



Route 6/10 Connector Project

Providence, Rhode Island

Rhode Island Department of Transportation

Counterclockwise from top: study area, visualization of Westminster bridge, and temporary but longstanding bridge support (©Rhode Island Department of Transportation)

Rightsizing highways can prompt redevelopment and provide active transportation assets.

CONTEXT

- In design, construction planned for 2023.
- Northeast.
- Urban.
- \$410 million.
- 1.6 miles.
- 100,000+ vehicles daily served.



HIGHWAY TRANSFORMATION

- New significant bike and pedestrian connections.
- Bridge replacement and demolition.
- New redevelopment opportunities through returned land.

WHAT WAS THE PROJECT DRIVER?

Interchanges and bridges along Interstate 95 in downtown Providence have reached the end of their lifespan. This project addressed a need to replace seven structurally deficient bridges. Temporary supports were installed over 15 years ago and over \$5 million/year has been spent in a series of repair projects necessary to keep the highway safe and open. Although the need had been well-documented, a solution has been elusive over the past 30 years as many different design options have been explored.

HOW DID THIS CONNECT THE COMMUNITY?

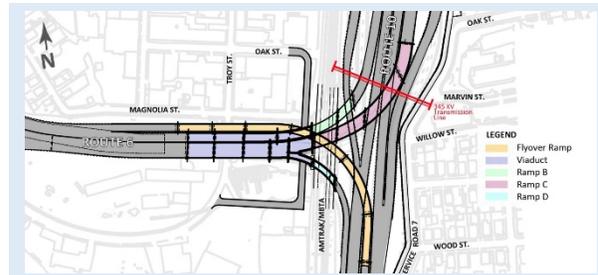
Many communities face the issue of an aging highway that divided communities. It can be difficult to balance national and regional freight needs of the interstate against local community needs. The 6/10 Connector does so through **context sensitive solutions** that reduce the footprint of the highway ramps and bridges, and adding in key connections, specifically:

- Replacing grade separations with surface streets on access roads.
- Adding new bicycle and pedestrian connections including 1.4 miles of new bike

paths and two new bridges over Amtrak tracks, connecting the nearby neighborhoods of Silver Lake and Olneyville as well as the Woonasquatucket Greenway and the Washington Secondary Trail.

- Building the “missing move” highway connection between Route 10 North and Route 6 West to remove traffic from local streets.
- Removing weaving sections such as those at Harris Avenue, which allows Harris Avenue traffic to access Route 10 South without the need to weave across Route 6 West traffic.
- Creating new real estate – the removal of the Harris Avenue ramp opens up 4.8 acres of additional real estate for development.
- Improved gateway aesthetics – such as a lighting arrangement to create a signature entranceway to Providence from Routes 6 and 10.

This project also represents a significant public and community collaboration. **Stakeholder engagement** activities included meetings with several advocacy and community advisory groups (such as moving Together PVD and Fix the 6-10 Coalition) along with public agencies that committed to exploring new options. **GIS Innovations** and **visualizations** were applied to communicate complex alternatives. Many options – from basic replacement to highway teardowns to urban boulevards - were explored, but the current solution represents a community agreement.



The “Missing Move” (©Rhode Island Department of Transportation)

WHAT WERE THE BENEFITS?



RENEW

A design build contract was awarded in December 2017 with construction scheduled to begin in early 2019.

Design work on the project is currently underway. The design-build approach that will save money and complete the project more quickly than anticipated.

It is also estimated that opening up the 4.8 acres from the ROW will also improve access to an additional 24 acres of underutilized land, creating a catalyst for other community improvements.

For more information:

http://www.gcpvd.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/6-10_Shared_Vision.pdf

<http://wpri.com/2018/01/15/pinpoint-traffic-blog-improving-the-6-10-connector-whats-next/>

https://www.warwickri.gov/sites/warwickri/files/news/6 - 10_interchange_notice.pdf