

**IMPROVEMENTS ON I-84 EB EXIT 63 OFF-RAMP AND
INTERSECTION OF ROUTES 30 & 83
MANCHESTER, CONNECTICUT
CTDOT PROJECT NO. 76-193**

State Project No. 76-193 encompasses I-84 eastbound Exit 63 off-ramp including improvements to the Route 30 and Route 83 approaches. The existing alignment of the off-ramp consists of three simple curves, each progressively sharper. The current ratio between successive curves is not in compliance with CTDOT guidelines. The lack of storage capacity has been known to cause vehicles in queue to back up onto I-84. This complex curvature also creates a very short stopping sight distance. This is evidenced by the large number of rear end accidents at this location.

The project involves full realignment and reconstruction of the off-ramp to a single curve allowing for a 30 mph design speed. This includes minor alignment changes to the on-ramp and widening the off-ramp approach from two to four lanes to provide a second left turn lane and increased length to the existing exclusive right turn lane. The new off-ramp alignment will require a new bridge to accommodate the four lanes for improved storage capacity.

The eastbound approach of Route 30 at its intersection with Route 83 will be widened to five lanes to add an exclusive right turn lane. This will require modifications to Bridge No. 05238 over the Hockanum River. Field measurements were taken to confirm that by removing the sidewalk on the north side, a seven lane cross section (5 approaching, 2 departing) could be provided without widening the bridge. The sidewalk on the north side does not connect to other sidewalks and there are no residences or businesses on that side of the road that would generate pedestrian activity.

The northbound approach of Route 83 will be widened by one lane. The widening is proposed on the east side, which would avoid any impacts to utility poles and provide proper alignment with the on-ramp. However, widening on the east side will impact wetlands and require the need to acquire right of way.

On the westbound approach of Route 30, the entire leg will be shifted slightly to the north to align with the new lane arrangement on the eastbound approach. This will require minor widening along the north side and narrowing on the south side of Route 30.

There are 4 locations within the project limit that appear on the 2004-2006 SLOSSS. The intersection of Routes 83 and Route 30 ranks #502 and #1420 respectively. The northbound approach on Route 83 ranks #375 and the Route 30 eastbound approach ranks #1211.

There were 253 accidents recorded within the project limits over the three year period from 2004 through 2006. Rear-end accidents were the most predominant type with 128 accidents accounting for 64% of the total.

This project will require temporarily closing portions of two trails associated with the Hockanum River Linear Park during construction activities for safety reasons. This project will require sections of the Hockanum River Linear Park (including portions of the Oakland Hiking Trail and the Union Pond Trail) between Route 30 and the I-84 EB On-Ramp to be temporarily closed to the public during construction activities. It is anticipated that construction will take place from Spring 2015 to Summer 2016. Closing portions of these two trails on the Hockanum River Linear Park is required for safety issues during construction.

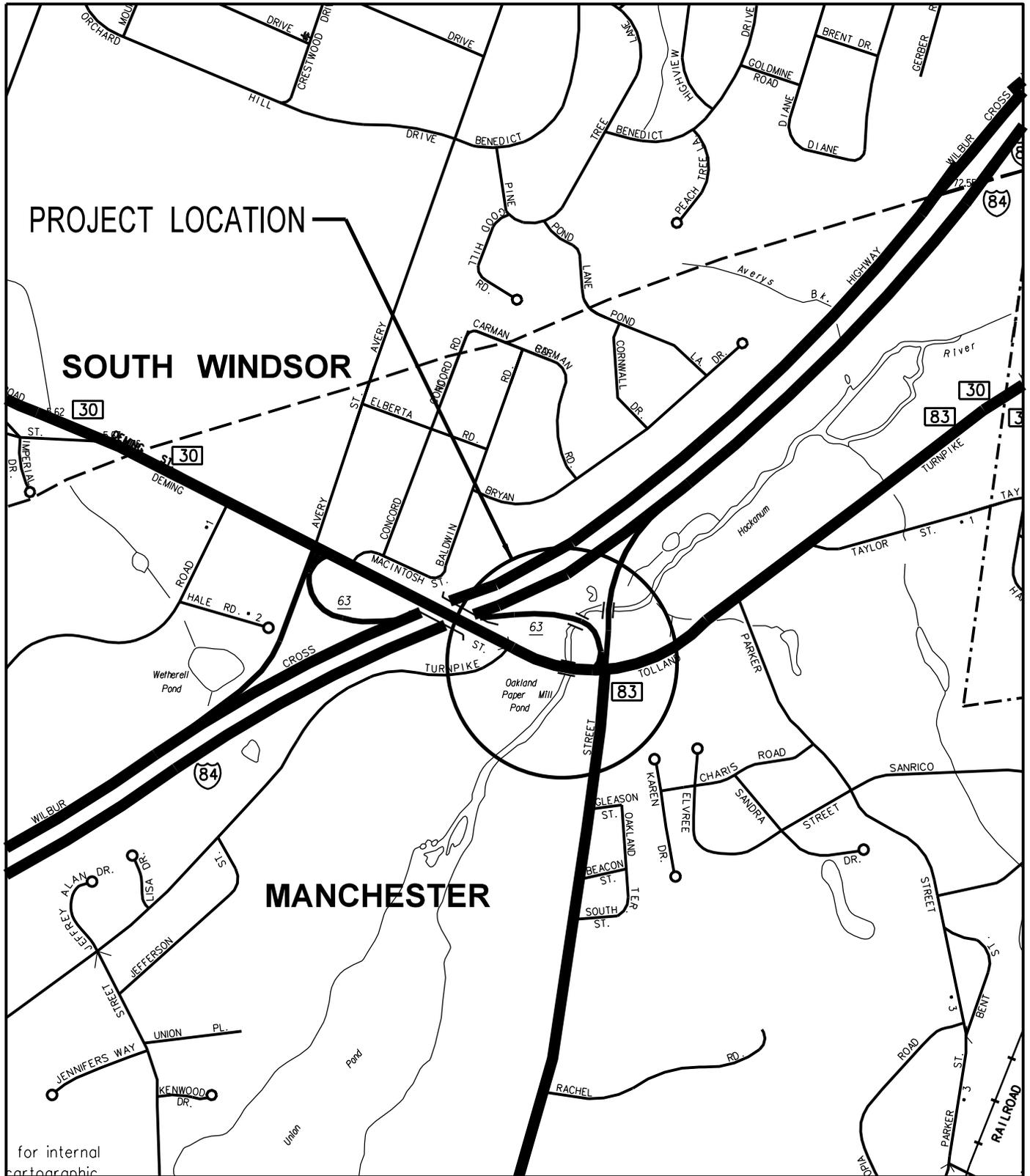
The Hockanum River Linear Park is located in several towns including the town of Manchester. It consists of various hiking trails throughout Manchester, East Hartford, Ellington, and Vernon. There are 9 hiking trails within the Linear Park in Manchester, two of which will be impacted by this project. As previously stated, the temporary closing of segments of the Oakland Trail and the Union Pond Trail are required during construction of this project. Both trails run tightly parallel to the Hockanum River on both sides of the river along the waterlines. Connecting trail users across the Hockanum River is a pedestrian steel truss bridge installed in April 2006 and replacing the CTDOT bridge built in 1951.

Union Pond Hiking Trail

The Union Pond Hiking Trail is a roughly 2.4 mile trail around the Town of Manchester's Union Pond. It is surrounded by mature forest on the east and a few residences. There is also a Union Pond Park with a boat launch on the south; and Northwest Park – containing an observation deck, two baseball fields, a garden, and picnic pavilion on the west side of the trail. The Union Pond Hiking Trail is hidden from nearby highways/local roads and the northern portion of the trail connects to the Oakland Trail. Roughly 638 feet of the trail where it connects to the Oakland Trail will be closed during construction. The remainder of the trail will remain open during construction and accessibility to the trail as well as parking will not be impacted.

Oakland Hiking Trail

The Oakland Hiking Trail is a roughly 2.0 mile loop trail, in a green belt along the north side of the Hockanum River close to I-84, and with a return along the south side of the river. The trail runs behind multiple businesses on the south side of the river behind Tolland Turnpike. The trail connects to the Union Pond Hiking Trail at the southeast portion of the trail. Roughly 976 feet of the trail will be closed during construction north of the connection with the Union Pond Trail. The remainder of this hiking trail will remain open during construction and accessibility to the trail as well as parking will not be impacted.



STATE PROJECT NO.:

076-193

CITY/TOWN:

MANCHESTER, CT

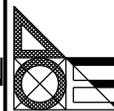


STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
IMPROVEMENTS ON I-84



EXIT 63 ON/OFF-RAMPS & INTERSECTION
OF ROUTE 30 @ ROUTE 83

OFFICE OF
ENGINEERING



DATE:

MAY 2012



The Hockanum River Linear Park Committee, Manchester CT

1 OAKLAND HIKING TRAIL

[HRLPC Home](#)
 [Distance](#)
 [Maintained By](#)
 [Parking](#)
 [Trail Walk](#)
 [Canoe/Kayak](#)
[Trail Restrictions](#)
 [Blaze Markings](#)
 [Trail Benches](#)
 [Trail Photos](#)

Distance: About 2 miles.

Maintained by: The Hockanum River Linear Park Committee (HRLPC)

Parking at the beginning of the trail:

The most accessible trailhead for this path is on the right side of the Kohl's parking lot at 155 Tolland Turnpike. The green and white sign on the road reading "Hockanum River Hiking Trail" is the first clue. The brown sign, "TRAIL" with a "No Bikes" symbol, marks the hiker entrance.

The trail walk: (Note that the HRLPC favors locating the trail as close to the river as possible when laying out and clearing trails.)

This is a 2.0 mile loop trail, in a green belt along the north side of the river close to I-84, and with a return along the south side of the river. The trail runs behind multiple businesses on the south side of the river behind Tolland Turnpike.

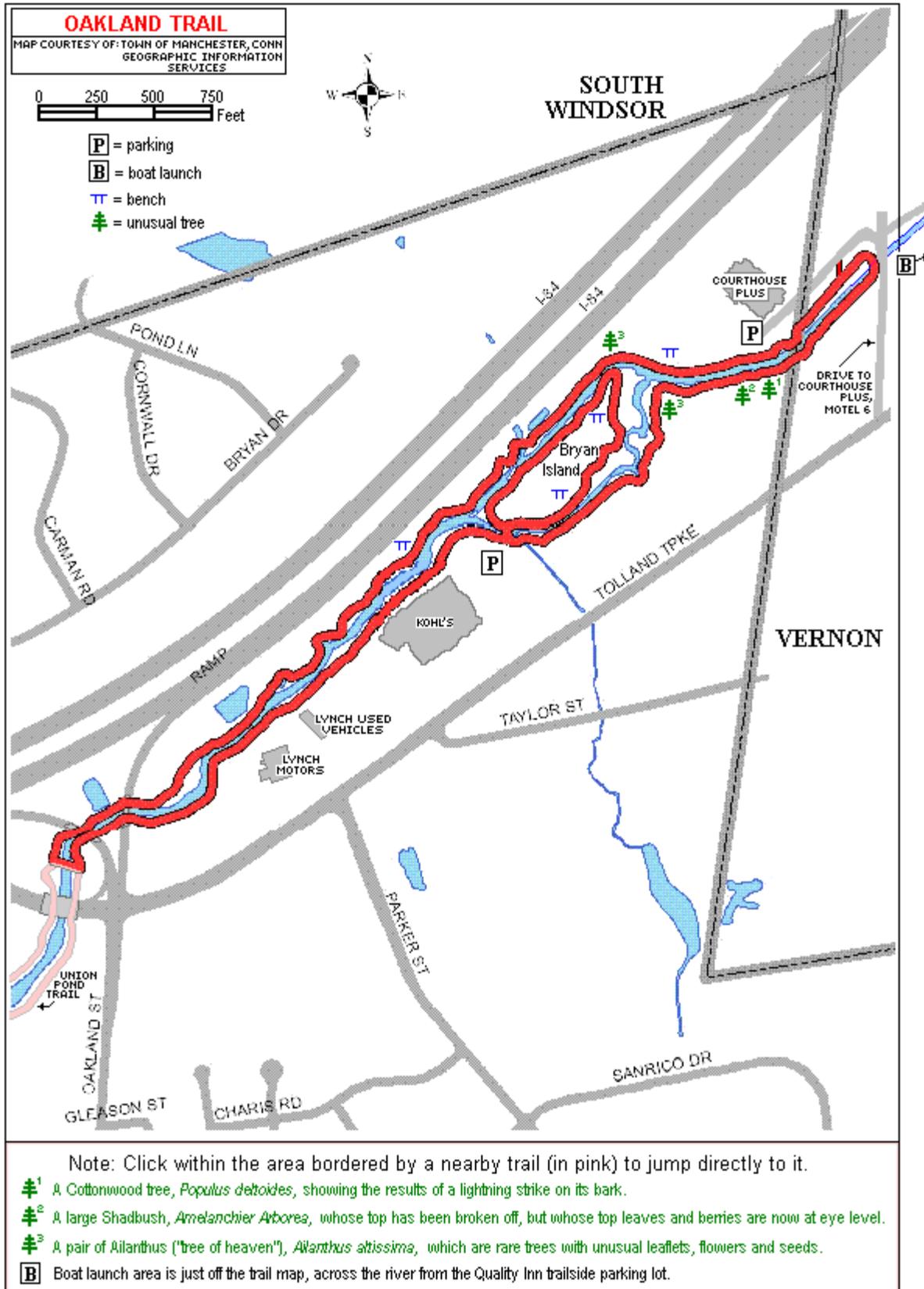
50 feet from the trailhead, the path divides. Straight ahead are 5 steps down to a 30 foot bridge with wood railings, across the river to a 4 acre Bryan Island in the river with its 0.4 mile loop trail through a very scenic meadow and forest. Deer hang out here frequently.

Back off the island, the main Oakland loop goes either up or downstream. Upstream, the path goes down 8 steps and across a 20 foot bridge through a small meadow, then behind Conyers garages, and over another footbridge. It then proceeds around a chain-link fence, down a slope, through a meadow-and-forest area, behind various industrial and auto dealer sites seen off (through the woods) to the side, and eventually out to the Motel 6 vehicle bridge.

The trail turns left over the bridge, then left again now downstream, over a Boy Scout footbridge and along grass, enters the woods and proceeds past Court House Plus. The path follows close to the river still downstream, through meadow and forest, with the river on the left and I-84 close to the right behind trees. Try to ignore the traffic noise and focus on the scenic beauty of the river, the water birds, the bench for a brief relaxation, and the wildflowers.

At 3/4 miles downstream the path goes under I-84 entrance and exit ramp bridges, over several mini-footbridges, up a steep flight of steps, through a meadow and numerous white pines planted as seedlings in 1983. It then goes left across the river on our big steel footbridge.

(Historically, this large footbridge was constructed in Minnesota and installed here in April, 2006, to replace an old bridge erected by the Connecticut State DOT in 1951.) This bridge is also part of the [Union Pond Trail](#), another trail managed by the HRLPC.



The trail next turns right on the other end of the bridge, and then sharply right again, and finally upstream under the big footbridge.

The trail then follows up along the river, under the highway exit and entrance bridges again. It next goes down a bank and across a brook via stepping stones. *Take caution here.* Now it comes out behind Lynch Motors into a beautifully landscaped woodland strip, with steps up to the Toyota dealership (where weary hikers can find rest rooms and benches).

The path follows the river in a low floodplain meadow, on a woodchip course behind Lynch Used Vehicles, up a slope and along the rear of Kohl's store back to the starting point.

Flora seen on the Oakland Trail include red maple, cottonwood, alder, phragmites, Japanese knotweed, black cherry, buttonbush, goldenrod, jewelweed, purple loosestrife, multiflora roses, viburnum, Queen Anne's lace, wild cucumber, trout lily, common blue violet, poison ivy and watercress.

Fauna seen here include white tail deer, mallard ducks, Canada geese, kingfishers, great blue herons, river otters, beavers, muskrats and woodchucks.

Canoe/Kayak: Details on the boat launch icon can be found on the Town of Manchester web site's [Canoe & Kayak Access Guide](#) pages, item #1.



The Hockanum River Linear Park Committee, Manchester CT

2 UNION POND HIKING TRAIL

[HRLPC Home](#)

[Distance](#)

[Maintained By](#)

[Parking](#)

[Trail Walk](#)

[Canoe/Kayak](#)

[Historical Info](#)

[Trail Restrictions](#)

[Blaze Markings](#)

[Trail Benches](#)

[Trail Photos](#)

Distance: About 2.4 miles

Maintained by: The Hockanum River Linear Park Committee (HRLPC)

Parking at the beginning of the trail:

Parking is available at 3 locations:

> At the Robertson School, 65 North School Street, just north of the Main and North Main Street intersection. This route goes north on North School Street, around to the right past Union Pond Park, and then left into the driveway to the boat launch site.

> Alternatively, hikers can park in the lot across from the Union Pond Park, then go across the street to the driveway to the boat launch site. There is also a small parking area at the boat launch site itself.

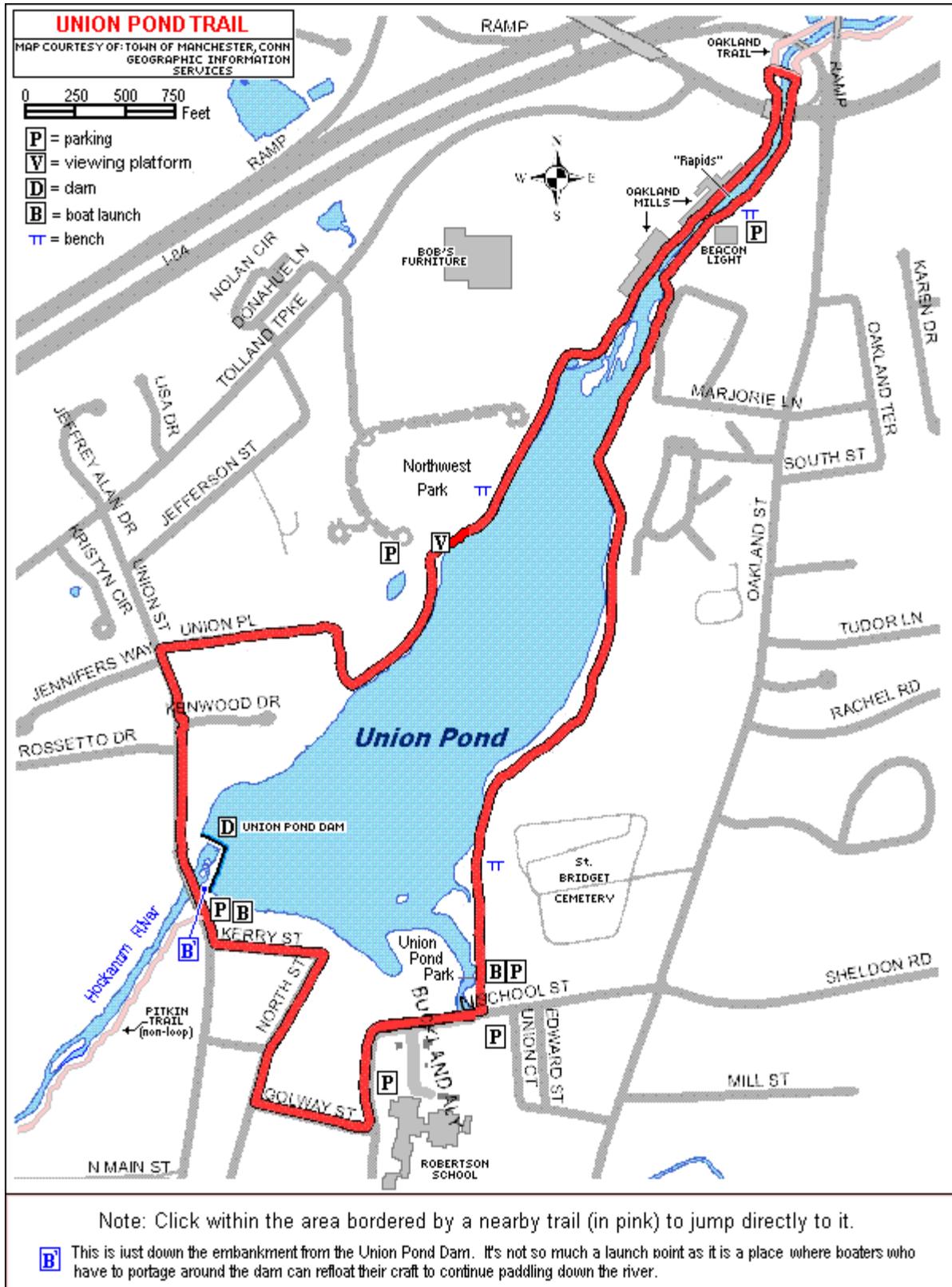
> Lastly, there is a parking lot off Oakland Street near the Beacon Light store, off to the right when you enter the parking area. Access to both upstream and downstream hiking is available from here.

The trail walk: (Note that the HRLPC favors locating the trail as close to the river as possible when laying out and clearing trails.)

On this hilly walk around the Town of Manchester's 60 acre pond, hikers can see wildflowers, water birds and a historic paper mill. *Please note:* There is some narrow and uneven footing between the abandoned Oakland Mills buildings and the steep bank. *Proceed with caution in this stretch.*

The Pond and hiking trail are hidden from nearby highways and local roads. It is surrounded mostly by mature forest on the east, a few apartments, and some scattered homes. There is also quiet Union Pond Park with a braille trail, a dock on the south, and a skating pond in winter; and the large Northwest Park with an observation deck, 2 baseball fields, garden, and picnic pavilion on the west side.

Union Pond hosts a large number of water birds -- Canada geese, sea gulls, mallards, cormorants, and other birds year round. More infrequent visitors include osprey, great blue heron, great egret, and passing Bald Eagles looking for open water in winter.



The trailhead officially starts at the boat launch site, crosses the grass on the right side of the Pond, and enters the woods ahead. The path is an old dirt road for a while, with great Pond views for almost a mile on the left; and the Saint Bridget Cemetery, for a short span, back through the trees on the right.

The path then climbs a hill, and there is a side trail off to the right that goes out to Garden Sales greenhouses and perennial gardens in season. Back up the hill the trail continues along the woodland crest and past moss-covered mounds that are the only reminders of the destructive tornado that crossed over the Pond and through the forest here in 1971, leaving hundreds of fallen trees.

Proceeding further upstream the trail crosses the lawn behind the Oakland Heights Apartments, goes down a wooded hill, passes close to the Pond, and moves past a majestic old White Pine tree. It then wanders along the shoreline past mature Highbush Blueberry bushes around the edge of the water; and then past the Forest Pond Condominiums and over their scenic footbridge, built by us in 2003. There is a small patch of rare Trailing Arbutus ground cover here, and abundant Mountain Laurel bushes hanging over the waterway. The prominent boulders were probably rolled here out of early farm fields up the hill.

Next the trail passes behind the Beacon Light and Supply Company, among numerous large White Pines planted as seedlings many years ago. As the path continues upstream the quiet pond waters are interrupted by the rushing river entering the pond.

Note: This section of the Hockanum is known as the Rapids; and is most challenging to kayakers and canoeists, descending as it does over a series of sandstone ledges during the Class-II swift water of the annual River Race. The open slope on the right, off Oakland Street, is the best spectator area for watching the racers go by.

Note: For information on the River Race, click [here](#) or access "Canoe/Kayak" off the HRLPC Home Page above.

Following the trail further up the river past more rapids, footing is more difficult with rough ledge underfoot all the way under the Tolland Turnpike vehicle bridge. Then the path turns to the right, and up a short climb to reach a footbridge which crosses the river.

For those hikers wishing to keep following the Hockanum upstream and **not cross the river**, the [Oakland Trail](#) stays close to the water, and goes **under** the footbridge to continue up the river.

On the other hand, if the hiker **does cross the river** on our big footbridge and turns RIGHT, s/he will continue along the Oakland Trail along the opposite shore.

If the hiker **does cross the river** the Union Pond Trail goes over the bridge and turns LEFT, to continue back down the west side of the river. All the beautiful White Pines on the west side of the footbridge were planted by the Linear Park Committee starting in 1983. And the expansive meadow, full of wildflowers, was created when the footbridge was completed in 2006.

Going down the west side, the Union Pond Trail first descends a steep set of steps, proceeds along a rocky base, and then goes up onto the old Oakland Paper Mill property, with the ancient brick walls close on the right and a slope dropping off sharply to the river on the left. This narrow path stays close to several buildings of varying ages from the late 1700s. This complex of paper mills of sandstone and brick are remarkable, with remnants of the large metal flume still in place in the wall; while its curved stone supports can also be seen underfoot. Without the river and its driving power, these historic mills wouldn't have been built here. Reference the [Historical Info](#) section below for more information on the history of these mills.

Then the trail opens out onto a flat meadow, curves around to the right, and goes through a long alley of tall pine trees first planted in April, 1981. Glimpses of the Pond can be seen through the trees on the left and Northwest Park up the slope on the right. Granite steps go up to the Park; where the path curves around to the left and back into the woods along the water. (If you come to a chain-link fence barrier, you must turn back.) A blaze takes the trail to the right, which then curves left and out to Union Place.

The course is now on pavement, out to Union Street, left down Union Street, and over the

Hockanum on the Union Street Bridge. There are spectacular views of the Union Pond Dam and waterfall here. Past the dam is a parking lot for the [Pitkin Trail](#), which is across the street and which runs downstream along the river.

Continuing along the Union Pond trail, you next turn left onto Kerry Street to a charming tour of the historic Union Village. Finally, you proceed right onto North Street, left on Golway Street, and finally back to your starting point.

Canoe/Kayak: Details on the two boat launch icons can be found on the Town of Manchester web site's [Canoe & Kayak Access Guide](#) pages, items #2 and #2A.

Historical Information:

Union Pond was created by the erection of a dam just upstream from Union Street and adjacent to the historic Union Village. This dam, built in the early 1800s, provided water power for the Pitkin Cotton Mill and later the Union Manufacturing Company mill complex, which was situated on the riverbank just downstream from Union Street in the North End of Manchester. The original dam was much smaller than the current one, which is the latest of several rebuildings which have occurred over the years.

Oakland Mills. An early sawmill and gristmill made use of the water power at "Oakland." In 1784, Butler and Hudson established a paper mill, which operated on and off under various owners until 1864, when the Cheney Brothers took command for a few years and reorganized it as the Hudson-Cheney Paper Company, making all the post card paper for the U.S. government for several years.

Through various other reorganizations, the factory "has manufactured the finest class of papers, including bank-note paper." (*History of Manchester, Connecticut*, by Mathias Spiess and Percy W. Bidwell, published 1924.)

"In 1899, the American Writing Paper Company, which was formed to take over a chain of paper mills, bought the Oakland Mill ... since that time, the mill has been practically rebuilt, wooden buildings being replaced with brick." (*The Manchester Herald*, June 13, 1914.)

Like many businesses, the paper mill suffered financially during the Great Depression of the 1930s, and went out of business in 1933. The Dexter Company bought the mills and processed pulp here in the 1940s. Other businesses have used the buildings since then, including Raybestos, Conyers (cement mixing), and a recycling center.

By careful observation, hikers may discover clues to what was manufactured here over the many years of changes.

BEGIN STATE PROJECT NO. 76-193
 FEDERAL AID PROJECT NO. 0844(147)
 I-84 EXIT 63 OFF-RAMP
 STATION 211+00

BEGIN STATE PROJECT NO. 76-193
 FEDERAL AID PROJECT NO. 0844(147)
 ROUTE 30 STATION 103+40

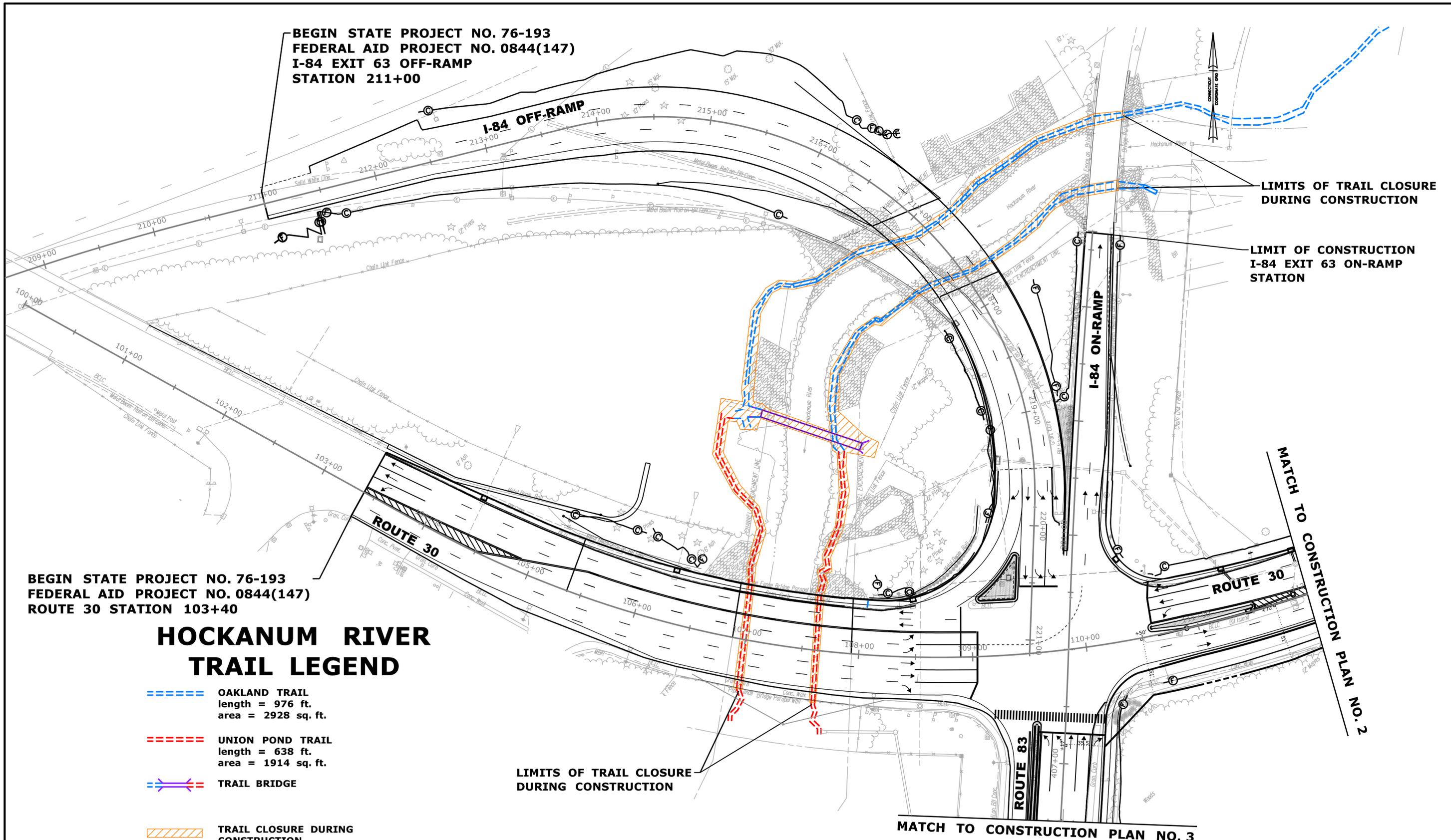
HOCKANUM RIVER TRAIL LEGEND

-  OAKLAND TRAIL
length = 976 ft.
area = 2928 sq. ft.
-  UNION POND TRAIL
length = 638 ft.
area = 1914 sq. ft.
-  TRAIL BRIDGE
-  TRAIL CLOSURE DURING CONSTRUCTION
total length = 1614 ft.
area = 4842 sq. ft.

LIMITS OF TRAIL CLOSURE DURING CONSTRUCTION

LIMITS OF TRAIL CLOSURE DURING CONSTRUCTION

LIMIT OF CONSTRUCTION I-84 EXIT 63 ON-RAMP STATION



MATCH TO CONSTRUCTION PLAN NO. 3

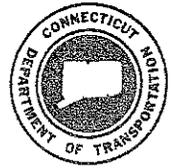
MATCH TO CONSTRUCTION PLAN NO. 2

PRELIMINARY DESIGN REVIEW

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|-----------|----------------------|-----------|-------------------------|--|---|--|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| REV. DATE | REVISION DESCRIPTION | SHEET NO. | Plotted Date: 10/9/2012 | DESIGNER/DRAFTER: PWY |  STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION | SIGNATURE/BLOCK: OFFICE OF ENGINEERING | PROJECT TITLE: IMPROVEMENTS ON I-84 EXIT 63 OFF-RAMP AND INTERSECTION OF ROUTES 30 & 83 | TOWN: TOWN OF MANCHESTER | PROJECT NO. 76-193 |
| | | | | CHECKED BY: MRV | | APPROVED BY: | DRAWING TITLE: CONSTRUCTION PLAN SHEET 1 | DRAWING NO. | SHEET NO. |
| | | | | SCALE IN FEET 0 40 80 SCALE 1"=40' | Filename: ...Plan\HW_MSH_0076_0193_4(f).dgn | | | | |



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION



2800 BERLIN TURNPIKE, P.O. BOX 317546
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06131-7546

Phone:

July 5, 2012

The Honorable Leo V. Diana
Mayor
Town of Manchester
41 Center Street
Manchester, Connecticut 06040

Dear Mayor Diana:

Subject: State Project No. 76-193
Federal Aid Project No. (PE) 0844(147)
Improvements on I-84 EB Exit 63 On/Off-Ramps and
Intersection of Routes 30 & 83
Town of Manchester

A Public Informational Meeting for this project was held beginning at 6:30 p.m., on May 17, 2012 at the Lincoln Center, 464 Main Street, Manchester. The proposed improvements presented at the meeting are intended to improve the operation and safety of the subject intersection and include adding an exclusive right-turn lane to the Route 30 eastbound approach and a left-turn lane to the Route 83 northbound approach, with a new traffic control signal.

Additional improvements include realigning and widening the off-ramp to create one simple curve in order to improve sightlines. This off-ramp work includes an additional left-turn lane and extension of the right-turn lane to provide a four-lane approach to the intersection. The on-ramp will be shifted to match the Route 83 northbound thru-lane and the existing lane arrangements will remain unchanged.

Minor drainage improvements are proposed to accommodate the new edge of road within the project limits. Conflicts with utility poles are not anticipated; however partial property acquisitions, a slope easement, and a temporary work area will be required. Wetland permits including flood management, stream channel encroachment, and storm water discharge are anticipated.

There will be two lanes of traffic open during construction of the realigned I-84 Exit 63 eastbound off-ramp. Access to adjacent properties will be kept open and traffic will be maintained on each roadway during construction.

There were a total of eighteen attendees at the meeting including Manchester Town Director Rudy C. Kissman; South Windsor Mayor Tom Delnicki; two business owners and seven residents. There were nine people who took the opportunity to speak at the meeting. In general, the project was well received by those in attendance. The following comments were made at the meeting:

- ⇒ Mr. Kissman asked about the existing pedestrian sidewalk and crosswalk locations and whether or not a crosswalk was located at Tolland Turnpike. The Department described the locations of the existing sidewalk along the north side of Route 30 which switches over to the south side via a crosswalk across Route 30 at the Tolland Turnpike intersection. This intersection will continue to feature a crosswalk across Route 30.
- ⇒ A resident asked why a right-turn lane onto the on-ramp is not provided on Route 30/Route 83 westbound approach to the intersection. The Department stated that a shared thru and right-turn lane is adequate for the existing and projected traffic volumes and movements.
- ⇒ A resident asked if this project was part of a corridor study relating to the Buckland Hills Mall. The Department stated that this project is independent of the Buckland Hills Mall corridor study. The project limits do not extend beyond the intersection of Tolland Turnpike and Route 30.
- ⇒ A resident asked if the signal timing phase could be shortened on all approaches of the intersection. The Department stated that the signal timing phases will likely be reduced due to the addition of the turn lanes throughout the intersection. The traffic signal design will be performed at a later date.
- ⇒ A resident asked if the Department plans on having one lane open for I-84 Exit 63 eastbound off-ramp traffic during construction. The Department will have two lanes of traffic open during construction of the re-aligned off-ramp.

Subsequent to the meeting, additional comments or questions were made as follows:

- ⇒ The committee chair of the Hockanum River Linear Park Committee, Doug Smith, stated that he does not find much value in having a dedicated 3' wide stone dust path entrance to access the hiking trails as proposed. Due to the proposed stone dust trail being requested by the town, the town was contacted and has responded by stating that a section of trail parallel to an abandoned degrading mill has been closed for safety concerns and that the proposed stone dust path could be used as a temporary detour for hikers. The Department will leave the proposed trail in the project design until further coordination between the town and the trail committee has been conducted.
- ⇒ A businessman, whose office is located just south of the project limit on the east side of Route 83, expressed his support for the second left-turn lane addition to the Route 83 approach to the intersection. He sees traffic backups all the time and favors the added lanes and configuration of the project design.

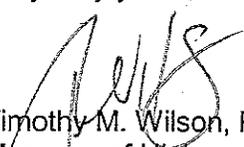
The comment period for the public informational meeting ended on June 18, 2011, with no additional comments received.

July 5, 2012

As a result of the support received for these improvements, the Department intends to proceed with the design as presented at the public informational meeting.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please feel free to contact Ms. Susan Libatique, Project Manager, at (860) 594-3179.

Very truly yours,



Timothy M. Wilson, P.E.
Manager of Highway Design
Bureau of Engineering and Construction

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Jeff LaMalva, Town Engineer, Town of Manchester