

## MaineDOT apologizes for not informing communities of I-395/Route 9 plan

by [Dawn Gagnon](#) January 6, 2012  
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AUGUSTA, Maine — State transportation officials issued a statement Friday in response to local reaction to the [drastic change of plans](#) for the proposed I395/Route 9 connector project.

In an article published by the Bangor Daily News this week, officials from Eddington and Brewer said they were caught flatfooted by the Maine Department of Transportation's plan to eliminate the route chosen in 2003. MDOT now supports a different route than Holden residents favored.

Holden's town planner learned about the change through MaineDOT's website and provided other local officials an informal update. The new route would extend I-395 at its Wilson Street junction and would roughly follow the Holden-Brewer line until entering Eddington and connecting to Route 9. The previous route cut through the mostly unpopulated center of Holden.

The state said concerns about environmental impact led to the change.

In a statement emailed to the Bangor Daily News on Friday by MDOT spokesman Ted Talbot, the department apologized for inadequate outreach to leaders in municipalities that would be affected by the connector, which aims to alleviate heavy traffic flow between the Canadian Maritime Provinces and the federal highway system.

"The Maine Department of Transportation ... regrets the insufficient outreach by MaineDOT to leaders of the affected communities along the proposed I-395 US Route 9 connector," the statement read. "Town officials and the residents of Brewer, Holden, Eddington and Clifton deserve to be fully informed of all decisions and progress. We recognize that it is our obligation to do so, and we will rectify this situation in the future."

"While no decisions have been made regarding whether or how to proceed with the Study, MaineDOT will continue to focus on options that we can

permit, build and afford with the least amount of overall environmental and community impacts," the statement added.

"In the coming weeks, MaineDOT officials will refocus on the public process in which residents will have ongoing opportunities to provide feedback including review of the draft environmental impact statement and public hearing(s) as needed. We look forward to hearing from all interested parties," the statement concluded.