WELCOME TO THE Iway

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COMMEMORATIVE PROGRAM

Rhode Island Department of Transportation
Welcome to the Iway, the future of highway travel in Providence. For those who haven’t heard that term before, the Iway is the name the Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) adopted for the huge construction job taking place in Providence. The name, and its tagline – “Yours. Mine. Ours.” – was chosen to emphasize that the I-195 Relocation Project is being done with the overriding goal of reducing congestion, improving safety and enhancing the quality of life for all Rhode Islanders and visitors who travel through Providence.

This is an exciting time at RIDOT, as we begin to open the first phase of the Iway to the public in Fall 2007. To this point, most motorists have faced only minor delays related to construction. In an effort to minimize traffic delays, RIDOT has limited lane restrictions and road closures to the overnight hours when traffic is lightest. This commemorative program represents progress to date, information on new exit ramps (see below), and interesting facts and figures about the project.

RIDOT is confident the project will live up to its potential and mark a major leap forward in highway travel in and around Rhode Island’s capital city.

Buckle up and safe travels,

RIDOT Director
Jerome F. Williams

How to get there from here: New exits and ramps

When the Iway is all done, these new exits will be open to drivers

I-195 West:
- The Cano Street off-ramp and on-ramp at Exit 3 will remain the same.
- The South Main Street exit will be replaced with a new Exit 2, connecting to Wickenden Street at South Main Street.
- I-95 north (at the split) will still be a right exit. Off that exit will be a new Exit 1A to Point Street and the Northbound Service Road – which will be extended across the old interchange to connect to the existing service road at Broadway.
- I-95 South (at the split) will still be a left exit. Off that exit will be a new Exit 1B to Eddy Street and the Rhode Island hospitals campus.

I-95 North:
- New ramp, Exit 19, will lead to I-195 East.
- Immediately after that, there will be a new Exit 20 to Point Street and the Northbound Service Road.
- There also will be an on-ramp from Point Street to I-95 North.

I-195 East:
- Existing exits, Downtown/Dyer Street (Exit 1), Wickenden Street (Exit 2) and Gano Street (Exit 3) are all being removed. There will be a new Exit 2 to India Street just before the existing Cano Street exit (there will be no Exit 1). Traffic wanting to reach the Jewelry District, Business District and Wickenden Street area can use the new Exit 20 off I-95 North or Exit 21 off I-95 South.

I-95 South:
- The Broad Street on-ramp to I-95 South will be eliminated and replaced with a ramp from Point Street to I-95 South.
- I-195 East ramp at Exit 20 will be new, exiting on the right instead of the left.
- After that, a new ramp for Exit 19 will lead to Bordon Street or Eddy Street (for the hospitals). The existing Exit 19 for the hospitals will be eliminated.

Washington Bridge Replacement Project:
Just east of the Iway project, RIDOT built a new southern span of the Washington Bridge to carry I-195 East over the Seekonk River. The rendering above shows how the completed bridge will look, including the construction of a linear park and bike path (the thin bridge on the right hand side of the image), which will be built on a portion of the old bridge’s foundation.

RIGHT NEXT DOOR:
Other important projects related to the Iway

India Point Park Pedestrian Path:
This structure will link the Fox Point neighborhood to the waterfront and India Point Park. It replaces an aging, narrow structure with a new bridge featuring a wide, landscaped and lighted path with column-like lights, street lamps, and benches built into the base of numerous raised beds for small trees and shrubs.

Waterfront Park:
The City of Providence sponsored a design contest in 2006 to determine how to develop public spaces being created by the removal of the existing I-195. The winning design by Brown, Richardson & Rowe, Inc. (above) features parks on both sides of the Providence River, along with numerous buildings to be constructed by the private sector.
• Project Limits: From the Washington Bridge to the I-195 interchange, a distance of 9 miles.
• Dimensions: 1,018,000 cubic yards of earth moved.
• Cubic Yards of Earth Moved: 182,000, enough to fill Providence Place Mall, including the parking garage, from floor to roof.
• Tons of Asphalt: 24.
• Number of Beams and Girders: 652.
• Cost of Relocating Utilities: $610 million.
• Buildings Demolished: Two Interstates.
• Assembly Period: Traffic to use new highway began in 2003, with removal of old ramps and off-ramps.
• Cost: Four lanes in each direction. Center span is a tied arch design that supports the deck.
• Property to be converted to parks and open space: Six acres on west side of the Providence River, three acres on east side of the Providence River.

How the Iway came to be

Back in the 1980s, RIDOT received many plans to deal with the Providence River. Another idea that was considered was a no-build alternative, in which the existing alignment would have been reconstructed. This would have addressed problems with deteriorated structures, but done nothing about the congestion, weaving conflicts and existing safety hazards. Additionally, traffic would have been halted during construction.

Consideration of these solutions led RIDOT to choose the alignment south of the Fox Point Hurricane Barrier. Safety problems and congestion issues could be addressed, and the new old highway would allow for significant redevelopment of the Providence waterfront and fuller implementation of the Old Harbor Plan. The plan outlines how the land occupied by the existing highway will be reused. Another idea that was considered was a no-build alternative, in which the existing alignment would have been reconstructed. This would have addressed problems with deteriorated structures, but done nothing about the congestion, weaving conflicts and existing safety hazards. Additionally, traffic would have been halted during construction.

IN THE BEGINNING

How the Iway came to be

The Iway project has been years in the making, and now is taking shape in a way that people can see and recognize. With the placement of the project's signature bridge in August 2006 and completion of construction in 2009, everyone can now see the new highway will work. Many more exciting milestones lie ahead, including the opening of the first segment of the highway for traffic in Fall 2007 and the planned full opening of the highway in 2009.

Back in the 1980s, RIDOT received many plans to deal with the aging section of I-195 in Providence, which was built in the 1960s. Along with having numerous problems it was not wide enough to accommodate the traffic volumes had increased over the previous years. The highway was designed for 1970 levels of traffic, which carries more than 160,000 cars daily. The highway had other problems, tight curves, left-hand exits and closely spaced exits have contributed to excessive congestion on the highway, which spills over onto adjacent highways, causing delays for motorists on I-95, the Route 6/10 connector and city streets.

As RIDOT worked on the Iway’s Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in the early 1990s, the highway’s problems were put in paper. The I-195 corridor—deteriorated bridge, substandard roadway alignment, deep curves and inadequate width—was identified as RIBO at three alternatives before

NUTS & BOLTS: Iway facts and figures

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HOW RIDOT BUILT THE IWAY

The Iway – Project Milestones & Future Schedule

1950s
Existing segments of I-195 constructed

1984
First evaluation of I-195 for repair or reconstruction

1991
RIDOT initiates Environmental Impact Statement

1997
Environmental Impact Statement completed

1999
Final design started

2000
Land acquisition and utility relocation begins

2001
Site preparation begins

2003
Road and bridge construction begins

2005
Construction begins on "signature bridge"

2006
Bridge floated to Providence, steel placed for ramps

2007
Additional steel work, first traffic to drive on Iway

2009
All traffic expected to use highway

2010
Demolition starts on old I-195 roads and bridges

2012
Final completion expected

Site Preparation:
Looking west from Candler River Park, off Rhode Island Avenue, as utility relocation and the preparation began in 2000.

The Beginning:
An aerial view of the old Providence River Bridge during construction in the 1950s.

Pier Construction:
From 2003-2007, RIDOT built numerous piers to support the Iway’s nearly new bridge and associated roadway facilities.

Rolling the New Providence River Bridge:
RIDOT assembled the new Providence River Bridge on a pier at Quonset Point in 2005 and 2006. Transporters were used for roll the bridge onto two barges for hauling into Providence.

Floating the New Providence River Bridge:
Once on the barges, the new Providence River Bridge was moved 12 miles up Narragansett Bay (shown here entering right), arriving in Providence.

Ramp Assembly:
As seen from above early in 2007, the new ramps to and from the Iway and the new road in on I-195 bridge began to take shape.

Early View:
A view of the new roadway sections during construction of the Iway.

Architectural Details:
A view of a light tower built at the end of the new Providence River Bridge.

Beam Setting:
During the spring and summer of 2007, RIDOT closed portions of I-95 to allow the safe placement of overhead beams for the Iway.

Bridge Inspection:
A view from the bridge of the Iway's "signature bridge".