



## **Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority**

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

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**May 6, 2019**

# **DECK PROJECT ON NEWPORT PELL BRIDGE WILL RESUME SUNDAY, MAY 12<sup>TH</sup>**

**JAMESTOWN, R.I.** – Starting Sunday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, [The Rhode Island Turnpike and Bridge Authority \(RITBA\)](http://www.ritba.org) will recommence the significant structural rehabilitation project on the Newport Pell Bridge. RITBA will replace approximately 4,500 feet of the bridge deck over the next 19 months. This work is part of the multi-year multi-phase project, which began in the spring of 2017.

Phase I of this portion will begin May 12<sup>th</sup> and go through early August. **There will not be any lane closures during rush hours for this initial phase of the work.** The work being performed during this phase will be performed mostly nights and includes:

- 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 will show other traffic-related info)
- Performing expansion joint header repair on the road deck
- Performing routine maintenance

This will require temporary single lane closures on the bridge during non-rush hours from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and again overnight from 7:00 p.m. to 5:30 am. These lane closures are similar to the lane closures RITBA uses for their routine maintenance work.

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Phase II of this project will begin in early August. At that time, RITBA will resume the hydro demolition and replacement of the bridge deck. Permanent lane closures will be required on the bridge at that time. 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 have two lanes of traffic open going into Newport in the mornings. After rush hour, they will move the median barrier to create two lanes of travel leaving Newport in the afternoon. This traffic pattern and daily change of the barrier location will best accommodate the directions of the heavy daily traffic.

**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.

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 with 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 DOT 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.

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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. This evaluation informed 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 between Approach 2E and 22E.

RITBA wants to remind motorists the speed limit on the bridge during construction will be reduced to 25 miles per hour.

RITBA is committed to keeping the community informed throughout the duration of the project. To learn more, RITBA is inviting the public to attend community information sessions. The first of which will take place on **Tuesday May 14<sup>th</sup>** at **6:00 p.m.** in the *Community College of Rhode Island (CCRI) auditorium*, located at 1 John H Chafee Blvd, Newport. Another information session will take place on **Wednesday, May 15<sup>th</sup>** at **6:00 p.m.** at *RITBA Headquarters* located at 1 E Shore Road, Jamestown. Learn more about this project and access real-time traffic updates by visiting [ritba.org](http://ritba.org).

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