

Design firm selected to begin work on New Bedford-Fairhaven replacement

Today, Rep. Bill Straus (D-Mattapoissett) announced that the Massachusetts Department of Transportation has selected a design firm to begin work on the replacement of the New Bedford-Fairhaven Bridge. The selection comes in the midst of ongoing consultations between Rep. Straus, who has served as the House co-chair of the legislature's Joint Committee on Transportation since 2011, and Highway Administrator Jonathan Gulliver concerning the status of the project.

According to the announcement, MassDOT has selected the engineering firm of Modjeski and Masters to undertake the effort to advance the bridge replacement to the 25% design threshold. MassDOT and the firm are finalizing the terms of the scope of work agreement under which MassDOT will hold public hearings, receive public and stakeholder input and generate design documents to a 25% design level of completion. This design threshold is necessary to begin permit and funding requests for eventual removal and construction of a new Route 6 bridge over the Acushnet River between Fairhaven and New Bedford. A completed written scope of work is expected by the end of May.

"We have determined that Modjeski and Masters has the experience, expertise and skill to start work on the preliminary design and public input phase of this important bridge project which affects not only the road traffic but the efficient operation of the maritime needs in the Port of New Bedford," said Administrator Gulliver.

"I want to thank the Baker-Polito Administration and especially Administrator Gulliver for further advancing the

project as basic design work is the necessary pre-condition to get our project to a point where construction funding requests are possible," said Rep. Straus.

Based in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, Modjeski and Masters has offices throughout the country and is a world-wide engineering firm specializing in bridge design and engineering.