

2019 ACEC of Maine Engineering Excellence Awards

At the ACEC of Maine Fall Forum on October 25, 2019, HNTB was awarded an **Honor Award for Context-sensitive Design** for its Bar Harbor Route 3 Highway Rehab project.

Route 3 in the Town of Bar Harbor, Maine, is the only road onto Mount Desert Island and provides primary access to downtown. It is a two-lane state roadway that carries an average of 10,000 vehicles per day. Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) required a strategic design team to provide

improvements to a 4.7 mile corridor on Route 3 and one that could take a holistic perspective to balancing the needs of residents, businesses and the millions of visitors to Mount Desert Island each year while creating a safe and more efficient transportation route. MaineDOT selected HNTB Corporation (HNTB) as the prime engineering consultant to lead the design team.

Bar Harbor has a year-round population of 5,000 people, growing to more than 18,000 during the summer months. Acadia National Park (ANP), also located on Mount Desert Island, is the ninth most visited National Park in the United States attracting millions of visitors each year.



The design effort incorporated the vision established by the Route 3 Gateway Project Advisory Committee (PAC) to provide a "safe, efficient and aesthetically pleasing transportation corridor that encourages multiple uses and maintains or enhances the historic standards of Bar Harbor and Acadia National Park."

Mobility along Route 3 and access to residents and businesses from Ireson Hill to downtown, including the Hulls Cove entrance to ANP, had to be carefully balanced with contractor schedule and cost demands during construction. The PAC dedicated a considerable amount of time and energy, with nine committee meetings and four public meetings, all facilitated to understand the opportunities and constraints of the project area and guide the Context-Sensitive Solution (CSS) process.

The CSS approach demanded a design appropriate to Route 3 in Bar Harbor. The intent was to establish a strong, unified corridor while responding to the individual characteristics of the four different sections: Ireson Hill (Pirate's Cove to Barton's Motel), Barton's Motel into Hulls Cove, Acadia National Park Entrance through Bluffs and Duck Brook into town. Many areas needed special attention to develop the proper 'fit.' HNTB implemented these elements into a rehabilitated Route 3 "resulting in a project that fits in context with its surroundings and will serve its users for years to come."

Through thoughtful design, HNTB delivered an engineered solution totaling nearly \$25 million that not only addresses deficient roadway features, but that provides the Bar Harbor area, the traveling public, and MaineDOT a comprehensive Route 3 corridor that improved safety for all modes and will foster sustainable economic development.

HNTB is an infrastructure solutions firm with more than 4,100 employees serving public and private owners and contractors, delivering a wide range of services including planning, design, program, and construction management.

BAR HARBOR ROUTE 3 HIGHWAY REHABILITATION
BAR HARBOR, MAINE

Improvements to the 4.7-mile corridor on Route 3 in Bar Harbor required a strategic design team that could take a holistic perspective to balancing the needs of residents, businesses and millions of visitors to Mount Desert Island each year while creating a safe and more efficient transportation route. HNTB Corporation (HNTB) was selected to develop an innovative design solution to address these challenges.

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HNTB partnered with the Department to deliver this complex, high public interest project. Together, we developed innovative approaches to reduce impacts to the traveling public, adjacent property owners and the many hotels and businesses in the project area.

— Bradford Foley, PE
MaineDOT
Highway Program Manager

Context sensitive solutions rocky slope retaining wall with historic decorative fencing.

New rock/ice left catchment ditch in foreground and Frenchman's Bay in background in the Bluffs Region.

Reconfigured Route 2 at West Street/ West Street Extension intersection.

Transit stop at College of the Atlantic entrance.

Client: Maine Department of Transportation (Augusta, ME)
Firm: HNTB Corporation (Westbrook, ME)