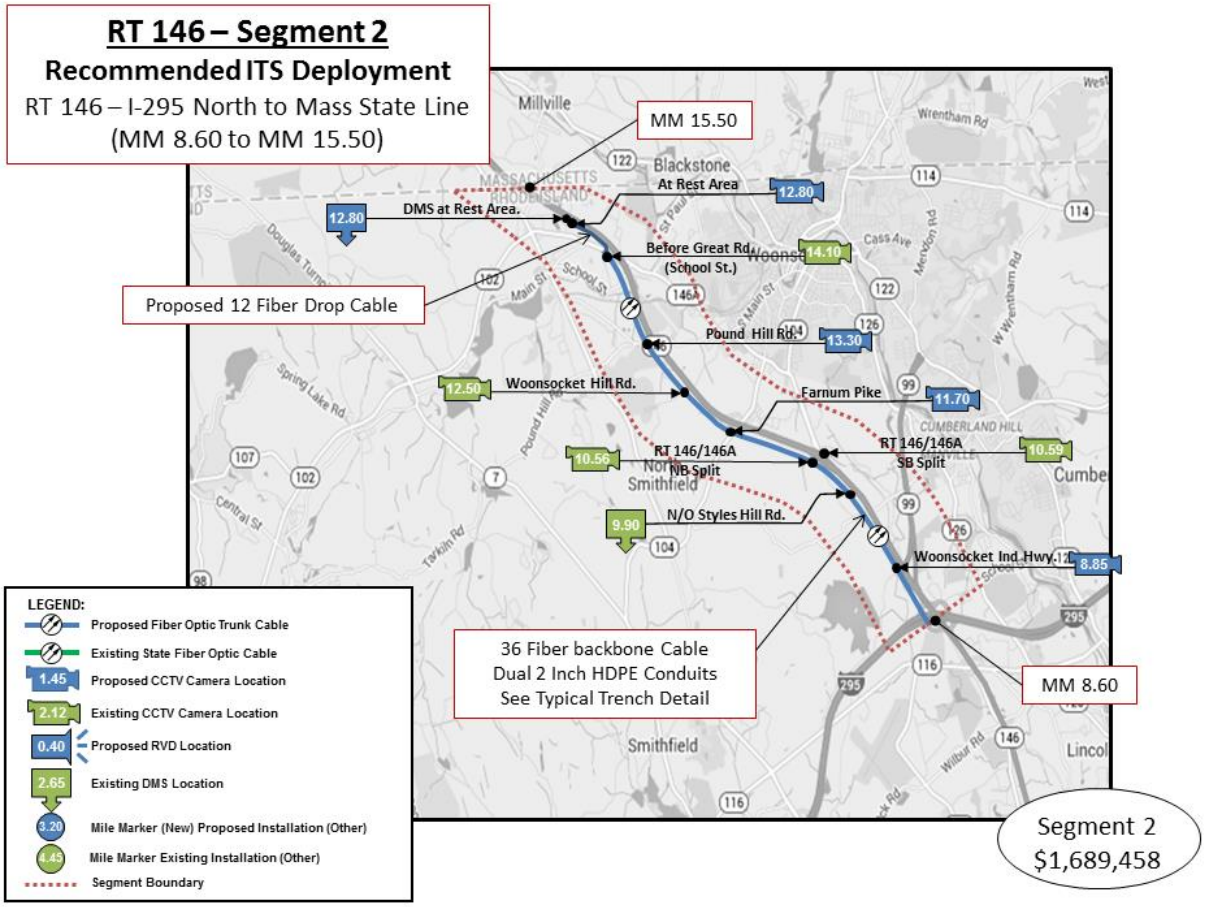
Criterion #3: Potential for Innovation

Area #1: Deployment of Innovative Technology

The RI-146 project will be built as a smart corridor that will embed miles of new fiber optic cables underground as part of a plan established by RIDOT's Traffic Management Center (TMC) to support a data-driven approach to monitoring congestion, traffic, and to provide real-time communication to traveling public, and emerging vehicle communication technologies, all of which greatly improve safety and efficiency. In the future, this fiber system could be monetized through a public-private partnership to help fund the state's infrastructure needs.

In addition, RIDOT will fully reconstruct pavement at the current weigh station on RI-146 South, installing a more modern Weight In Motion (WIM) system along and include additional Wrong Way Driving Detection systems.

Figure 14 -- Broadband project limits



Area #2: Construction Phasing Innovation

While the RI-146 project is underway, it is vitally important to ensure that this freeway remains open for business. As has been done with other large-scale RIDOT projects, phasing schemes will be utilized to minimize lane and ramp closures during construction. This phasing is discussed in detail in Section VI. The construction phasing and traffic conditions will be monitored via RIDOT's Transportation Management Center (TMC), the state's hub of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) and communication resources. Under the TMC Rhodeways program, roadside cameras help identify incidents on the highways and variable message signs provide real-time drive-time information to motorists.

Area #3: Innovative Financing

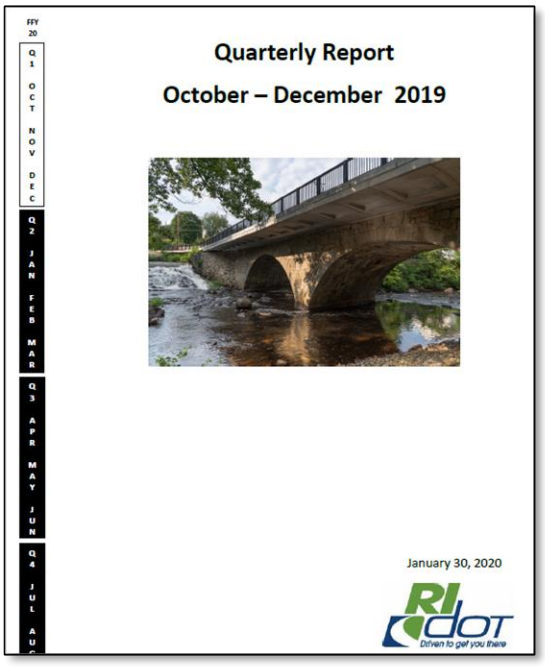
Although two portions of the RI-146 project are now in the STIP, budgetary constraints have prevented a full-scope solution to all issues that now exist with this vital freight corridor. To service the needs of this project, RIDOT will fund the project using a federal formula and INFRA funds, along with the required 20 percent state match. As stated under Objective #2, RIDOT plans to leverage future truck toll revenues to fund the program.

Innovative project bundling practices will also result in cost savings for the transit portion of this project, as a bus-on-shoulder lane for the southern portion of the project limits can be constructed with little extra cost, limited in scope to moving stormwater treatment units, paving and striping.

Criterion #4: Performance and Accountability

RIDOT issues a quarterly report to fulfill statutory requirements and to build the public's trust in the Department by ensuring that it is accountable to the taxpayers of the State of Rhode Island. Going beyond the statutory requirement of the RhodeWorks legislation, the report also includes updates on key accomplishments during the previous quarter.

Figure 15 -- RIDOT's Quarterly Report



That accountability is led by RIDOT's Division of Project Management. Charged with oversight and management of all projects from initial design through final completion, project managers at RIDOT closely monitor schedules, coordinate permits and regulatory requirements, and ensure that projects are completed on time, on budget and at the highest quality.

RIDOT's INFRA-funded project will be delivered on agreed-upon schedules, that will generate clear, quantifiable results, and that will advance both

USDOT and RhodeWorks goals. Once the project has been advertised, its progress will be tracked in the Quarterly Report.

If the project proceeds as a design-build, RIDOT will include bonuses for early completion of milestones during different phases in the contract, following a similar incentive/disincentives method used in previous rapid-bridge replacement projects in Rhode Island.

Key Accountability Metrics

This project will include the establishment of an accountability measure which will be used to report on the project's success. The Department is prepared to be held accountable if the achieved safety improvement for all vehicle and collision types within the project limits does not result in at least 50 percent of the projected improvement as compared to projected No-Build Safety performance within one year of the project's substantial completion date.

In its 2019 TAMP, RIDOT noted pavement typically lasts anywhere from 15 years on NHS arterials with heavy truck volume and environmental factors such as freeze/thaw cycles. Bridges can last up to 75 years following good asset-management practices.

VI. Project Readiness

Technical Feasibility

Engineering Design Studies and Activities

RIDOT has identified a comprehensive solution that is technically and economically feasible. The Department is currently working to secure environmental approvals which will allow the project to move forward, and the project plans presented here provide a comprehensive overview of a phased-approach to the construction of a complex and critical highway asset. RIDOT has begun to advance the project through preliminary engineering. This effort will advance all elements of the project design (including but not limited to, highway, structural, traffic, drainage, utilities) to a level sufficient for RIDOT to advertise the project, including plans, specifications, and estimates to a level tantamount to a 10 percent design review submission. This consultant will also be supporting RIDOT in the preparation and submission of permit applications, modifications, and extensions to the authorities having jurisdiction over the work.

Development of Design Criteria and Basis of Design

As outlined throughout this application, the flaws in the design of the existing RI-146 corridor, including its interchanges with RI-146A and I-295, have led RIDOT to prioritize the development of a design which rectifies the existing congestion and safety problems in the project area. The basis of the design referenced and presented in this narrative is preeminently concerned with designing this project to correct the problems with the design of the existing corridor, thereby avoiding a costly and wasteful in-kind replacement in the future.

Basis for the Cost Estimate

As shown in Section IV, RIDOT has estimated that the total future cost of the project will be $150 Million. This includes the completion of design, construction, and a $19.56 Million contingency fund. The base construction cost for the work detailed below will be approximately $118.2 Million.

Project Scope, Schedule, and Statement of Work

RIDOT and its consultants have developed the following project plans, which include phased construction at three key locations, followed by safety, transit, and pavement resurfacing improvements. Therefore, the scope and schedule laid out below is divided into four stages, with phased construction in each area.

Stage 1: Bridge Repair at I-295

Phase 1: Northbound Bridge

The first phase of construction will focus on I-295 Northbound (NB) bridge (#074801). Three lanes of traffic will be shifted to the northern side of the bridge, while the superstructure and piers on the southern side of the bridge are reconstructed, and the existing abutments are rehabilitated. During this phase, slip lanes to I-295 NB and RI-146 NB will also be constructed to increase traffic flow through the interchange in subsequent phases and the final condition.

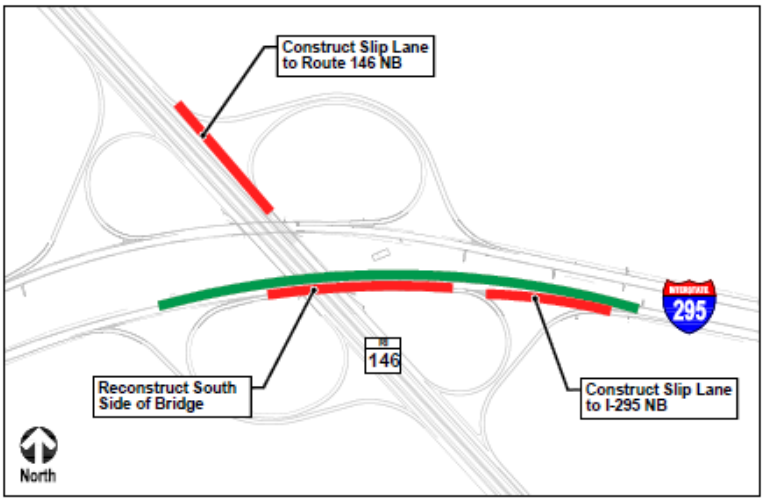


Figure 16 -- Phase 1, I-295 Bridges

Phase 2: Southbound Bridge

With the southern portion of bridge #074801 repaired, construction will shift to the center of the bridge. Traffic on I-295 NB will be split to provide a single lane to bypass the interchange and two lanes operating through the interchange. Meanwhile the I-295 Southbound (SB) bridge (#074821) will be rehabilitated during this phase.

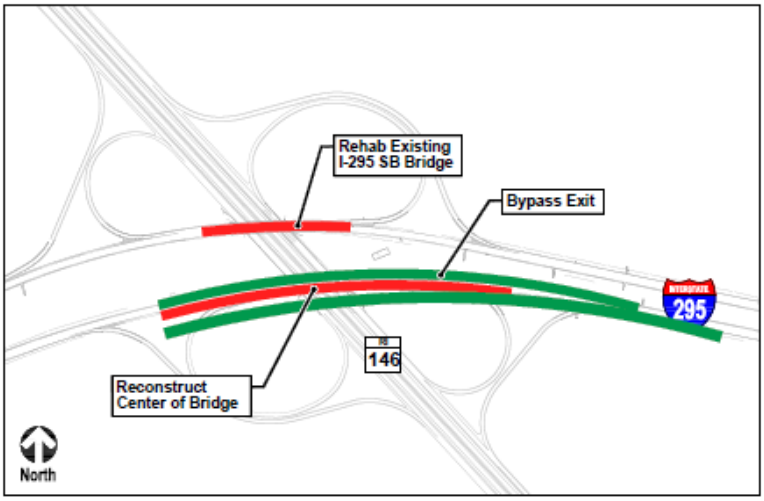


Figure 17 -- Phase 2, I-295 Bridges

Phase 3: Installing a New Bridge

The final stage of construction will complete the new bridge in place of the old #74801 structure, with the reconstruction of the northern side of the bridge with 3 lanes maintained on the new portion of the bridge. Rehabilitation work will also be completed on bridge #074821 during this phase of construction, allowing the project to move North on RI-146 to the RI-146A Interchange.

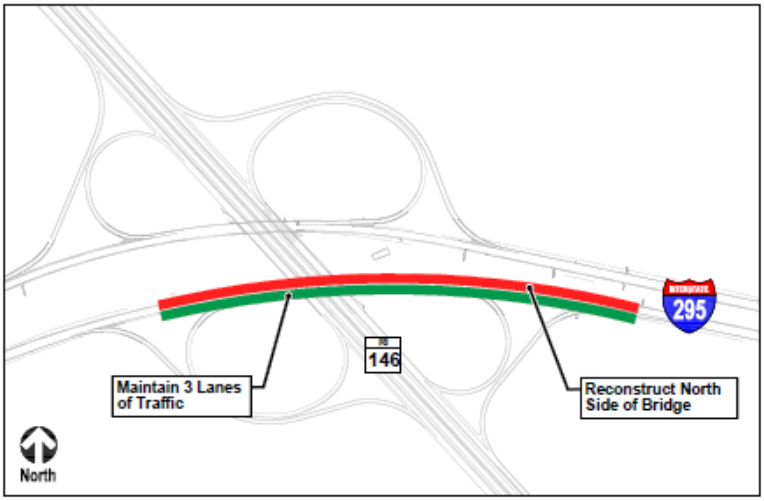


Figure 18 -- Phase 3, I-295 Bridges

Stage 2: RI-146A DDI

Phase 1: Offline Improvements

Following the reconstruction of the I-295 bridges, the next stage of this project will address the RI-146/146A interchange. The northernmost safety improvements in the project, the dangerous weave at 146A must be addressed before Sayles Hill Road is improved to avoid high-speed collisions at the 146A interchange. The first phase of construction in this stage will focus on the all the offline components of the new Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI) including new bridge, ramps/lanes, and widening of existing roadways. Traffic will be maintained or all existing movements.

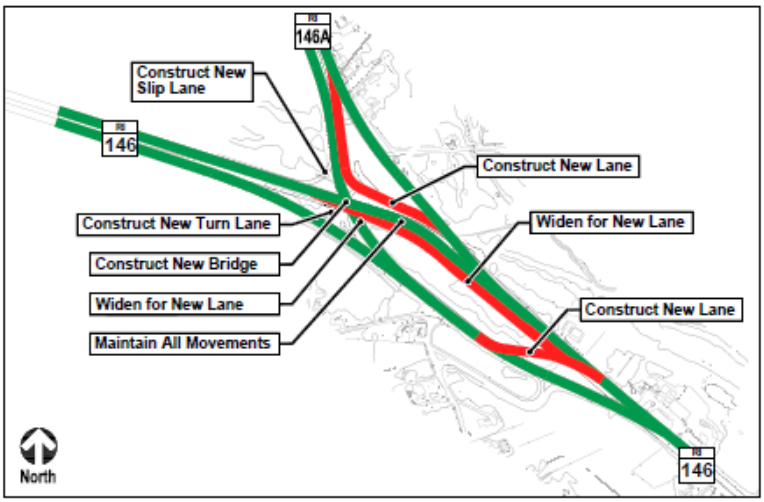


Figure 19 -- Phase 1, RI-146A Interchange

Phase 2: Shifting Traffic

Traffic will be shifted to crossover to the newly constructed bridge carrying RI-146 SB and the existing RI-146 NB bridge will be reconstructed. Minor widening and

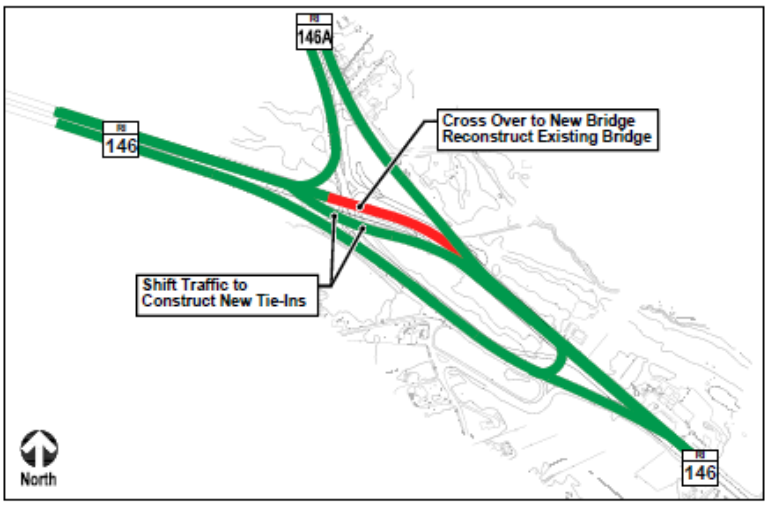


Figure 20 -- Phase 2, RI-146A Interchange

alignment changes through DDI, underneath RI-146 will be constructed in subphases to allow for opening of the interchange during Phase 3.

Phase 3: Opening the DDI

The DDI will be operational during this phase with minor work to complete the interchange including tie-ins to the relocated roadways and closure of the U-turns. This phase will facilitate Phase 2 of the RI-146/Sayles Hill Road work to ensure a U-turn is available for RI-146 NB traffic heading to RI-146A NB.

Stage 3: Sayles Hill Road

Phase 1: Preparing RI-146

The first phase of construction will to prepare RI-146 for the construction of the new structure. Key activities during this phase will include the widening of RI-146 in both northbound and southbound directions to accommodate the new C-D road and temporary traffic during Phase 2. The existing four-way traffic signal and all turning movements will be maintained during construction.

Phase 2: Laying Foundations

Most of the heavy construction required at this interchange will be completed during Phase 2. With traffic shifted to the outside on the newly constructed C-D road, construction in the center of RI-146 will include the installation of Mechanically Stabilized Earth (MSE) walls and a bridge structure over Sayles Hill Road. Turning

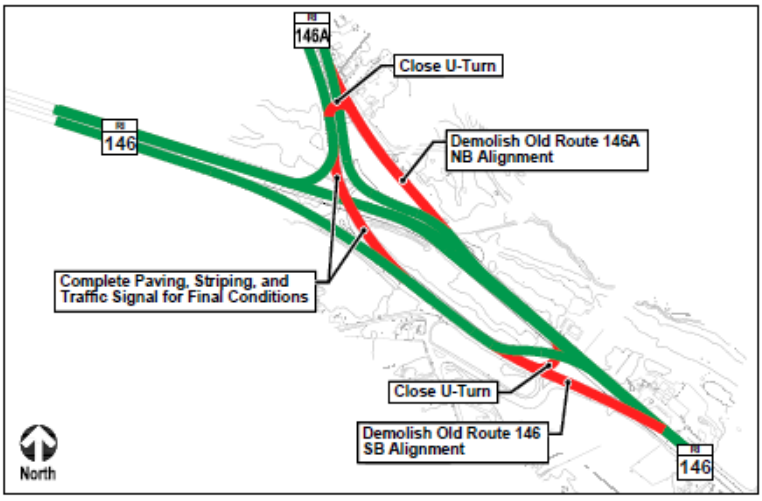


Figure 21 -- Phase 3, RI-146A Interchange

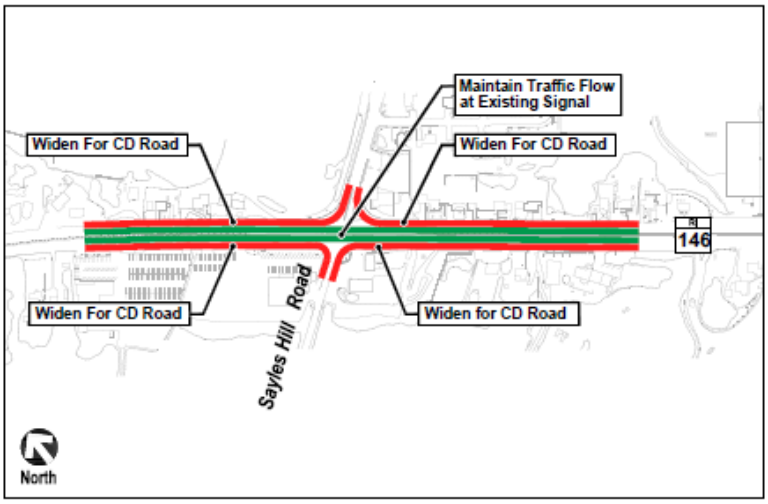


Figure 22 -- Phase 1, Sayles Hill Road

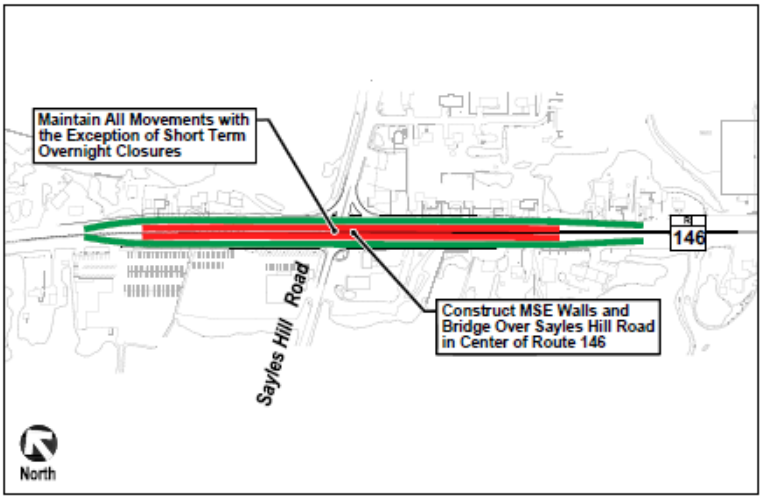


Figure 23 -- Phase 2, Sayles Hill Road

movements will be maintained except for short term, overnight closures to allow for setting bridge beams and other overhead activities.

Phase 3: Building a Bridge

Following the construction of the new bridge and wall structure, traffic will be shifted to the center of RI-146 while the bridge and walls are completed to the outside as needed. Through traffic will be carried over Sayles Hill Road, and local traffic will utilize the C-D Road. With these improvements in place, local traffic can flow freely beneath RI-146, while the high-speed freight and commuter traffic can cross Sayles Hill Road unimpeded by long signals. This phase marks the completion of most of the heavy construction involved, leaving only pavement resurfacing and safety improvements in the final stage of the project.

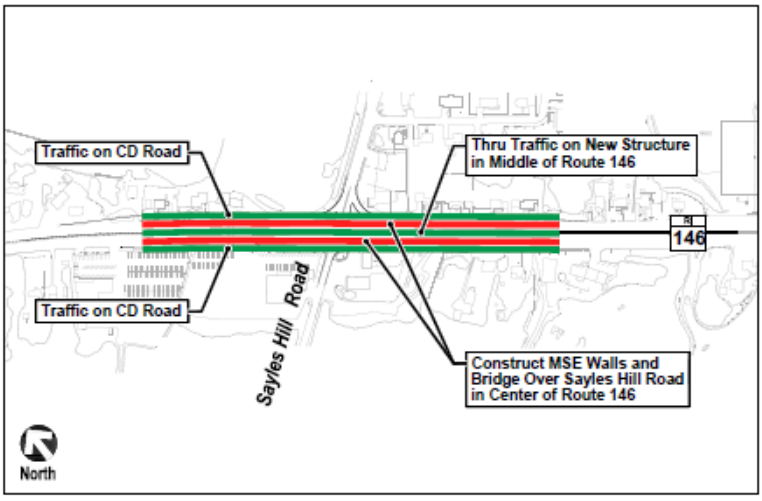


Figure 24 -- Phase 3, Sayles Hill Road

Stage 4: Installing Safety Features, Laying Fiber, and Resurfacing RI-146

The final stage of this project will include a variety of additional safety and technology improvements. While these improvements do not require graphical representation, they will still be phased during delivery.

Phase 1: WIMS and Buses

Following the major construction on the corridor, phase 1 of the final improvements will construct weigh stations, install wrong way detection systems, install fiber optic conduit, adjust catch basins, and add signing and striping along RI-146 SB to establish a bus-on-shoulder lane from RI-15 to the I-95 merge. This phase will also include widening the I-295 SB on-ramp from a C-D road linking RI-146 and RI-99 SB.

Phase 2: New Ramp Alignment

This phase will include the construction of a wall to realign the off-ramp from RI-146 south to the C-D road southbound providing access to I-295. This will ultimately allow for the ramp to be realigned to increase the weaving distance from RI-99 SB to I-295 SB, providing drivers with additional time to commit to a lane and avoid conflicting movements. This phase will conclude with the opening of a realigned ramp linking RI-146 SB to the C-D road.

Phase 3: New Pavement

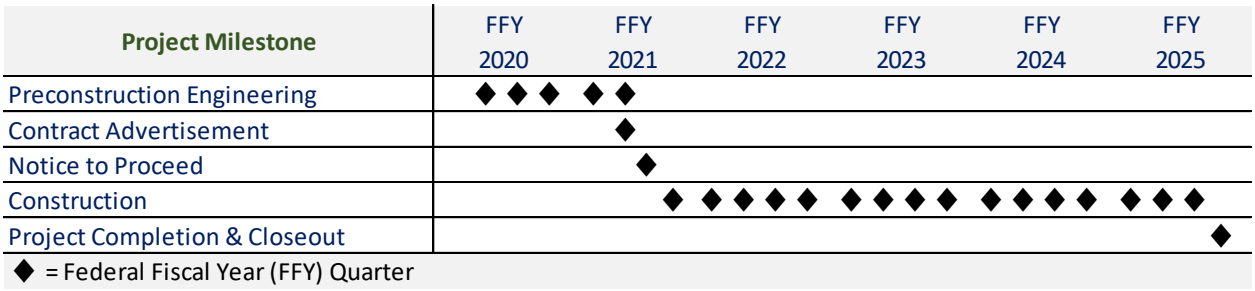
Following the completion of all heavy construction throughout the corridor, this project will conclude by resurfacing RI-146 from I-295 to the Massachusetts State Line. Following resurfacing, high-friction surface treatments will be installed at spot locations as an additional safety improvement.

Project Milestones

To date, RIDOT has developed sufficiently detailed conceptual designs to ensure that the project is (a) constructible within the constraints of state and federal funds available, (b) in conformity with modern highway design safety standards and performance criteria, and (c) consistent with local, regional, and national objectives for transportation efficiency and resiliency in the 21st Century. Crucially, all elements of the project are contained in the existing operational right-of-way, obviating potential risks associated with property acquisitions.

As the chart below shows, preliminary engineering work will continue on this project throughout FFY20, with advertising for construction proceeding during Q2 of FFY21. RIDOT expects to begin construction by Fall 2022, completing the project by sometime in late 2025

Figure 25 -- Project Milestones by Quarter and Fiscal Year



Required Approvals--Environmental Permits and Reviews

In cooperation with the FHWA Rhode Island Division, RIDOT is preparing a Categorical Exclusion (CE) for the construction of the RI-146 project. This CE will assess the impacts that the construction of the new Collector-Distributor Road will have on the area surrounding the project. It will also evaluate potential impacts to the natural environment, the local economy, and cultural resources. RIDOT has met with FHWA-RI officials who have conditionally agreed that this project can proceed with a CE.

Other Environmental Permits

RIDOT will also secure the following permits as the project is approaching 90 percent design:

- Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) Application for Stormwater Construction Permit and Water Quality Certification
- Compliance with RIDOT/USDOJ/USEPA Stormwater Consent Decree

Aside from the other environmental permits detailed above, there are no additional planning approvals required for this project.

Right-of-Way

All right-of-way required to complete this project is either [1] owned by the State already, or [2] in use for transportation purposes.

Broad Public Support

This project enjoys broad public support. RIDOT has received written letters of support from critical stakeholders including Rhode Island Division of Statewide Planning, the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC-RI), the Providence Foundation, Rhode Island Public Transit Authority, AAA Northeast and the Northern Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce

Required Approvals—Federal Transportation

The components of this project are all included in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program for FFY2018-2027 with mixed funding sources. If RIDOT is awarded INFRA grants support, those components will be consolidated into a single project and advanced accordingly

Assessment of Project Risks and Mitigation Strategies

As noted in preceding sections of this document, the project is being developed such that all facilities can be constructed within the existing state highway rights-of-way. This element removes any cost or schedule risks associated with the right-of-way acquisition and certification process, components which typically involve a degree of risk to cost and schedule in major construction projects.

The risks associated with this project are limited to the typical schedule uncertainties associated with projects of this magnitude, along with the potential for delays associated with obtaining the necessary regulatory approvals prior to construction. Taking every advance measure possible to minimize and mitigate all project risks. The preparation of bidding documents for a design-build contract is seen as a low-risk endeavor, with the schedule totally under the control of RIDOT and its consultant.

VII. Large/Small Project Requirements

With an estimated cost of $150 million, this project exceeds the minimum threshold for a large project, as specified in 23 U.S.C. and Section C of the 2019 INFRA Notice of Funding Opportunity.

RIDOT's projects are selected based on the value they provide to Rhode Islanders and the region as a whole. Specifically, RIDOT is working to ensure a State of Good Repair for all assets while working towards its "zero death" goal relating to traffic injuries.

As a result, RIDOT choose this project and design based on its ability to increase roadway safety and reduce congestion on a crucial regional highway.

National and Regional Economic, Mobility, and Safety Benefits

This project generates significant economic, mobility, and safety benefits. As the attached Benefit Cost Analysis explains in much more detail, this project will generate safety benefits, reduce emissions, improve traffic flows, create jobs, and reduce maintenance costs. In addition, the system reliability improvements resulting from the congestion mitigation efforts will considerably improve freight efficiency.

The U.S. Department of Transportation estimates that in 2010 trucks moved between five and ten million tons of freight between Rhode Island and Massachusetts, and between one and five million tons of freight between both Rhode Island and New York. According to the Rhode Island Division of Statewide Planning (RIDSP), the RI-146 project is estimated to benefit at least 40,148 tons of freight on an annual average day.

Infrastructure Condition

This project will considerably improve the condition of RI's highway system, restoring RI-146 to a state of good repair, rehabilitating several bridges, and mitigating safety issues that have plagued to corridor for decades.

Congestion Reduction

This project will reduce congestion on RI-146 and I-295 over a span of more than 8 miles, increasing daily average speeds in the network from 40 to 50 MPH. During peak hours, these improvements will cut travel times from I-295 to the Sayles Hill Road interchange in half.

System Reliability

This project will improve the reliability of the highway system by significantly reducing delays for freight traffic and commuters alike. Under existing conditions, the network experiences more than 1,700 hours of delay every day. Under the proposed alternative, that number would drop to less than 500 hours per day, an average delay of just 9 seconds per vehicle on a daily basis. These improvements will result in free-flowing traffic at all hours of the day, significantly improving reliability throughout the corridor.

Environmental Sustainability

The traffic flow improvements generated by this project will lead to significant emissions reductions, improving air quality throughout the state of Rhode Island and Central Massachusetts.

Reduced Project Delivery Delays

The award of the requested INFRA Grant support for this project will enable this project's acceleration and completion by 2025.

Preliminary Engineering

RIDOT has been working with a consult to develop a preliminary design for this project since 2019. In addition, RIDOT is working closely with FHWA-RI to perform studies supporting the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Non-Federal Financial Commitments

This project is supported by $30 million in non-federal (state) funding. In addition, as referenced in Section V, the completion of this project will facilitate the collection of revenue by RhodeWorks Toll Gantry 12, which will generate more than $2 million in annual state revenue for RIDOT. This revenue will directly support the regular maintenance of the RI-146 Corridor.

Contingency Amounts

As shown in the Future Eligible Costs section, the budgetary calculations for this project include explicitly states contingency amounts, also reflected in the SF-424C for this application.

Completion Without Federal Funding

Without INFRA support, RIDOT cannot guarantee that the project can be completed as described here. Because the RI-146 corridor cannot be allowed to be shut down, RIDOT will eventually be forced to repair its roads, bridges and intersections in pieces, at the lowest possible cost, effectively replacing it in-kind. The new asset would therefore retain the same safety issues and design flaws as the existing one, at an estimated cost of $120 million. That project would simply be a waste of money. The only way to guarantee that the problems with this critical asset are fixed is to secure the requested INFRA support.

Expected Construction Date

With INFRA support, RIDOT fully expects to begin construction within 18 months after the date of obligation of the project funds. As the project schedule in Section VI indicates, RIDOT expects to begin construction by Fall 2022, completing the project by sometime in late 2025.

- END -

Letters of Support

AAA Northeast

110 Royal Little Drive
Providence, RI 02904-1860
(401) 868-2000
AAA.com

February 12, 2020

Peter Alviti, Director
Rhode Island Department of Transportation
2 Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Director Alviti:

On behalf of AAA Northeast, I write to you in full support of RIDOT's FY2020 INFRA Grant Application to advance and construct a new and important highway improvement at the crucial Route 146 freight corridor

Route 146 is a key component to the economic activity between Providence and Worcester, Massachusetts, not only as one of Rhode Island's most important freight corridors but an important link to Boston and the rest of the Northeast Megaregion.

A properly functioning highway system is a necessity to the economic vitality and future of the entire area. In addition, we believe that this potential $150 million project – with the help of the $90 million INFRA funding – will help to create economic opportunity both in allowing faster, more efficient commerce through this busy commercial trucking link, and directly by adding much-needed construction jobs.

Communities in our region have long sought the kinds of improvements outlined in this INFRA Grant Application for the safety and well-being of our traveling public. In the past, repeated attempts to fix crumbling bridges and stop queuing of cars in this well-traveled commercial area have been stymied by lack of proper infrastructure funding.

Because we must seize this window of opportunity to rebuild this critical transportation infrastructure, AAA enthusiastically supports RIDOT's INFRA Grant Application and look forward to working with your Department in advancing the reconstruction of the most vital north-south link in our transportation infrastructure in our state today. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Lloyd Albert
Senior Vice President, Public and Government Affairs
AAA Northeast

SP1197709

ACEC

American Council of Engineering Companies
of Rhode Island

Mr. Peter Alviti
Director
Rhode Island Department of Transportation
Two Capitol Hill
Providence, R.I. 02903

RE: RIDOT's FY2020 INFRA Grant Application
Route 146 Safety Project

Dear Director Alviti:

On behalf of the American Council of Engineering Companies of Rhode Island (ACEC-RI), I write to you in full support of RIDOT's FY2020 $90 Million INFRA Grant Application to advance and construct a new and important highway improvement at the crucial Route 146 freight corridor.

Route 146 has historically been a critical economic and transportation link between Rhode Island and the northeast region. It is an important freight route that serves as an important element of our economic infrastructure. INFRA funding for this project will deliver economic opportunity and vitality for our State by allowing faster, more efficient commerce through this busy commercial trucking link, and directly by adding much-needed construction jobs.

Because we must seize this window of opportunity to rebuild this critical transportation infrastructure, ACEC-RI enthusiastically support RIDOT's INFRA Grant Application and look forward to working with RIDOT in advancing the reconstruction of the most vital north-south link in our transportation infrastructure in our state today.
Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Marcel A. Valois
Executive Director

CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRIES OF RHODE ISLAND

FAX COVER SHEET

Date Feb. 20, 2020

Name Pam Cotter

Firm RIDOT

Fax Number 222-2086

From Pat Fallone

We are transmitting 2 **pages (including this cover sheet)**

Additional Message:

If you do not receive all of the pages or there is another problem with this transmission, please call 401-738-8530.
Our Fax number is 401-732-2892

CIRI

Construction Industries of Rhode Island

February 19, 2020

Peter Alviti, Jr. P.E.
Director
R.I. Department of Transportation
Two Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Director Alviti,

On behalf of Construction Industries of Rhode Island, I write to you in full support of RIDOT's FY2020 INFRA Grant Application to advance and construct a new and important highway improvement at the crucial Route 146 freight corridor.

Route 146 is a key component to the economic activity between Providence and Worcester, MA, not only as one of Rhode Island's most important freight corridors but an important link to Boston and the rest of the Northeast Megaregion.

A properly functioning highway system is a necessity to the economic vitality and future of the entire area. In addition, we believe that this potential $150 million project – with the help of the $90 million INFRA funding – will help to create economic opportunity both in allowing faster, more efficient commerce through this busy commercial trucking link, and directly by adding much needed construction jobs.

Communities in our region have long sought the kinds of improvements outlined in this INFRA Grant Application for the safety and well-being of our traveling public. In the past, repeated attempts to fix crumbling bridges and stop queuing of cars in this well-traveled commercial area have been stymied by lack of proper infrastructure funding.

Because we must seize this window of opportunity to rebuild this critical transportation infrastructure, we, Construction Industries of Rhode Island, enthusiastically support RIDOT's INFRA Grant Application and look forward to working with your Department in advancing the reconstruction of the most vital north-south link in our transportation infrastructure in our state today.

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Timothy R. Scanlon
Executive Director

LYNCH

J.H. Lynch & Sons, Inc.
50 Lynch Place
Cumberland, RI 02864
401.333.4300
JHLynch.com

February 21, 2020

Director Peter Alviti
Rhode Island Department of Transportation
2 Capital Hill
Providence, RI 02903

RE: RIDOT's FY2020 INFRA Grant Application
Route 146 Safety Project

Dear Director Alviti:

J. H. Lynch & Sons, Inc. ("Lynch") supports RIDOT's FY2020 INFRA Grant Application to advance and construct the Route 146 freight corridor. Route 146 is an important component to the economic activity between Providence and Worcester, Mass., not only as one of Rhode Island's central freight corridors but an important link to Boston and the Northeast.

A properly functioning highway system is a necessity to the economic vitality and future of this area. In addition, lynch believes that this potential $150 million project – with the help of the $90 million INFRA funding – will create economic opportunity both in allowing faster, more efficient commerce through this busy commercial trucking link, and adding much-needed construction jobs.

Communities in our region have long sought the kinds of improvements outlined in this INFRA Grant Application for the safety and well-being of the traveling public. In the past, repeated attempts to fix crumbling bridges and enhance traffic congestion in this commercial area have been stymied by lack of proper infrastructure funding.

Because of the importance of this critical transportation infrastructure, Lynch enthusiastically supports RIDOT's INFRA Grant Application and look forward to working with your Department in advancing the reconstruction of this vital north-south link.

Sincerely,

Lawrence P. McCarthy
Vice President

TOWN OF NORTH SMITHFIELD
OFFICE OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

March 3, 2020

Pamela Cotter
Policy Director
Rhode Island Department of Transportation
2 Capitol Hill
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

RE: Reconstruction RI Rte. 146
From I 295 to Massachusetts border

Dear Pamela:

This is in response to your email to make us aware that the Rhode Island Department of Transportation is working to pursue funding for reconstruction of route 146 from the I 295 interchange in Lincoln to the Massachusetts border in North Smithfield.

As you are aware, multiple northern Rhode Island community leaders expressed concern last fall over the deplorable condition of Route 146. Because North Smithfield emergency responders are responsible for the longest section of that road, I was particularly vocal in my expression of concern simply from a safety perspective. That concern continues today and every day.

Further, I have also been a proponent for action to improve the traffic condition at the intersection of 146 with Sayles Hill Road which has been the scene of many fatal accidents plus longer and longer everyday morning and evening traffic backups. The safety issue that exists at that location for drivers and pedestrians has been the subject of many news articles. The traffic back up on both north and southbound lanes for extended periods is also a nuisance that grows in scope month by month. Drivers pursuing alternate routes create additional everyday safety problems in adjoining neighborhoods.

The conceptual plans that you have provided appear to result in a continuing opportunity for the business zone that exists nearby Sayles Hill Road which is vital to the Town of North Smithfield. On that basis and for the safety related matters expressed above please know that I am ready to support RIDOT's efforts in this regard and hope the funding can be obtained. RI Route 146 is a critical transportation link to economic opportunity both for northern RI and to nearby Massachusetts. Finding means and taking action to improve this essential corridor isn't an option. It is a must do!

Very truly yours,

Gary S. Ezovski PE
Town Administrator

MEMORIAL TOWN BUILDING, ONE MAIN STREET, PO BOX 248, SLATERSVILLE, RHODE ISLAND 02876
TEL. 401-767-2202 EXT. 301| FAX 401-766-0016 | TDD 800-745-5555
gezovski@nsmithfieldri.org | www.nsmithfieldri.org

NORTHERN RHODE ISLAND
CHAMBER
OF
COMMERCE

February 19, 2020

RE: RIDOT's FY2020 INFRA Grant Application
Route 146 Safety Project

Dear Director Alviti:

On behalf of the Northern Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce, I write to you in full support of RIDOT's FY2020 INFRA Grant Application to advance and construct a new and important highway improvement at the crucial Route 146 freight corridor.

Route 146 is a key component to the economic activity between Providence and Worcester, Mass., not only as one of Rhode Island's most important freight corridors but an important link to Boston and the rest of the Northeast Megaregion.

A properly functioning highway system is a necessity to the economic vitality and future of the entire area. In addition, we believe that this potential $150 million project – with the help of the $90 million INFRA funding – will help to create economic opportunity both in allowing faster, more efficient commerce through this busy commercial trucking link, and directly by adding much-needed construction jobs.

Communities in our region have long sought the kinds of improvements outlined in this INFRA Grant Application for the safety and well-being of our traveling public. In the past, repeated attempts to fix crumbling bridges and stop queuing of cars in this well-traveled commercial area have been stymied by lack of proper infrastructure funding.

Because we must seize this window of opportunity to rebuild this critical transportation infrastructure, the Northern Rhode Island Chamber of Commerce enthusiastically supports RIDOT's INFRA Grant Application and we look forward to working with your Department in advancing the reconstruction of the most vital north-south link in our transportation infrastructure in our state today. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Liz Catucci
President/CEO

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REPRESENTATIVE MICHAEL A. MORIN, *District 49*
Deputy Majority Leader
Committee on Finance
Second Vice-Chairman, Committee on Corporations
Second Vice-Chairman, Committee on Small Business
Permanent Joint Committee on State Lottery

February 20, 2020

Peter Alviti, Jr.
Director, Rhode Island Department of Transportation
Two Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Director Alviti:

I write to you in full Support of RIDOT's FY2020 Grant Application to advance and construct a new and important highway improvement at the crucial Route 146 freight corridor.

Route 146 is a key component to the economic activity between Providence and Worcester, Mass., not only as one of Rhode Island's most important freight corridors but an important link to Boston and the rest of the Northeast Megaregion.

A properly functioning highway system is a necessity for the economic vitality and future of the entire area. In addition, we believe that this potential $150 million project with the help of the $90 million INFRA funding will help to create economic opportunity both in allowing faster, more efficient commerce through this busy commercial trucking link and directly by adding much-needed construction jobs.

Communities in our region have long sought the kinds of improvements outlined in this INFRA Grant Application for the safety and well-being of our traveling public. In the past, repeated attempts to fix crumbling bridges and stop queuing of cars in this well-traveled commercial area have been stymied by a lack of proper infrastructure funding.

Because we must seize this window of opportunity to rebuild this critical transportation infrastructure, I enthusiastically support RIDOT's INFRA Grant Application and look forward to working with your Department in advancing the reconstruction of the most vital north-south link in our transportation infrastructure in our state today. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Michael

Michael A. Morin
RI State Representative
District- 49

180 ALLEN STREET, UNIT 202
WOONSOCKET, RHODE ISLAND 02895
rep-morin@rilegislature.gov

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

REPRESENTATIVE ROBERT D. PHILLIPS, *District 51*
Deputy Majority Leader
First Vice-Chairman, Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Second Vice-Chairman, Committee on Health, Education and Welfare
Committee on Small Business
Committee on Rules

February 25, 2020

Peter Alviti, JR. P.E.
Director, RIDOT
Two Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Director Alviti:

As a State Representative in northern Rhode Island I write to you in full support of RIDOT's FY2020 INFRA Grant Application to advance and construct a new and important highway improvement at the crucial Route 146 freight corridor

Route 146 is a key component to the economic activity between Providence and Worcester, Mass., not only as one of Rhode Island's most important freight corridors but an important link to Boston and the rest of the Northeast Megaregion.

A properly functioning highway system is a necessity to the economic vitality and future of the entire area. In addition, we believe that this potential $150 million project – with the help of the $90 million INFRA funding – will help to create economic opportunity both in allowing faster, more efficient commerce through this busy commercial trucking link, and directly by adding much-needed construction jobs.

Communities in our region have long sought the kinds of improvements outlined in this INFRA Grant Application for the safety and well-being of our traveling public. In the past, repeated attempts to fix crumbling bridges and stop queuing of cars in this well-traveled commercial area have been stymied by lack of proper infrastructure funding.

This is a very important matter to me because I drive this route often I've been thriving to see what this improvement will do for the area and most importantly I feel will help boost the economy. We must seize this window of opportunity to rebuild this critical transportation infrastructure. I Representative Robert Phillips enthusiastically support RIDOT's INFRA Grant Application and look forward to working with your Department in advancing the reconstruction of the most vital north-south link in our transportation infrastructure in our state today. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me at my State email rep-phillips@rilegislature.gov or by phone at 401-762-2010.

Sincerely,

Robert D. Phillips
RI State Representative
District-51-Wonsocket/Cumberland

325 DUNLAP STREET, WOONSOCKET, RHODE ISLAND 02895

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 28, 2020

The Honorable Elaine Chao, Secretary
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, Southeast
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Secretary Chao:

We write in support of the application submitted by the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) for the Rhode Island Route 146 (RI-146) safety and congestion improvement project under the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant program.

RI-146 is a critical link between two of New England's largest cities, Providence, Rhode Island and Worcester, Massachusetts. More than 171,000 vehicles travel along this corridor each day. However, the road system is plagued by deteriorating pavement conditions (classified as "poor" or "failing" in many areas), structurally deficient bridges, and an obsolete design that compromises safety and contributes to an average of 85 collisions annually.

INFRA funding will allow RIDOT to advance and integrate planned improvements on the corridor, while incorporating other unfunded priorities and new features, including reconfigured and safer road designs, "bus-on-shoulder" lanes, fiber optic cables, and safety technology. By pursuing these elements within a unified project, RIDOT will also address forecasted traffic congestion through the year 2055. Without INFRA funding, RIDOT will be forced to pursue "in kind" replacement of the existing infrastructure, moving at a slower pace and forgoing commonsense improvements that would provide long-term benefits to the region.

We strongly support RIDOT's proposal and request that you thoroughly consider this application within all applicable rules and regulations. If we can be of assistance to you in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact our offices.

Sincerely,

Jack Reed
United States Senator

Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator

James R. Langevin
Member of Congress

David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS

Department of Administration
DIVISION OF STATEWIDE PLANNING
235 Promenade St.
Providence, RI 02908-5870

Office: (401) 222-7901
Fax: (401) 222-2083

February 18, 2020

Rhode Island Department of Transportation
2 Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02903

RE: RIDOT's FY2020 INFRA Grant Application

Dear Director Alviti:

The Division of Statewide Planning in the Rhode Island Department of Administration enthusiastically supports the application of the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) to construct new highway improvements along Route 146, a key state designated Critical Urban Freight Corridor, under the United States Department of Transportation's (USDOT) Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant program. Route 146 is a key corridor in the economic activity between Providence and Worcester, Mass., not only as one of Rhode Island's most important freight corridors, but as an important link to Boston and the rest of the Northeast Megaregion.

The Division of Statewide Planning is responsible for preparing and maintaining plans for the physical, economic, and social development of the state, along with coordinating the actions of state, local and federal agencies and private individuals within the framework of the state's development goals and policies, as described in the State Guide Plan. This project will further the goals, objectives, and priorities included in several of our State Guide Plan elements including our Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), our State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), and our State Freight and Goods Movement Plan (Freight Plan).

The RIDOT proposal enhances traffic safety, which is a priority of the STIP, and also has significant mobility benefits, which aligns with one of the guiding principles of the STIP. Additionally, the project furthers the economic development objective ED.1.b in our current LRTP, which is to move freight efficiently to, from, and within Rhode Island by all modes. This proposed project will include repaving, bridge replacement, a new bus-on-shoulder route, ITS improvements, capacity and safety improvements, and improved geometry, which will all lead to alleviation of a major traffic bottleneck and crash location.

All of the project components mentioned in the proposal align well with goals and objectives included in the Freight Plan for increasing the efficiency and expanding the capacity of the

freight system. This proposed project is vitally important to the movement of freight and to Rhode Island's economic competitiveness. The project also supports operational efficiency, connectivity, and safety for the state's residents, businesses, and visitors.

In summary, the Division of Statewide Planning commends RIDOT for pursing this USDOT competitive funding opportunity to fully reconstruct Route 146 in North Smithfield, which will relieve one of the state's worst traffic bottlenecks and improve safety and reliability along a critical freight corridor for the State of Rhode Island and the region. We pledge our full support to RIDOT's efforts and look forward to this exciting opportunity. Please give this proposal your full and careful consideration.

Sincerely,

Meredith E. Brady, Associate Director
Rhode Island Division of Statewide Planning

CC: Mrs. Pamela Cotter, Policy Director RIDOT
Mrs. Linsey Callaghan, Assistant Chief Division of Statewide Planning
Mrs. Roberta Groch, Assistant Chief Division of Statewide Planning

RHODE ISLAND PUBLIC TRANSIT AUTHORITY

February 13, 2020

Director Peter Alviti
Rhode Island Department of Transportation
2 Capitol Hill
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

RE: RIDOT's FY2020 INFRA Grant Application

Route 146 Safety Project

Dear Director Alviti:

On behalf of the Rhode Island Public Transit Authority (RIPTA) I write to you in support of the Rhode Island Department of Transportation's FY2020 INFRA Grant Application to advance and construct a new and important highway improvement at the crucial Route 146 freight corridor.

Route 146 is a key component to the economic activity between Providence and Worcester, Mass., not only as one of Rhode Island's most important freight corridors but an important link to Boston and the rest of the Northeast Megaregion. The fright corrido will have a major impact on the communities of Woonsocket and North Smithfield.

A properly functioning highway system is a necessity to the economic vitality and future of the entire area. In addition, we believe that this potential $150 million project – with the help of the $90 million INFRA funding – will help to create economic opportunity both in allowing faster, more efficient commerce through this busy commercial trucking link, and directly by adding much-needed construction jobs.

Northern Rhode Island communities in our region have long sought the kinds of improvements outlined in this INFRA Grant Application for the safety and well-being of our traveling public. In the past, repeated attempts to fix crumbling bridges and stop queuing of cars in this well-traveled commercial area have been stymied by lack of proper infrastructure funding.

Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Scott Avedisian

Chief Executive Officer

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

SENATOR
JESSICA de la CRUZ
District 23

P.O. Box 649
Forestdale, Rhode Island 02824

Room 120, State House
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Bus: 401-222-2708
Cell: 401-484-0155
Fax: 401-222-1206

Email: sen-delacruz@rilegislature.gov

Committee on Judiciary

Committee on Labor

Senate Chamber

February 18, 2020

Mr. Peter Alviti Jr., Director
Department of Transportation
Two Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Director Alviti:

I write to offer my full support full support of the Rhode Island Department of Transportation's Fiscal Year 2020 INFRA grant application to advance and construct a new and important highway improvement at the crucial Route 146 freight corridor.

I have long supported improvements to Route 146, sections of which are in desperate need of repair. In addition to being a vital commuter artery to Rhode Islanders, Route 146 is a key component to the economic activity between Providence and Worcester, Mass. It is not only one of Rhode Island's most important freight corridors, but an important link to Boston and the rest of the Northeast mega region.

A properly functioning and safe highway system is a necessity to the economic vitality and future of the entire area. In addition, I believe that this $150 million project – with the help of the $90 million INFRA funding – will help to create economic opportunity. Not only will this project allow faster, more efficient commerce through this busy commercial trucking link, but also directly add much-needed construction jobs.

Cities and towns in our region have long sought the kinds of improvements outlined in this INFRA Grant Application for the safety and well-being of our traveling public. In the past, repeated attempts to fix crumbling bridges and stop queuing of cars in this well-traveled commercial area have been stymied by lack of proper infrastructure funding.

Because we must seize this window of opportunity to rebuild this critical transportation infrastructure, I enthusiastically support RIDOT's INFRA Grant Application and look forward to working with RIDOT in advancing the reconstruction of this vital north-south link in our transportation infrastructure. Please feel free to contact me with questions.

Sincerely,

Jessica de la Cruz
SENATOR, DISTRICT 23

JdlC:khc

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

SENATOR
RYAN W. PEARSON
Senior Deputy Majority Leader
District 19

Room 209, State House
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Bus: 401-276-5597
Fax: 401-222-4263

sen-pearson@rilegislature.gov

Senate Chamber

Secretary,
Committee on Finance

Chair, Finance Subcommittee on
Education and Commerce

Committee on Education

February 24, 2020

Mr. Peter Alviti, Jr.
Director, Department of Transportation
Two Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02903

RE: RIDOT's FY2020 INFRA Grant Application
Route 146 Safety Project

Dear Director Alviti:

I write to you in full support of RIDOT's FY2020 INFRA Grant Application to advance and construct a new and important highway improvement at the crucial Route 146 freight corridor

Route 146 is a key component to the economic activity between Providence and Worcester, Mass., not only as one of Rhode Island's most important freight corridors but an important link to Boston and the rest of the Northeast Megaregion.

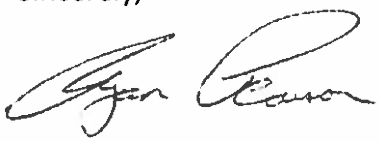
A properly functioning highway system is a necessity to the economic vitality and future of the entire area. In addition, we believe that this potential $150 million project – with the help of the $90 million INFRA funding – will help to create economic opportunity both in allowing faster, more efficient commerce through this busy commercial trucking link, and directly by adding much-needed construction jobs.

Communities in our region have long sought the kinds of improvements outlined in this INFRA Grant Application for the safety and well-being of our traveling public. In the past, repeated attempts to fix crumbling bridges and stop queuing of cars in this well-traveled commercial area have been stymied by lack of proper infrastructure funding.

Because we must seize this window of opportunity to rebuild this critical transportation infrastructure, I Senator Ryan Pearson enthusiastically support RIDOT's INFRA Grant Application

and look forward to working with your Department in advancing the reconstruction of the most vital north-south link in our transportation infrastructure in our state today. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Ryan W. Pearson
Senator, District 19

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

SENATOR
THOMAS J. PAOLINO
Senior Deputy Minority Leader
District 17

19 Heritage Drive
Lincoln, Rhode Island 02865

Room 120, State House
Providence, Rhode Island 02903

Cell: 401-749-6120
Bus: 401-222-2708
Fax: 401-222-1206
Email: sen-paolino@rilegislature.gov

Senate Chamber

Committee on Finance

Committee on Education

Committee on Health and Human Services

February 25, 2020

Mr. Peter Alviti Jr., Director
Department of Transportation
Two Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Director Alviti:

I write to offer my full support full support of the Rhode Island Department of Transportation's Fiscal Year 2020 INFRA grant application to construct a new and crucial highway enhancement on the Route 146 freight corridor.

I have long supported improvements to Route 146, sections of which are in dire need of repair. In addition to being a vital commuter artery to Rhode Islanders, Route 146 is a key part of the economic activity between Providence and Worcester, Mass. It is not only one of Rhode Island's most important freight corridors, but an important link to Boston and the rest of the Northeast mega region.

A properly functioning and safe highway system is essential to the economic vitality and future of the entire area. In addition, I believe that this $150 million project – with the help of the $90 million INFRA funding – will help to create economic opportunity. This project allow faster, more efficient commerce through this busy commercial trucking link, and also directly add much-needed construction jobs.

Cities and towns in my district have long sought the kinds of improvements outlined in this INFRA Grant Application for the safety and well-being of our traveling public. In the past, repeated attempts to fix crumbling bridges and stop queuing of cars in this well-traveled commercial area have been blocked by lack of proper infrastructure funding.

Because we must seize this window of opportunity to rebuild this critical transportation infrastructure, I enthusiastically support RIDOT's INFRA Grant Application and look forward to working with RIDOT in advancing the reconstruction of this vital north-south link in our transportation infrastructure. Please feel free to contact me with questions.

Sincerely,

Thomas J. Paolino
SENATOR, DISTRICT 17

TJP:khc

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

REPRESENTATIVE
NICHOLAS A. MATTIELLO
Speaker of the House

Room 323 State House
Providence, Rhode Island, 02903

401-222-2466

House of Representatives

March 4, 2020

Peter Alviti, Jr., Director
Rhode Island Department of Transportation
Two Capitol Hill
Providence RI 02903

RE: RIDOT's FY2020 INFRA Grant Application
Route 146 Safety Project

Dear Director Alviti,

On behalf of the Rhode Island House of Representatives I write to you in full support of RIDOT's FY2020 INFRA Grant Application to advance and construct a new and important highway improvement at the crucial Route 146 freight corridor.

Route 146 is a key component to the economic activity between Providence and Worcestor Mass., not only as one of Rhode Island's most important freight corridors but an important link to Boston and the rest of the Northeast Megaregion.

A properly functioning highway system is a necessity to the economic vitality and future of the entire area. In addition, we believe that this potential $150 million project – with the help of the $90 million INFRA funding – will help to create economic opportunity both in allowing faster, more efficient commerce through this busy commercial trucking link and directly by adding much-needed construction jobs.

Communities in our region have long sought the kinds of improvements outlined in this INFRA Grant Application for the safety and well-being of our traveling public. In the past, repeated attempts to fix crumbling bridges and stop queuing of cars in this well-traveled commercial area have been stymied by lack of proper infrastructure funding.

Because we must seize this window of opportunity to rebuild this critical transportation infrastructure, we enthusiastically support RIDOT's INFRA Grant Application and look forward to working with your Department in advancing the reconstruction of the most vital north-south link in our transportation infrastructure in our state today. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Nicholas A. Mattiello
SPEAKER

GENERAL TEAMSTERS LOCAL 251

Affiliated with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Washington, D.C.

February 21, 2020

Peter Alviti, Director

Rhode Island Department of Transportation

2 Capitol Hill

Providence, Rhode Island 02903

RE: RIDOT's FY2020 INFRA Grant Application

Route 146 Safety Project

Dear Director Alviti:

On behalf of Teamsters Local 251 I write to you in full support of RIDOT's FY2020 INFRA Grant Application to advance and construct a new and important highway improvement at the crucial Route 146 freight corridor

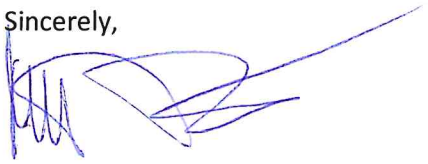
Route 146 is a key component to the economic activity between Providence and Worcester, Mass., not only as one of Rhode Island's most important freight corridors but an important link to Boston and the rest of the Northeast Megaregion.

A properly functioning highway system is a necessity to the economic vitality and future of the entire area. In addition, we believe that this potential $150 million project – with the help of the $90 million INFRA funding – will help to create economic opportunity both in allowing faster, more efficient commerce through this busy commercial trucking link, and directly by adding much-needed construction jobs.

Communities in our region have long sought the kinds of improvements outlined in this INFRA Grant Application for the safety and well-being of our traveling public. In the past, repeated attempts to fix crumbling bridges and stop queuing of cars in this well-traveled commercial area have been stymied by lack of proper infrastructure funding.

Because we must seize this window of opportunity to rebuild this critical transportation infrastructure, Teamsters Local 251 enthusiastically supports RIDOT's INFRA Grant Application and look forward to working with your Department in advancing the reconstruction of the most vital north-south link in our transportation infrastructure in our state today. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Matthew Taibi

Secretary-Treasurer

Principal Officer

MT/vt