



## Upper Winchester Street Reconstruction Project Schedule Update

In November 2023 the Public Works Department published a press release to update the community on the expected schedule for the completion of the Island Street Bridge. At that time, the contractor's schedule, which appeared reasonable, suggested that the bridge reconstruction would be complete by the end of March 2024. The Island Street Bridge reconstruction is an integral part of the Upper Winchester Street Reconstruction project and as you are likely aware, the bridge construction is not complete. The planned completion date for the project is now **May 31, 2024**. Several items are contributing to the delay in completing the project, as detailed below:

1. The extent of preparation needed to build a concrete bridge deck in January was not fully detailed in the November schedule. In addition to insulating blankets and heaters above the concrete deck, shielding and heating were needed below the concrete deck. Although this should have been foreseen and reflected in the November schedule, the work was needed to successfully build a concrete bridge deck during freezing temperatures. We see this issue as an error in presenting their schedule rather than a failure to execute the work in a timely manner.
2. To align with the planned Island Street Reconstruction project, the Public Works Department directed the contractor to make some changes to the utility configuration north of the bridge. This included replacing the undersized stormwater outlet into the Ashuelot River and extending the limits of water and sewer replacements. Due to the high river elevations during spring snow melt, this work took longer than would normally be required to complete. Frozen ground conditions, and the inability to properly compact backfilled soil, also delayed the work by several days. This delay was beyond their control.
3. The full extent and time needed by the gas company to complete their connections on both sides of the bridge were not previously known. The November schedule anticipated approximately three days to complete this work. The scope of work has expanded to align the gas main with the planned Island Street Reconstruction project and to ensure the safety of all staff working near active gas mains. The total time needed to do this work has increased by about two weeks. In hindsight, Liberty Utilities should have been asked to verify their needs prior to making the overall schedule public.
4. The opening date of the asphalt plant owned by the paving subcontract is generally the end of April, however, this has not yet been confirmed. After the base course of pavement is installed, the curbing and sidewalk work must be finished before final paving. Upon detailed review, the November schedule did not include the final paving and time needed to complete this work.

A combination of extra work, more complicated work, unpredictable environmental conditions, and an unknown asphalt plant opening date are contributing to the delayed project schedule. Some oversights in the contractor's November schedule likely could have been identified and communicated at the time. Although the schedule delay is a disappointment, the delays are substantiated. The contractor, the bridge subcontractor, and the gas company have worked diligently on this project throughout the winter. We hold weekly progress meetings with the project team to review the work completed, work planned, and potential problems. Delays are substantiated with documentation and schedule updates, which are reviewed by the Resident Engineer and Public Works Department. The project team has maintained high quality for constructed features to-date and will continue to do so through completion.

We appreciate the support of the community and look forward to bringing this critical project to completion.

[Project Website](#)