



EXIT 36 Southbound – Frequently Asked Questions

1. How is the Exit 36 Project Funded?

The Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC) in conjunction with the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG) has received federal funding through the Transportation, Community and Systems Preservation Program (TCSP) to conduct a study assessing the effectiveness of a south bound off-ramp at Exit 36 on US 3, near the New Hampshire and Massachusetts border.

2. The Exit 36 project should consider the development of a multi-modal / rail station in the vicinity of the Pheasant Lane Mall.

There has been significant interest in the relationship between Exit 36S Planning Study and the return of passenger rail to South Nashua. The most common question is will the Exit 36S project make a recommendation to locate a passenger rail station at or near the Pheasant Lane Mall? The answer to that question is no. The Exit 36S Study is not scoped to analyze the engineering and operational components needed to determine the most effective location for a passenger rail station.

3. What the Exit 36S study will do related to passenger rail:

- Estimate potential traffic generation and parking demand for an intermodal facility located at or near the Pheasant Lane Mall based on updates to past studies facilitated by the Nashua Regional Planning Commission (NRPC), Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG), and the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS).*
- Analyze traffic operations of Exit 36S and surrounding intersections assuming an intermodal facility is located at or near the Pheasant Lane Mall.*
- Identify opportunities to coordinate potential passenger rail service with intercity bus service and local and regional transit service.*
- Identify Transit Oriented Development opportunities in the project area that may be associated with an intermodal facility.*
- Identify opportunities to improve and connect bicycle and pedestrian access to an intermodal facility.*
- Identify existing infrastructure to support the development of a multimodal facility.*

4. The study should be consistent and timed with the development of the Capital Corridor Rail Project.

Project staff will monitor progress on the ongoing passenger rail studies in New Hampshire and coordinate with New Hampshire Department of Transportation and their consultant, URS Corporation, to ensure these two related planning efforts share information and coordinate analyses as necessary.

5. The Nashua Technology Park has short-term plans to develop 400 – 500 new apartment units and long term plans for additional commercial, retail and hotel space. The buildout of this site is dependent upon traffic volumes and flow at Exit 1 and capacity improvements will be needed.

The study will include analysis of traffic operations at Exit 1 and the surrounding intersections based on current and buildout conditions. It is anticipated that the addition of an Exit 36S ramp will create additional capacity at Exit 1 as many of the existing trips migrate to the new off ramp. Both short- and long-term improvements will be noted in the study.

6. Need improvements for bicycling and walking throughout the study area, especially to facilitate movement between residences and a potential multi-modal facility.

The study will collect and analyze data on existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities and identify opportunities for additional bicycle and pedestrian connections.

7. Are there any Transit Oriented Design / Residential developments anticipated in the future?

The only planned residential developments are the 400 - 500 apartments planned for the Nashua Technology Park.

8. Funding for this project will require consensus and solution building from both states. This is especially true given that the majority of the capacity improvements will occur in New Hampshire while the infrastructure will be located almost entirely in Massachusetts.

Future funding of the project will require the support of the Congressional Delegation and State Departments of Transportation in both states.

9. Businesses are very interested in the potential for improved access and additional utility service to this area, hopefully leading to increased economic benefits.

The land use planners at NMCOG have identified utilities and infrastructure availability and capacity as issues impacting future economic development on the Tyngsborough side of the border and plan to discuss this further as part of overall land use analysis. Specific and detailed analysis of sewer capacity, water needs and so on are beyond the scope of the project.

10. Access needs to be improved in both directions facilitating movements both from the north into Tyngsborough and from the south into South Nashua.

Exit 36S will provide better access to Tyngsborough from points north and provide direct access to South Nashua on the DW Highway. Individuals traveling to Tyngsborough from New Hampshire will have direct access to Middlesex Road in Tyngsborough. Likewise, the most southern extent of Nashua will be directly accessible from the new ramp. In addition, a new Exit 36S may reduce the number of vehicles using Exit 35 in Tyngsborough to access south Nashua, thus alleviating traffic in Tyngsborough Center.

11. Traffic will continue to increase as the economy grows. How can we address short-term improvements, to facilitate circulation, prior to the construction of an Exit 36S off-ramp?

The plan could address this issue by identifying a range of recommendations with varying timeframes, including short-, mid- and long-term. This method would allow improvements to occur incrementally as funding becomes available.

12. Improvements are needed in the Tara Boulevard and Exit 1 area.

It is likely that the Exit 36S Ramp, when implemented, will benefit traffic operations at Exit 1, however specific improvements to Tara Boulevard and Exit 1 are beyond the scope of the study.

13. The study seems very narrowly focused. What do NH and MA have planned for this area? The bridge over the Merrimack River at RT 113 in MA, potential rail service and the Exit 36S off-ramp should be addressed as a whole.

The Tyngsborough Master Plan, the Tyngsborough Economic Development Plan and the Daniel Webster Highway and Spit Brook Road Corridor Study will be reviewed and relevant recommendations will be included in the final reports for the Exit 36 study.

14. How was Exit 36N Ramp funded?

The Right-of-Way was provided by the State of Massachusetts and the project was funded with State of New Hampshire Turnpike Dollars.

15. Are there plans for a second bridge crossing the Merrimack River in Tyngsborough?

A Feasibility Study has been conducted on this issue and 2 additional locations were identified for an additional river crossing including: 1) near the Pheasant Lane Mall; or 2) just south of the existing bridge in Tyngsborough near Westford Road (behind Sullivan Farms Ice Cream). Either bridge option would require review under the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act and an Environmental Impact Report.