



Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority

One East Shore Road | P.O. Box 437 | Jamestown, Rhode Island 02835-0437

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 7, 2019

PHASE II OF NEWPORT PELL ROAD DECK PROJECT TO START MONDAY, AUGUST 12th

JAMESTOWN, R.I. –Starting Monday, August 12th, [The Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority \(RITBA\)](#) will begin Phase II of the significant structural rehabilitation project on the Newport Pell Bridge. RITBA will replace approximately 4,500 feet of the bridge deck during this phase. This work is part of the multi-year multi-phase project, which began in the spring of 2017.

Phase I of this project began in early May. The work started during this phase consisted of

- Installing temporary traffic management signs to help keep travel safe
- Installing permanent digital lane control signals on the bridge (in the future, they will indicate whether a lane is open or closed, and show other traffic-related info)
- Performing expansion joint header repair on the road deck
- Performing concrete form work underneath the road deck in preparation for the concrete paving.
- Performing routine maintenance that will not be possible during the deck work due to lane closures

Phase II of this project will resume the hydro demolition work and replacement of the bridge deck. Permanent lane closures will be required on the bridge at that time and

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travel speeds will be reduced to 25 miles per hour on the bridge during construction, which will take place day and night. During rush hour travel, RITBA will deploy a new traffic pattern for this phase that is planned to lessen traffic delays.

By using a movable median barrier, RITBA will keep two lanes open in the direction of heaviest traffic during rush hours: heading into Newport in the morning (6am-9am) and heading out of Newport in the evening (3pm-6pm). There will be one lane open in the opposite direction during these times.

During rush hours, one lane will remain open in the opposite direction from the heavy traffic flow and only one lane will be closed and available for the deck work. **During non-rush hours** there will be one lane open in both directions and the contractor will have access to perform work on the other two lanes.

Overwide and overweight trucks are prohibited from crossing the bridge during Phase II of the project. The following will be banned from crossing:

- **Width EXCEEDING 8 feet 6 inches**
- **Gross Vehicle Weight (GVW) OVER 80,000 pounds**

To determine the area of the bridge deck that requires replacement during this phase, RITBA undertook a major evaluation of the bridge deck using state of the art technology. This analysis included the use of “Half Cell Electrical Connectivity Testing”, “Ground Penetrating Radar” and “Sodium Testing” via core drilling. The analysis and testing allowed RITBA to perform a detailed assessment of the condition of the bridge deck and the concrete embedded steel rebar for every section of the bridge.

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This evaluation enabled RITBA to determine what section of the bridge deck was in most need of replacement and to sequence future deck work. Due to the findings, the work will focus on 4,500 feet of the bridge and take place on the East approach (Newport side) between spans 2E and 22E.

The contract for this portion of the deck project was awarded to Aetna Bridge Company, a Warwick, Rhode Island based company. The contract is for 19 million dollars. The contract includes stiff financial penalties if the contractor does not meet the December 2020 completion date.

RITBA has been working closely and coordinating with the RI Department of Transportation. After completion of this contract, RITBA will delay further work on the replacement of the bridge deck as RIDOT will then commence its major renovations to the ramps and access to the bridge in Newport. RIDOT has worked with the City of Newport in the planning for the “Newport Ramp” project as a more efficient road and bridge access alignment will open up high quality land for development.

RITBA is committed to keeping the community informed throughout the duration of the project. To learn more about this project and access real-time traffic updates visit ritba.org.

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