City of Boston Utility Coordination Software

COBUCS

Getting started –

The clearance process is one of the most crucial interactions that take place between the City of Boston and the many utility companies, private contractors, and other City agencies.

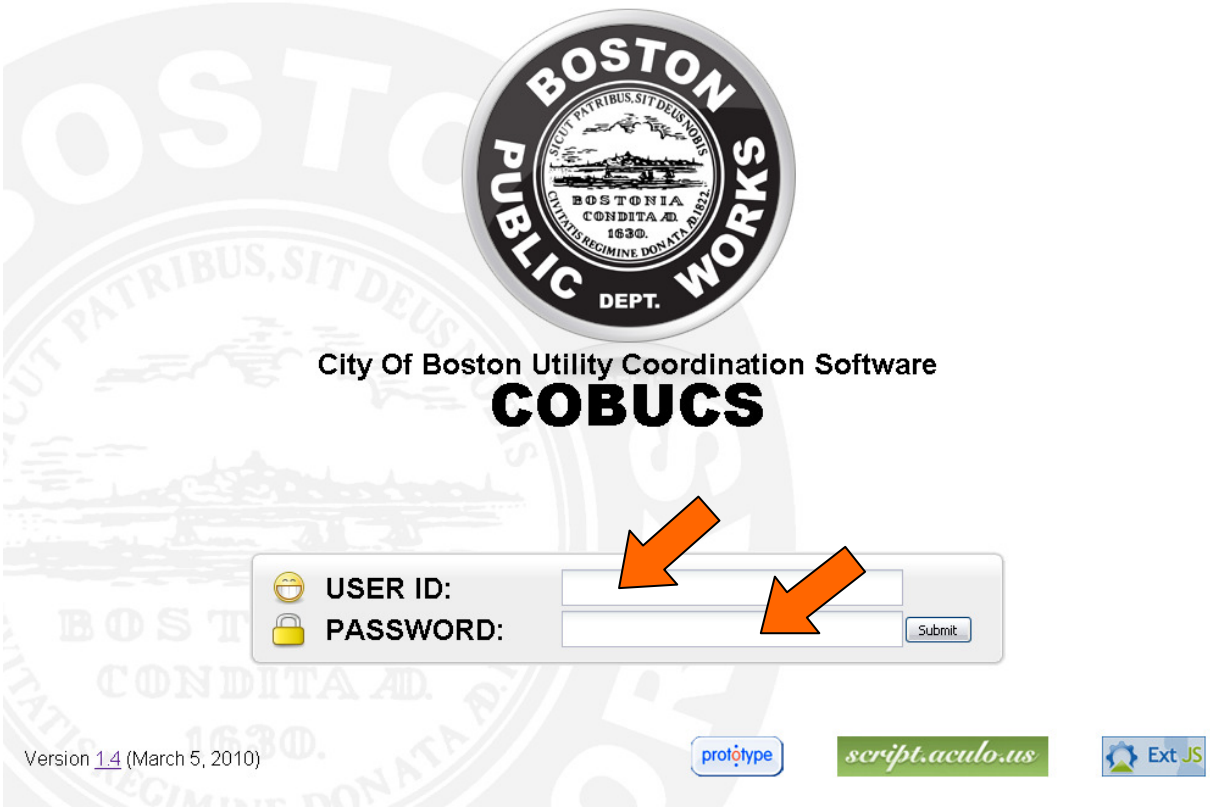
By keeping vigilant and coordinating with each other, together we ensure that the City of Boston's streets are well maintained while allowing the vital construction that supplies the constituents with their gas, water/sewer, phone, cable, and electricity.

Nothing is more embarrassing than a utility company requesting a permit for a street that was only recently paved, for both the utility company as well as the City. Let us all continue working hard to prevent such a mistake.

The Public Works Department, Paul Taylor with input from Mark Cardarelli, designed COBUCS to be as User-friendly as possible. Following these simple steps will allow your company to enter its planned work in just a few clicks of the mouse.

In order for COBUCS to perform successfully it is dependent upon each of you to enter your company's projects immediately upon receiving notice of them. Even if your company does not plan to apply for a permit for months or possibly years down the road, enter every project you receive in even the earliest planning stages, because it may be in those months that the City paves the street you wish to work on. With plenty of notice ahead of time on proposed work, the City is better able to coordinate with your company.

By using COBUCS to enter proposed work immediately upon notice, your company will be able to view whether the work takes place on a guaranteed street or within the limits of a City Capital Project instantly.



Signing into COBUCS –

1) Go to the COBUCS web address using your assigned web browser (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Google Chrome, etc) –

   http://140.241.251.251:81/cobucs/login.html

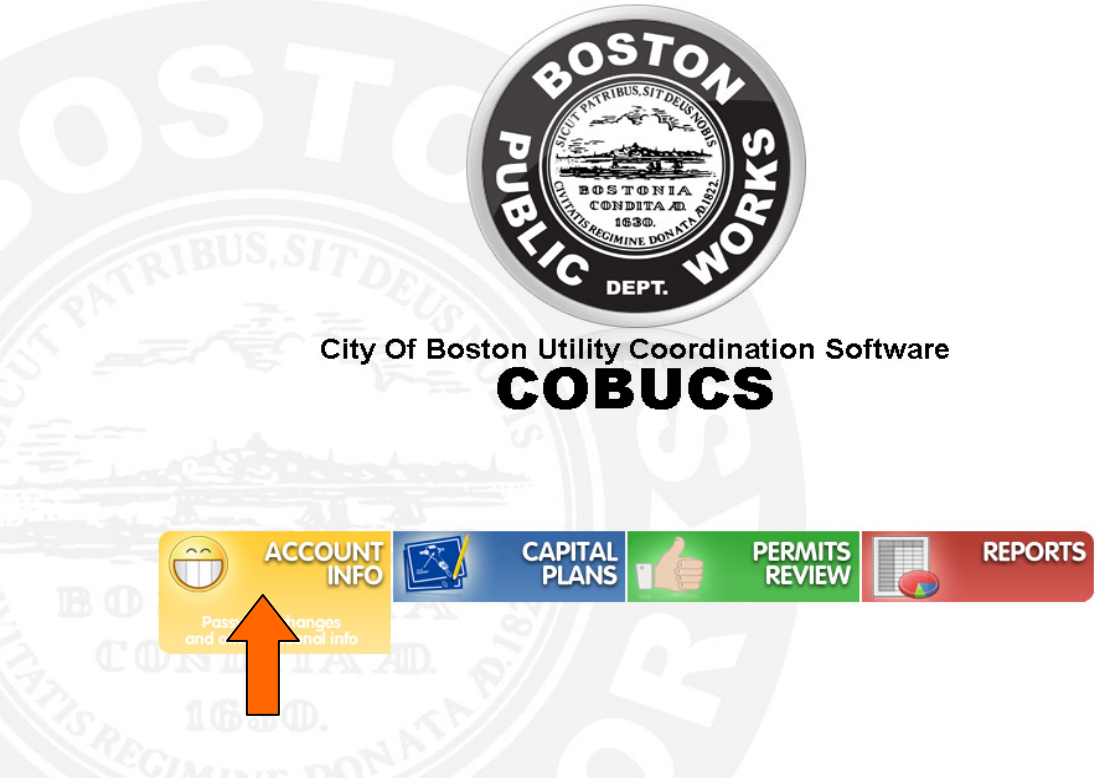
2) Once the COBUCS sign-in page has loaded, enter the Username and Password assigned to you.

   A. If you have not been assigned a Username or Password be sure to contact the Boston Public Works Department to verify that your company has authorized you for access to the COBUCS program.

   B. If your Username or Password does not work, please notify Mark Cardarelli immediately by emailing him at mark.cardarelli@cityofboston.gov.

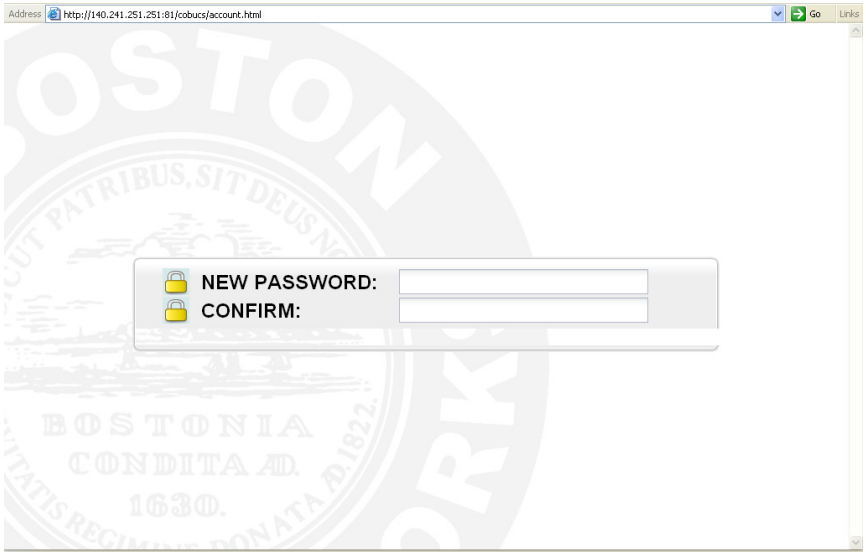
   C. If you forget your Password, please notify Mark Cardarelli immediately by emailing him.

3) Upon entering your Username and Password, hit the ENTER or RETURN key on your Keyboard.



Changing your Password –

1) Once you enter COBUCS you will be given four tabs to choose from. Each tab has a separate function. The first tab, labeled Account Info will bring you to a window that will allow you to change your Password.

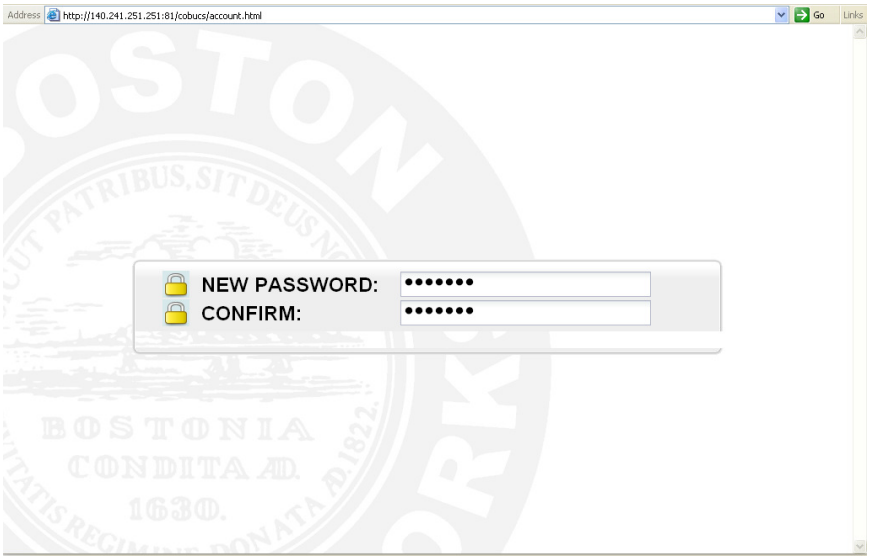


A. It is very important that you change your Password upon entering COBUCS for the first time.

Changing your Password Con't –

B. Your new Password should be something only you would know, and something that you will remember in the future.

C. For security reasons it is recommended that you create a password that is over seven characters long and contains both letters and numbers.



2) Once you have entered your new password, hit the ENTER or RETURN key.

3) If successfully done, you will be redirected to the starting menu once more and asked to enter in your Username and Password again. Be sure to use the new password that you just created.

4) The City of Boston will supply your company with as many User Accounts as needed. To apply for a User Account please email Mark Cardarelli at mark.cardarelli@cityofboston.gov

5) If you experience any problems opening the Account Info tab please notify Mark Cardarelli immediately by emailing him at mark.cardarelli@cityofboston.gov.

City Of Boston Utility Coordination Software

COBUCS

Entering New Work into COBUCS –

1) To enter your company's proposed and planned work into COBUCS, start by clicking on the Capital Plan tab located on the starting Menu of COBUCS.

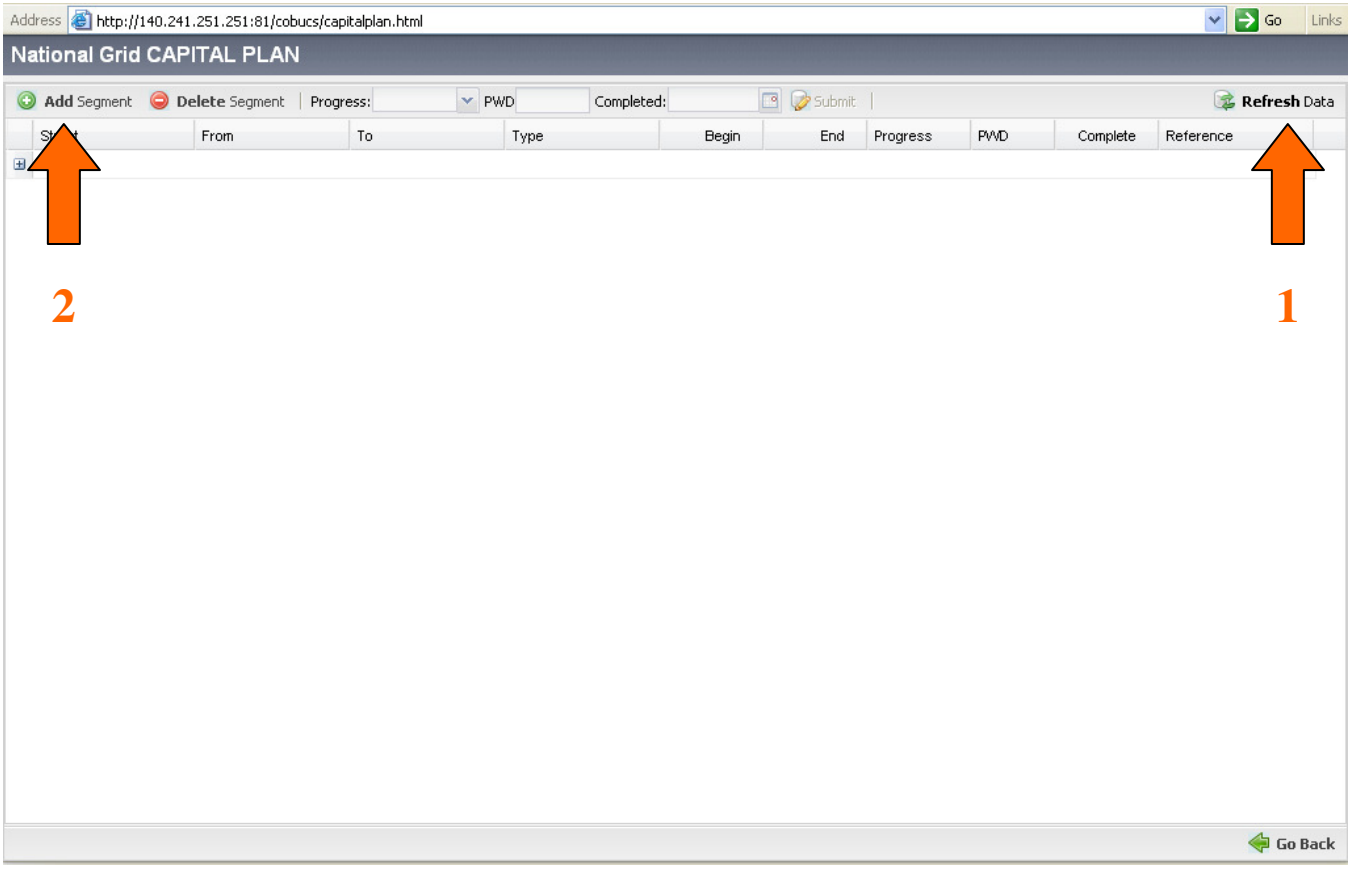
2) Remember, absolutely NO PERMITS shall be issued by the Boston Public Works Permit Branch until the proposed work has been entered into the COBUCS program.

   A. Emergency Permits are not considered Planned Work and are therefore not required to be entered into COBUCS for activation.

   B. On any emergency where the work continues beyond the 24 hour emergency period, or if the work is put on hold at any point requiring either the use of steel plates or the backfilling and securing of the work site in cold patch and/or hot mix asphalt, the Permittee is required to apply for a PWD Permit to continue working at the location.

   C. At any point where a Permittee must apply for a PWD permit, that Permittee will be responsible to enter the proposed work into COBUCS.

3) If you experience any problems opening the Capital Plans tab please notify Mark Cardarelli immediately by emailing him at mark.cardarelli@cityofboston.gov.



Adding a Proposed Work Segment –

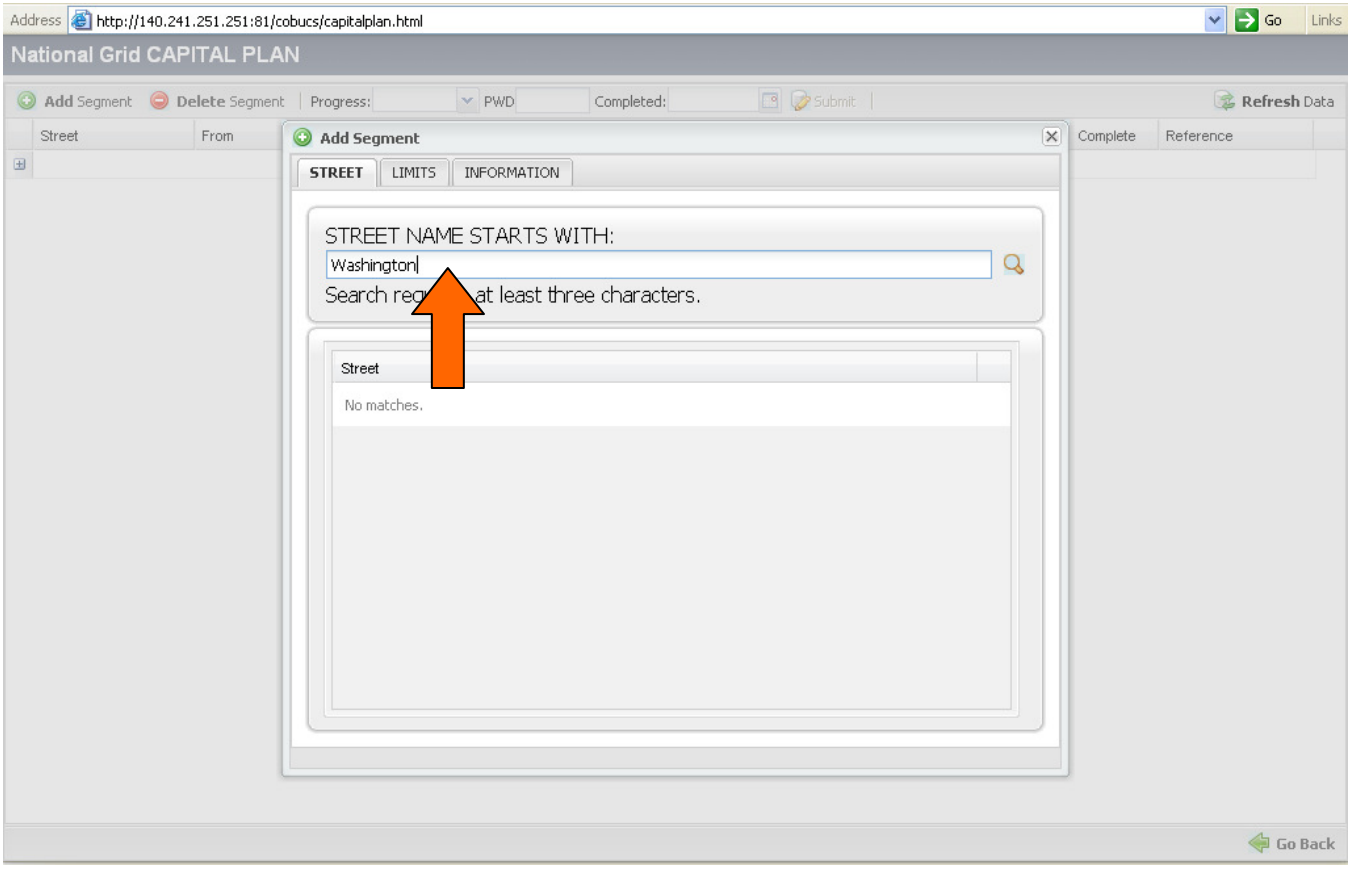
1) After clicking on the Capital Plans tab you will be redirected to your company's proposed work list. This list will include all entries made into the COBUCS program by your company.

   A. In the above example no work has been entered, therefore the page is blank. Once you start to add segments of work to the COBUCS program your proposed work list will begin to grow.

   B. If more than one person is entering proposed work locations for your company, be sure to press the Refresh Data (see 1 on above figure) icon on the top right of the COBUCS screen periodically. This will load all locations entered by another party for your company so that you may see what work has been entered. Once refreshed, all locations will be available for you to review.

2) To enter a new proposed work location, click on the Add Segment tab at the top left of the screen (see 2 on above figure).

3) If you experience any problems opening the Add Segment tab please notify Mark Cardarelli immediately by emailing him at mark.cardarelli@cityofboston.gov.



Selecting the Location of Proposed Work –

1) After clicking on the Add Segment tab you will be redirected to a new window (see above figure)

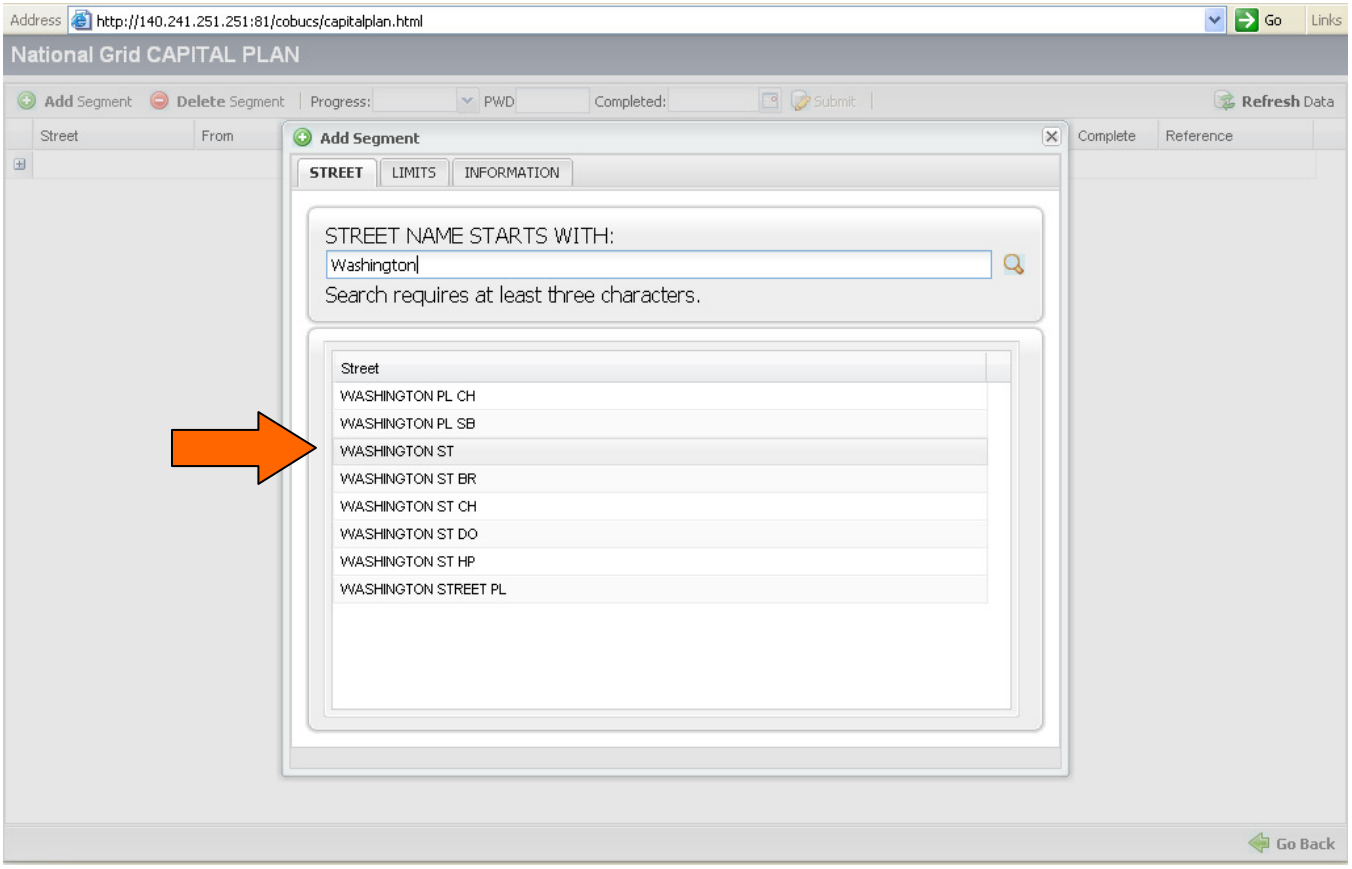
2) In this window you will be prompted to supply COBUCS with the name of the street you wish to perform work on.

    A. The name of the street may be abbreviated.

    B. The COBUCS program will not recognize misspelled street names so it is a good idea to write out only as much of the name as you know.

    C. Do not add suffixes to the street name (St, Ave, Sq, Ct, etc). COBUCS will supply the appropriate suffixes in the verification process.

3) Once you have the street name entered into the appropriate field, hit the ENTER or RETURN key on your keyboard.



Verifying the Location of Proposed Work –

1) Upon entering the name of the street you wish to perform work on, you will be given a selection of streets with similar names to choose from. Verify which street you wish to perform work on by clicking on the appropriate street name.

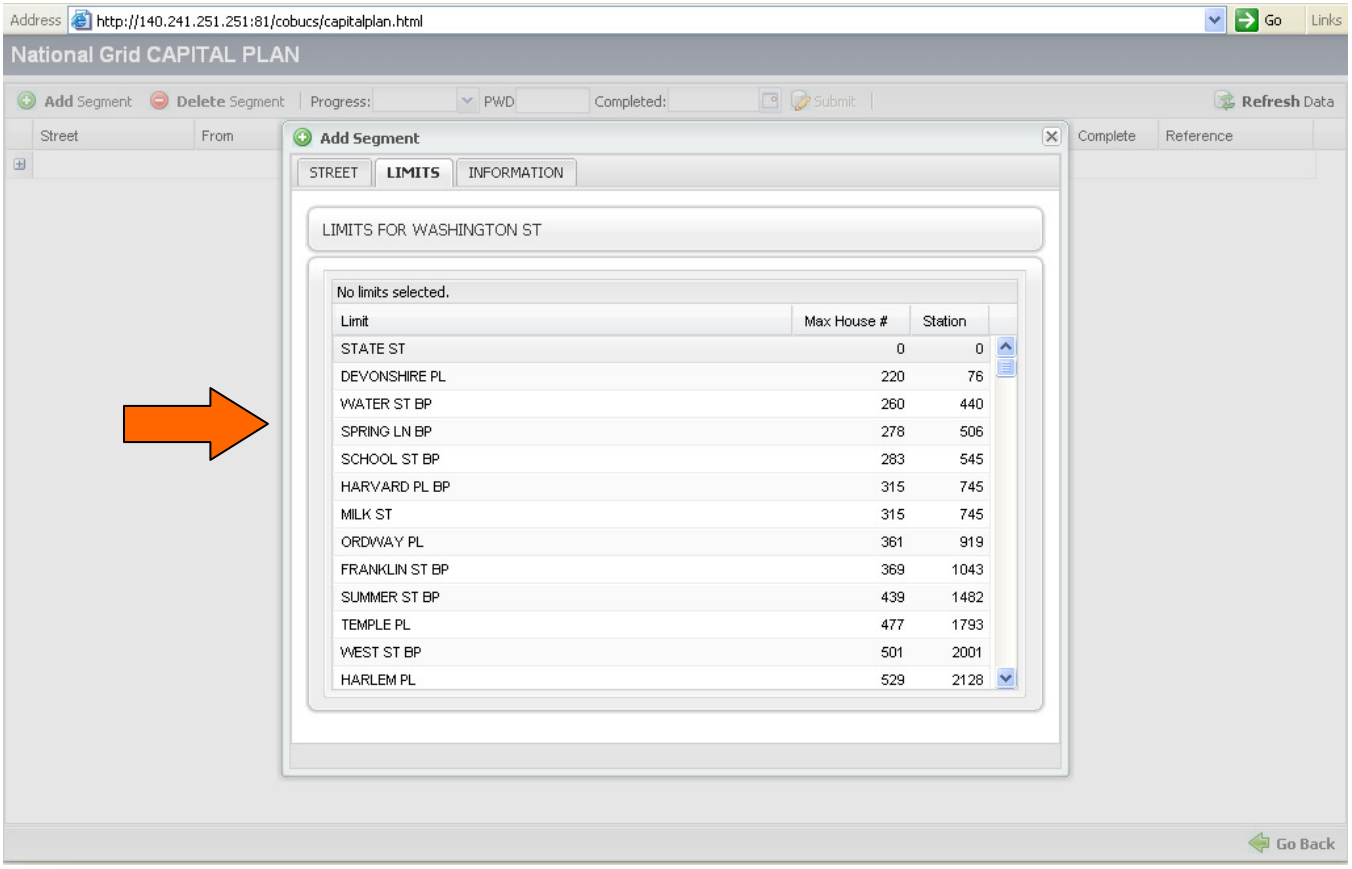
    A. Take care in selecting the correct street name. There are many streets throughout the City of Boston that share the same name. A two-letter code may be present at the end of the street name to signify which district the street resides.

    B. If you are given only one choice for verification it is likely that there is only one street with the given name you entered. You must still verify the street you wish to perform work on by clicking on the street name in the field list.

2) If the street you wish to perform work on is not shown in the verification field list, double check your spelling. If needed, enter only the partial name of the street you wish to perform work on in the Street Name Starts With field.

    A. For Washington St you needn't write out Washington in the street name field. Instead you can write Wash. COBUCS will supply you with a number of streets that match what you entered.

    B. For streets that contain a prefix, such as St Botolph St, you may need to write out the prefix. In this case St Botolph may need to be written as Saint Botolph or vice versa.



Selecting the Limits of Proposed Work –

1) Once the street has been verified you will be asked for limits of the work to be performed.

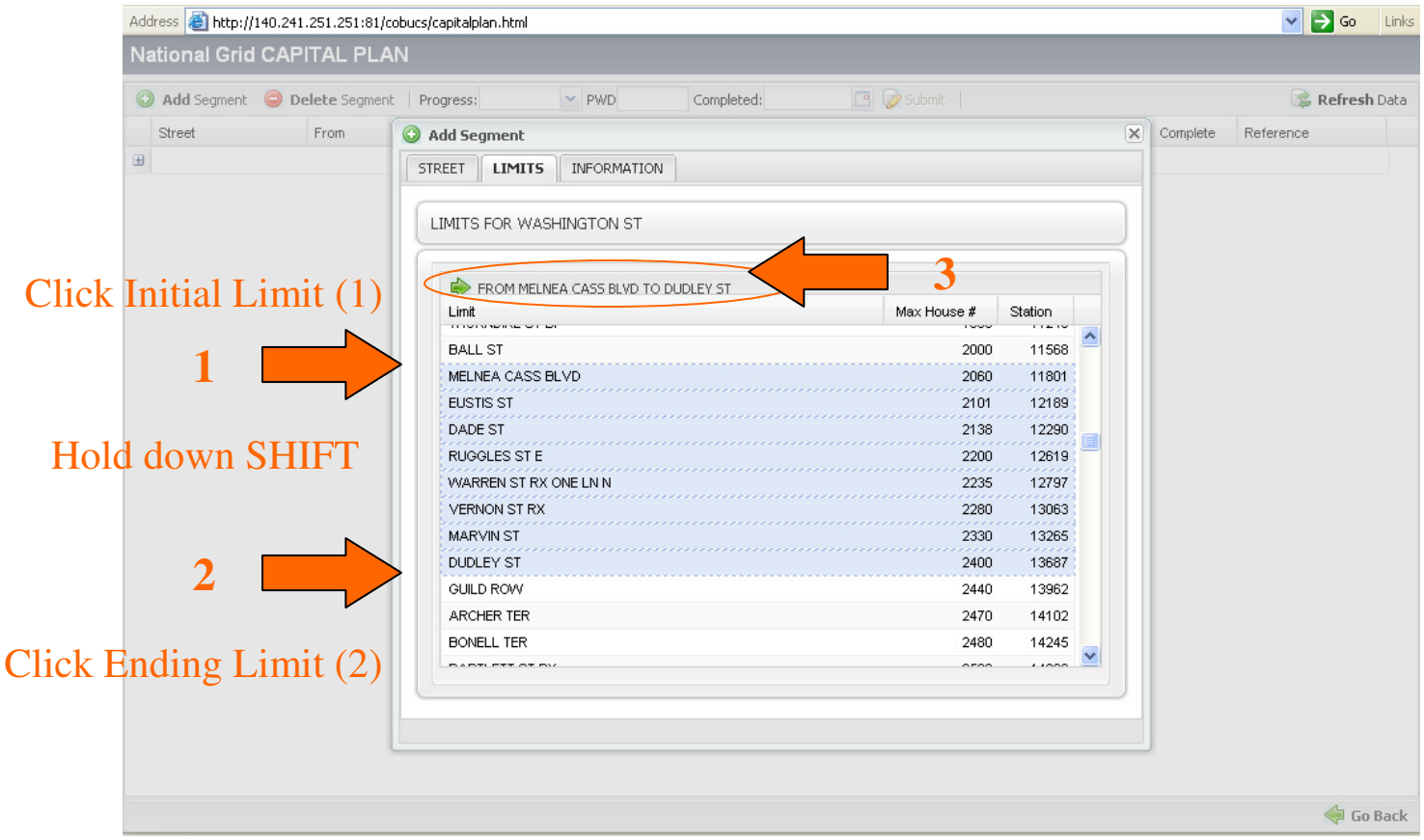
2) To begin, scroll through the list of cross streets provided under the Limit field until you come to the starting location of work (see above figure).

   A. If you do not see the beginning cross street listed in the Limit field it may be labeled under a cross street at the same intersection. Verify the location limits of work and see if another street intersects the location you wish your work to begin at.

   B. You may be required to extend the limits of your proposed work if the proposed work enters into the intersection of a cross street.

3) Once you have found the beginning of your proposed work limits, click on the name of the cross street. The cross street should be highlighted once it is selected.

4) If you experience any problems opening the Limits tab please notify Mark Cardarelli immediately by emailing him at mark.cardarelli@cityofboston.gov.



Selecting the Limits of Proposed Work Con't –

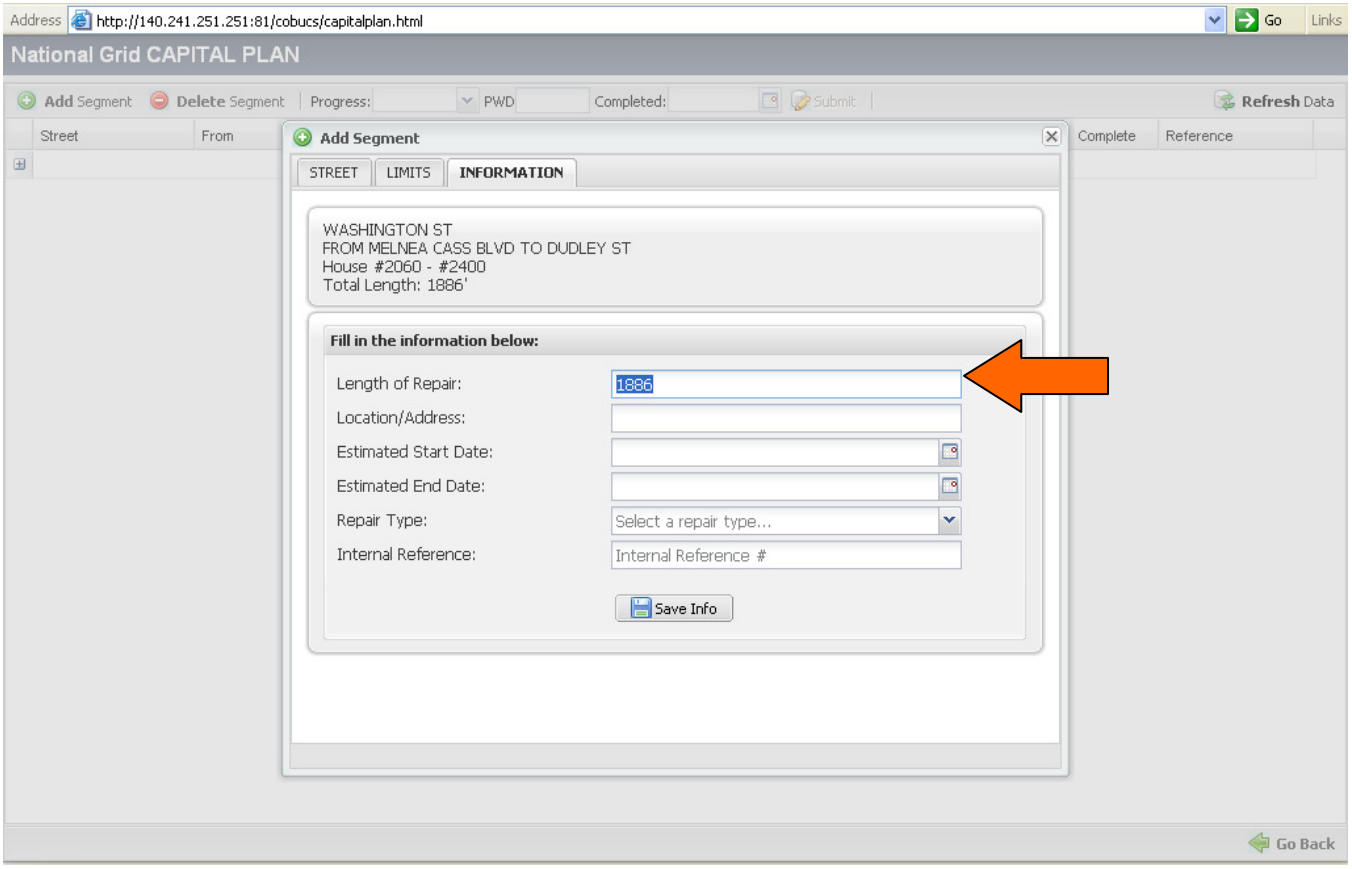
5) To select multiple segments, extending the proposed area of work, hold down the SHIFT or CTRL (control) button on your keyboard and click on the appropriate cross street that will encompass the propose work (see 1 & 2 on above figure).

6) If your work takes place at a single address, choose the limits that extend before and after your proposed work location.

7) When submitting a street for proposed work, be sure that the cross streets or segments selected fully encompass the project. You may choose to extend the limits of your proposed work on COBUCS to ensure that your company's project remains between the specified cross streets in the selected segment.

8) Once you have selected the limits of your proposed work, a green arrow with the street limits will appear at the top of the Limit field (see 3 on above figure).

9) Confirm that your limits are correct by clicking on the green arrow to the left of your limit verification (see 3 on above figure).



Entering Actual Length (in Linear Ft) of Work –

1) After verifying the segments of work you will be redirected to a new tab labeled Information. Here you will be asked for specific information regarding the location, size, and estimated time frame of your proposed work.

2) The given Length of Repair is the entire length, in linear feet, between the two Limits you selected.

    A. If your company intends to do patch work at a specific address, please provide the estimated length, in linear feet, of the work to be performed. Simply replace the current length listed in the Length of Repair with the accurate estimated length of work. If your company wishes to perform multiple cuts within the length of service, please give the sum length, in linear feet, of all locations.

    B. The Length of Repair should reflect the estimated length of repair your company will be requesting on the permit application.[1]

3) If you experience any problems opening the Information tab please notify Mark Cardarelli immediately by emailing him at mark.cardarelli@cityofboston.gov.

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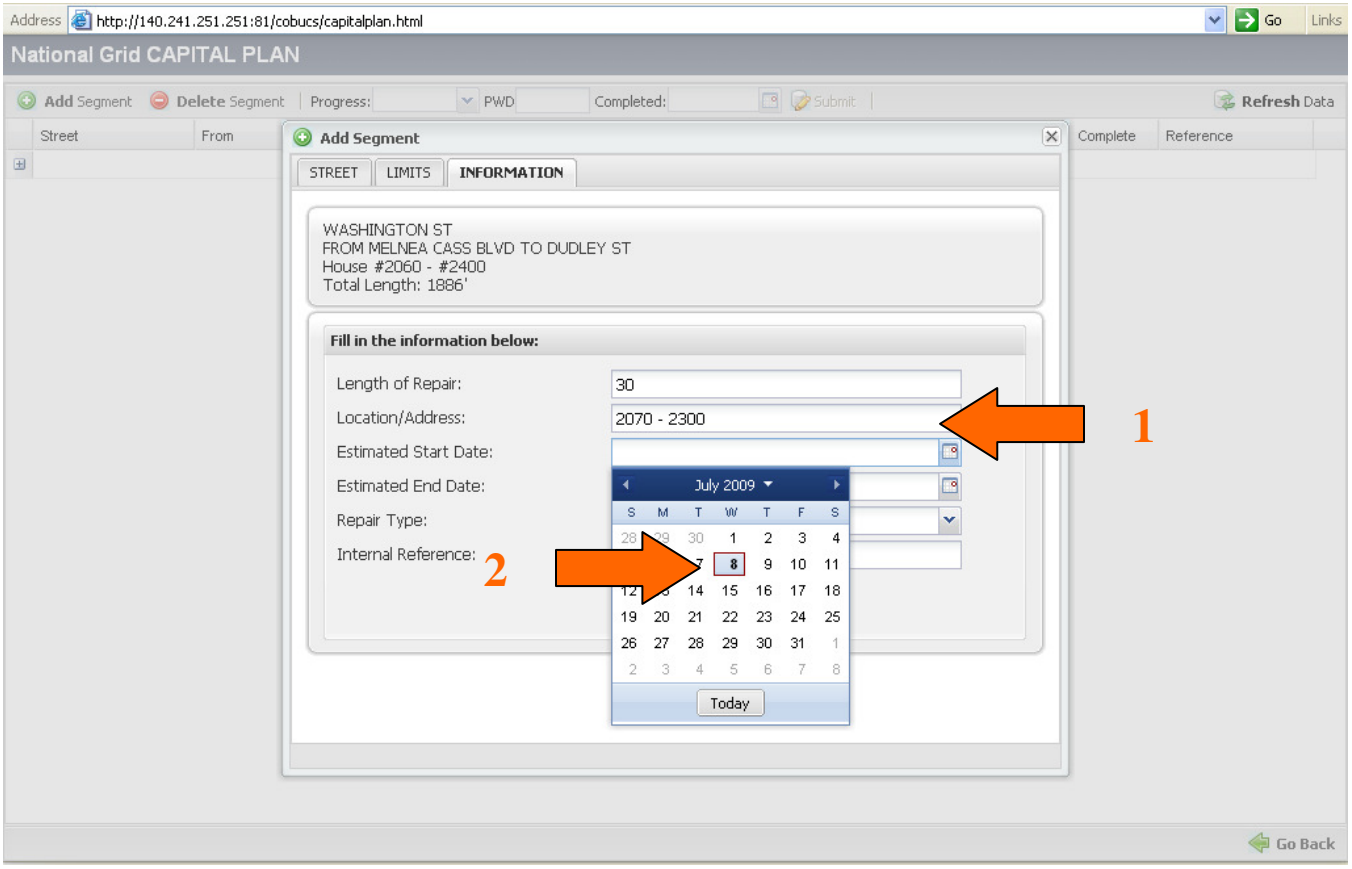
[1] While COBUCS would like to have an accurate measurement of the proposed work, there will be certain instances where you may not be able to ascertain the actual length and may use the given segment length as your entry. COBUCS' is main goal is to let the City know there is work between the segments. Obviously, when submitting the card for permit application required by the PWD you are required to provide the accurate cut measurements.



Entering Actual Address of Work –

1) Once you have entered the estimated length of the proposed work, enter the specific house address, or range of addresses, where the proposed work is to take place (see 1 on above figure). This will allow for a more defined view of exactly where your company intends to perform work.

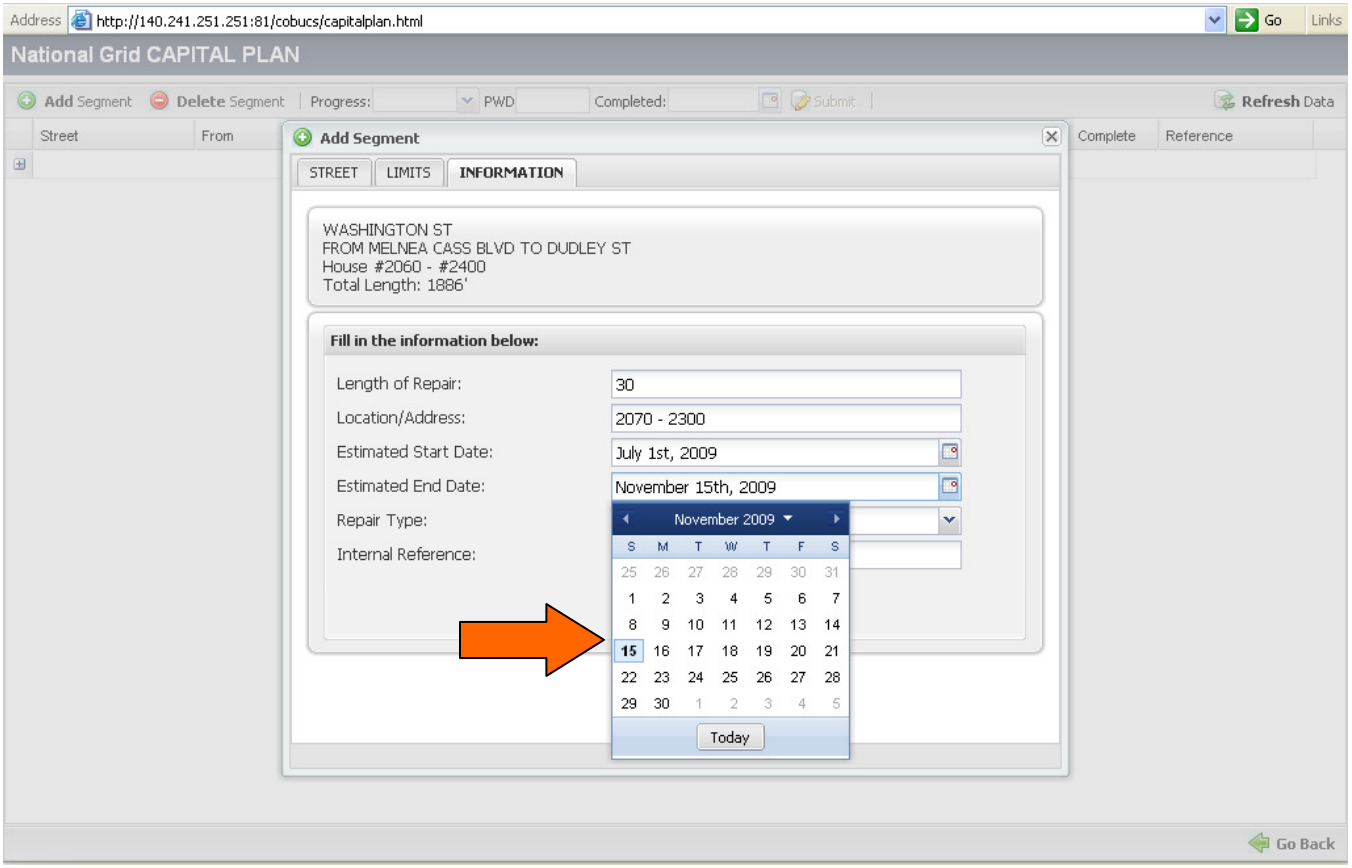
2) The Location/Address field should reflect the address your company will be requesting on the permit application

Entering Estimated Start and Completion Dates of Work –

1) After entering the address(s), or address limits, enter the date of entry into the Estimated Start Date field (see 2 on above figure).

   A. Whether your company is entering work planned for the following year, the following month, or the following week, the Estimated Start Date field should always be the day the work was entered into COBUCS.

   B. By entering the date of entry as the estimated starting date you allow the City to coordinate with you more efficiently.



Entering Estimated Start and Completion Dates of Work Con't –

1) When entering data into COBUCS regarding your company's long-term planned projects, it is recommended that you extend your proposed completion date to the end of the construction season (see above figure), regardless of your actual planned completion date.

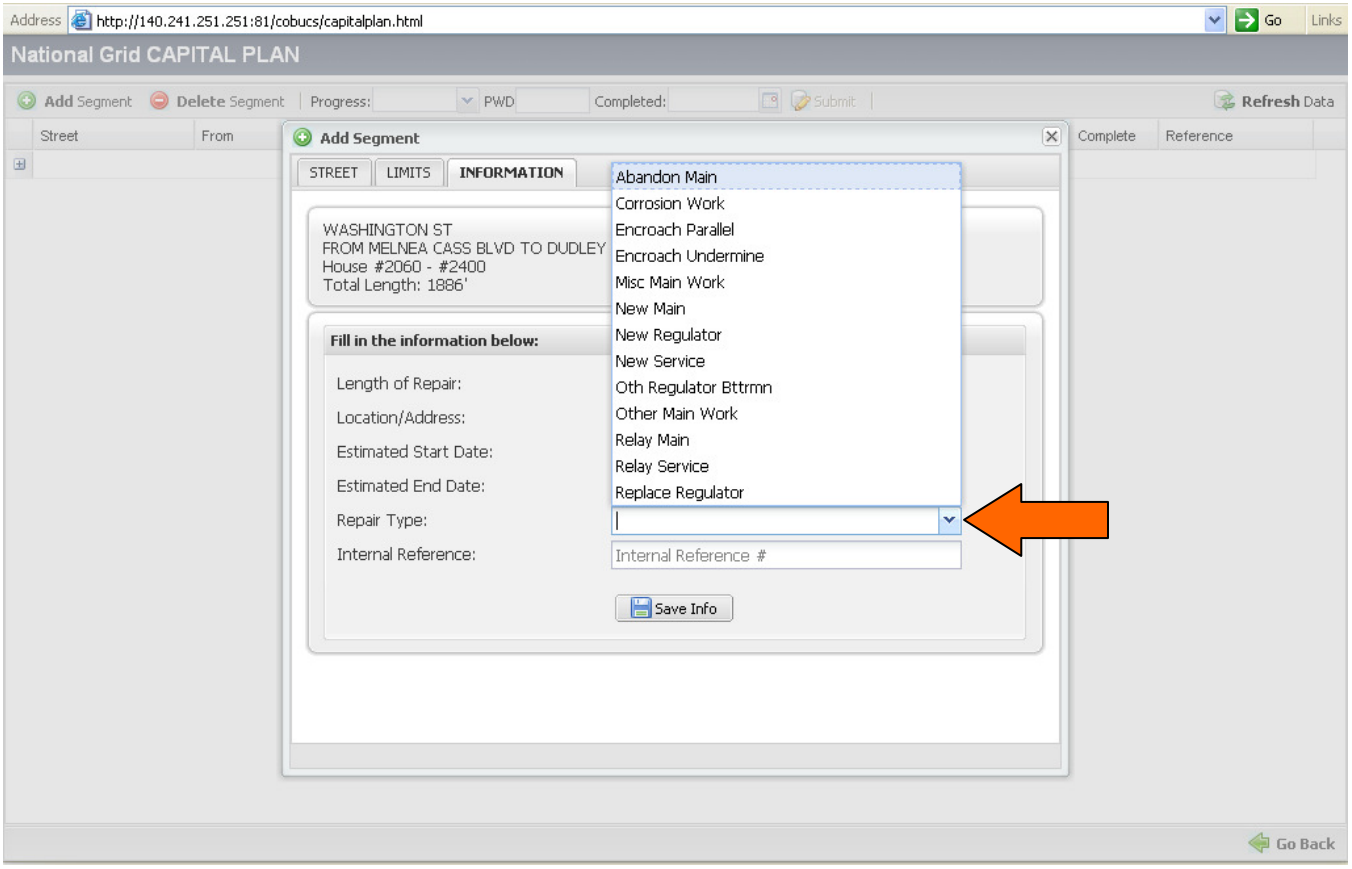
    A. When your company finishes the work on the proposed work location, the actual date of completion can be entered into the COBUCS program.

    B. On any proposed capital projects your company has scheduled for the following year, it is mandatory that you enter the information right away using the date of entry as your start date. This will allow the City to know that you have proposed major work coming up in case it has plans to work on the street.

2) When you enter the estimated start and completion date of a proposed project, COBUCS reserves the location of proposed work for your company.

    A. If the City reserves a street before your company requests work for that location, COBUCS will show a conflict upon submitting the proposal. This does NOT mean you will be unable to perform the work. The City will coordinate with your company to allow work to be performed prior to the City's work.

3) If you experience any problems entering the Estimated Start/End Date(s) please notify Mark Cardarelli immediately by emailing him at mark.cardarelli@cityofboston.gov.



Entering the Type of Work to be Performed –

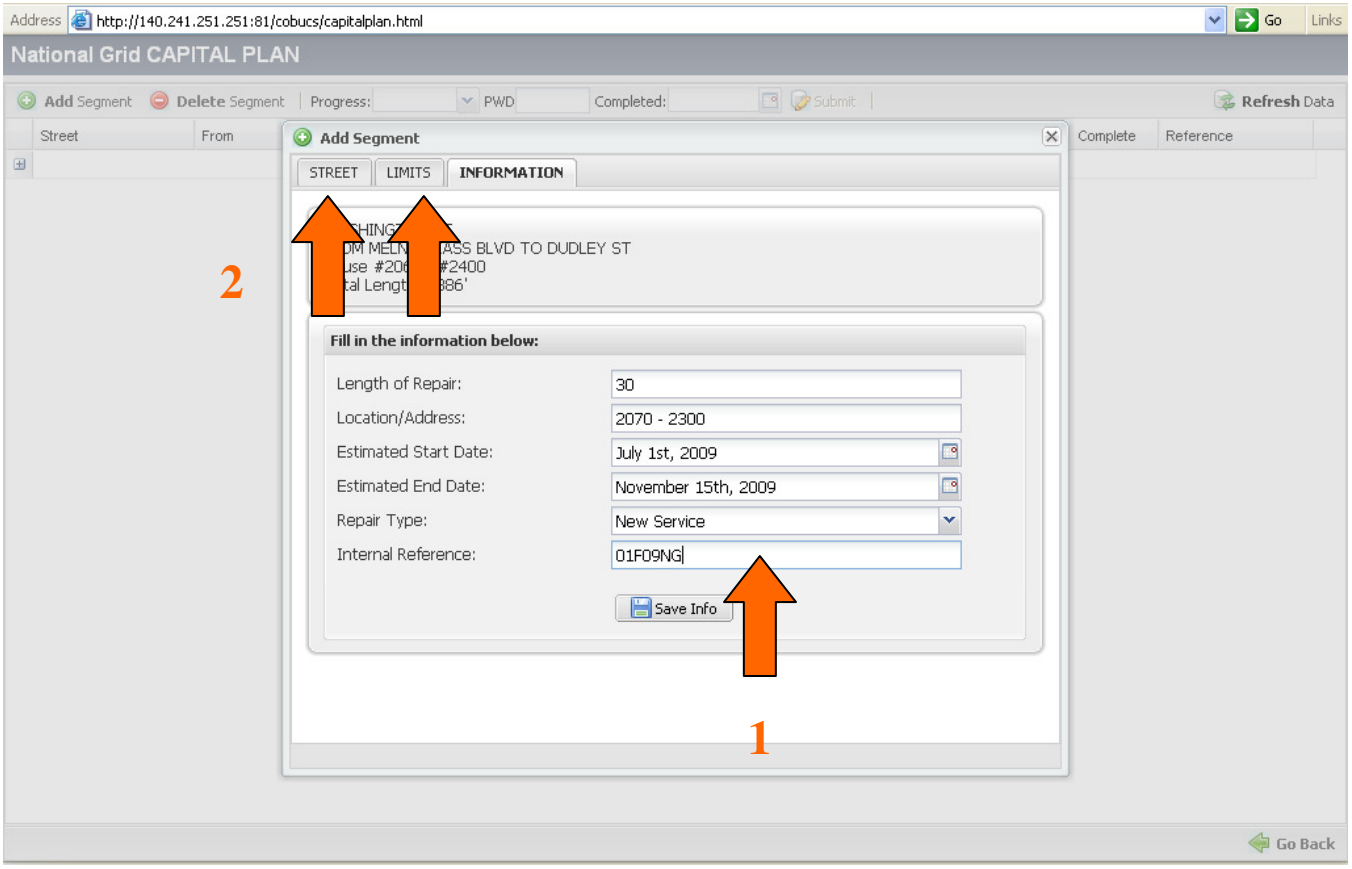
1) COBUCS has been designed to cater to your own company's needs. As such, your company should have submitted a list of Repair Types for you to select from when entering proposed work into COBUCS.

   A. To view your company repair types, click on the drop-down icon to the right of the field (see above figure).

   B. If the Repair Type field is empty when you open the drop-down tab verify that your company has supplied the Boston Public Works Department with the necessary information and notify Mark Cardarelli immediately by emailing him at mark.cardarelli@cityofboston.gov.

   C. You MUST enter a Repair Type from the available choices in the drop-down field. If the appropriate option does not exist for the proposed work, notify Mark Cardarelli so that the option can be added to your company's Repair Type field.

2) By entering the Repair Type in the Information tab, you are indicating the general work to be performed at the selected location. This information should reflect the type of repair your company will be requesting on the permit application.



Entering a Reference Code –

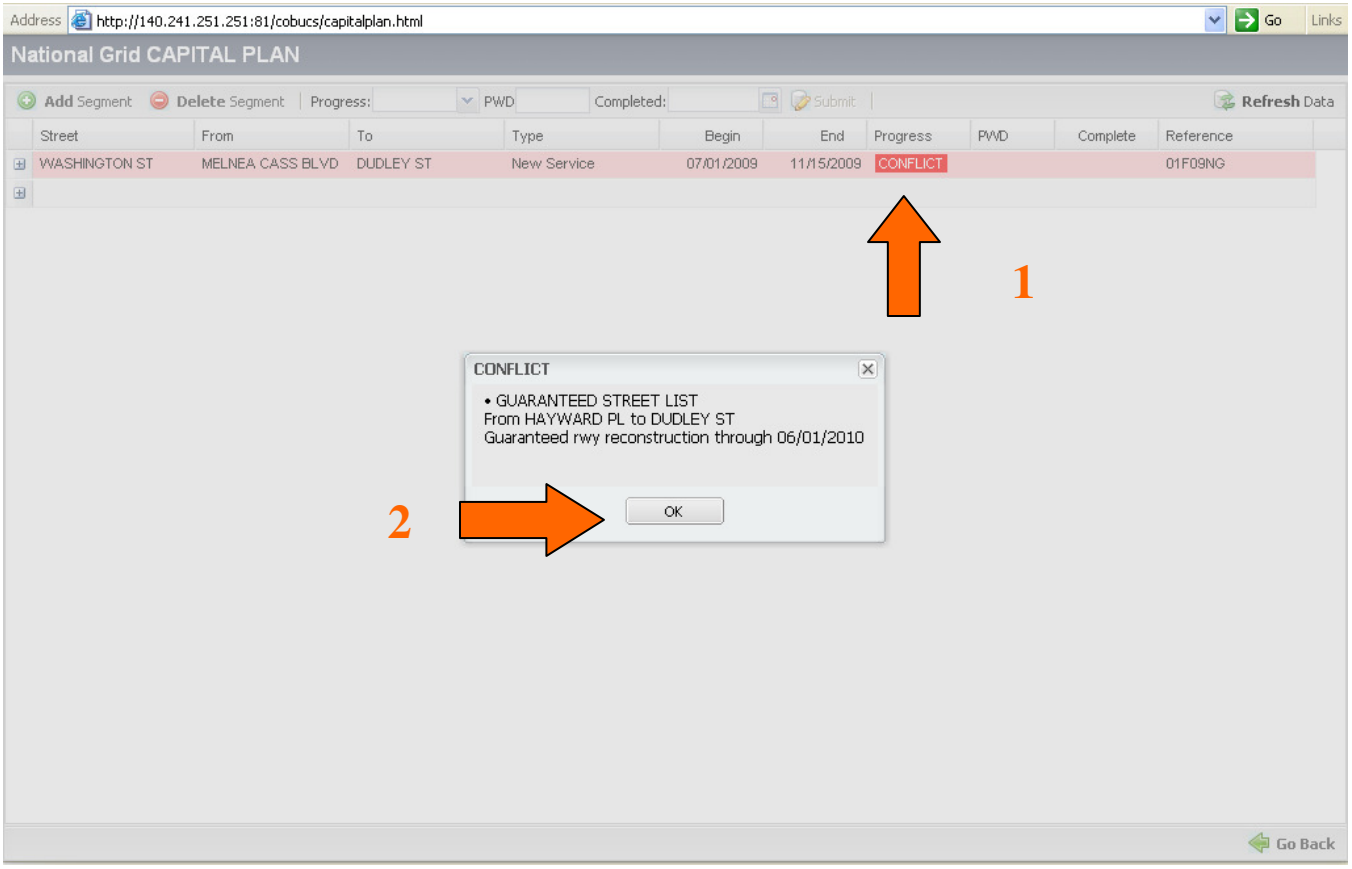
1) The final step before entering your proposed location into COBUCS is to add an Internal Reference so that your company is better able to location the proposed work (see 1 on above figure).

   A. Utility Companies and Private Contractors may use any code their company chooses to best reference the work to be performed. It is recommended that your company use its **Work Order** number system where applicable.

   B. Site Plan Engineers must supply the contact name and phone number of the point person for the project in the Internal Reference Field so that the City can Coordinate where necessary.

2) Once you have entered your chosen Internal Reference, click on the Save Info icon at the bottom of the window. Once the proposed work has been submitted there is no way to edit the information, so take care to double check all information before submitting.

3) If at any point in the input process you wish to change the limits of work, you can go back to the Street and Limit windows by clicking on the appropriate tab (see 2 on above figure).



Conflicts on Proposed Work Locations –

1) If you enter a location that falls within either a Guaranteed Street limit, or else an area listed on the City of Boston's future and proposed Capital Projects, the segment you entered will be considered a Conflict, the street will become highlighted in red (see 1 on above figure), and a pop-up window telling you why the location is in conflict will appear.

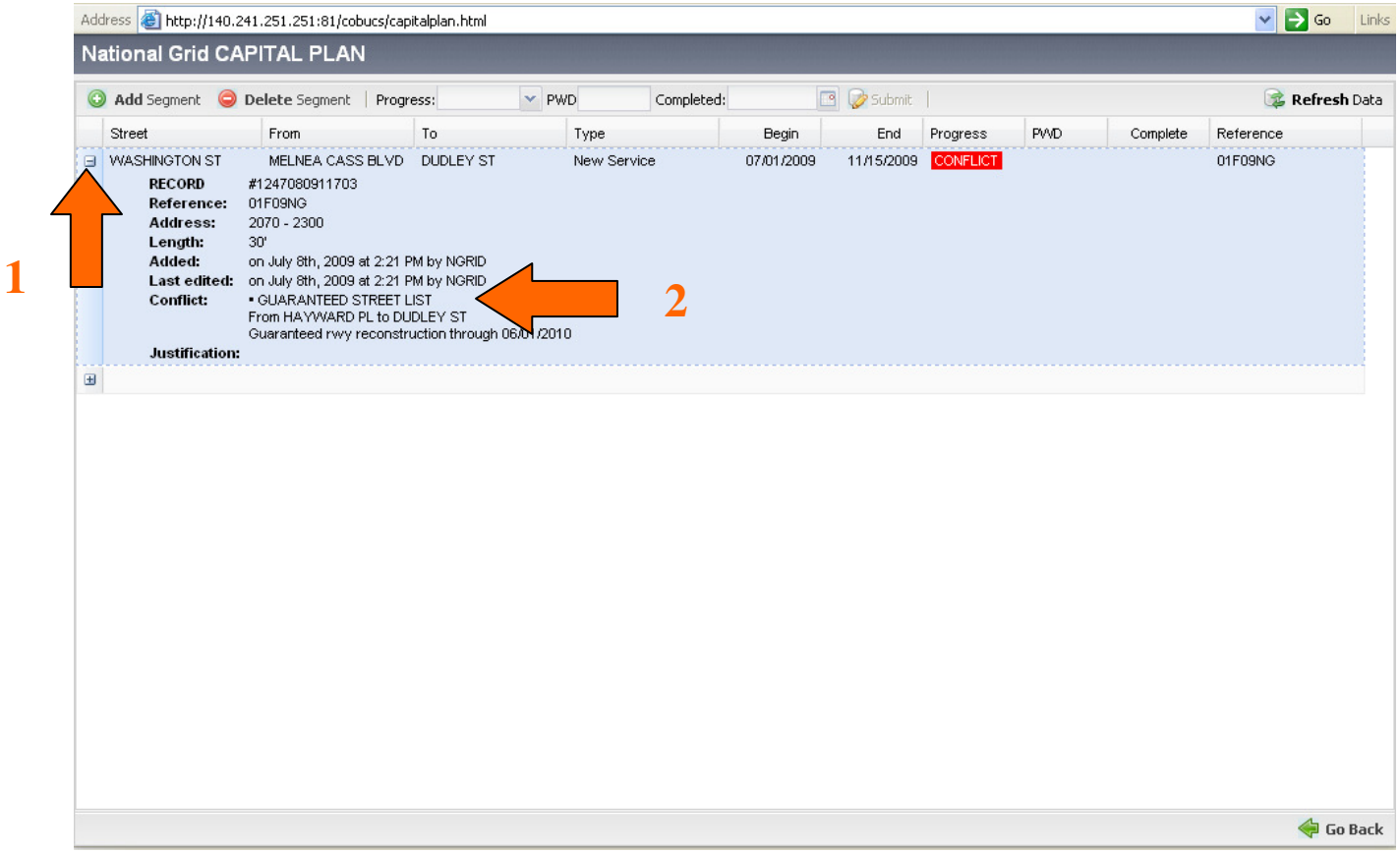
   A. If the proposed work takes place on, or crosses through, a Guaranteed Street, your company will be responsible for paying the complete restoration costs for that area.

   B. If the proposed work takes place on a proposed City of Boston Capital Project, contact Mark Cardarelli immediately by emailing him at mark.cardarelli@cityofboston.gov.

   Note: Immediately notifying PWD may allow Mark to coordinate with the City Engineer to allow the work to take place before resurfacing commences.

2) If a street is listed as being in Conflict it does NOT mean you will be unable to perform the work. The City will coordinate with your company to allow work to be performed prior to the City's work commencing, where possible.

   A. To continue your entry, click on the OK button (see 2 on above figure)



Viewing Details of Proposed Work Entered –

1) You are able to view the information you entered when adding a new proposed work location by clicking on the Extension icon located to the left of your proposed work entry (see 1 on above figure).

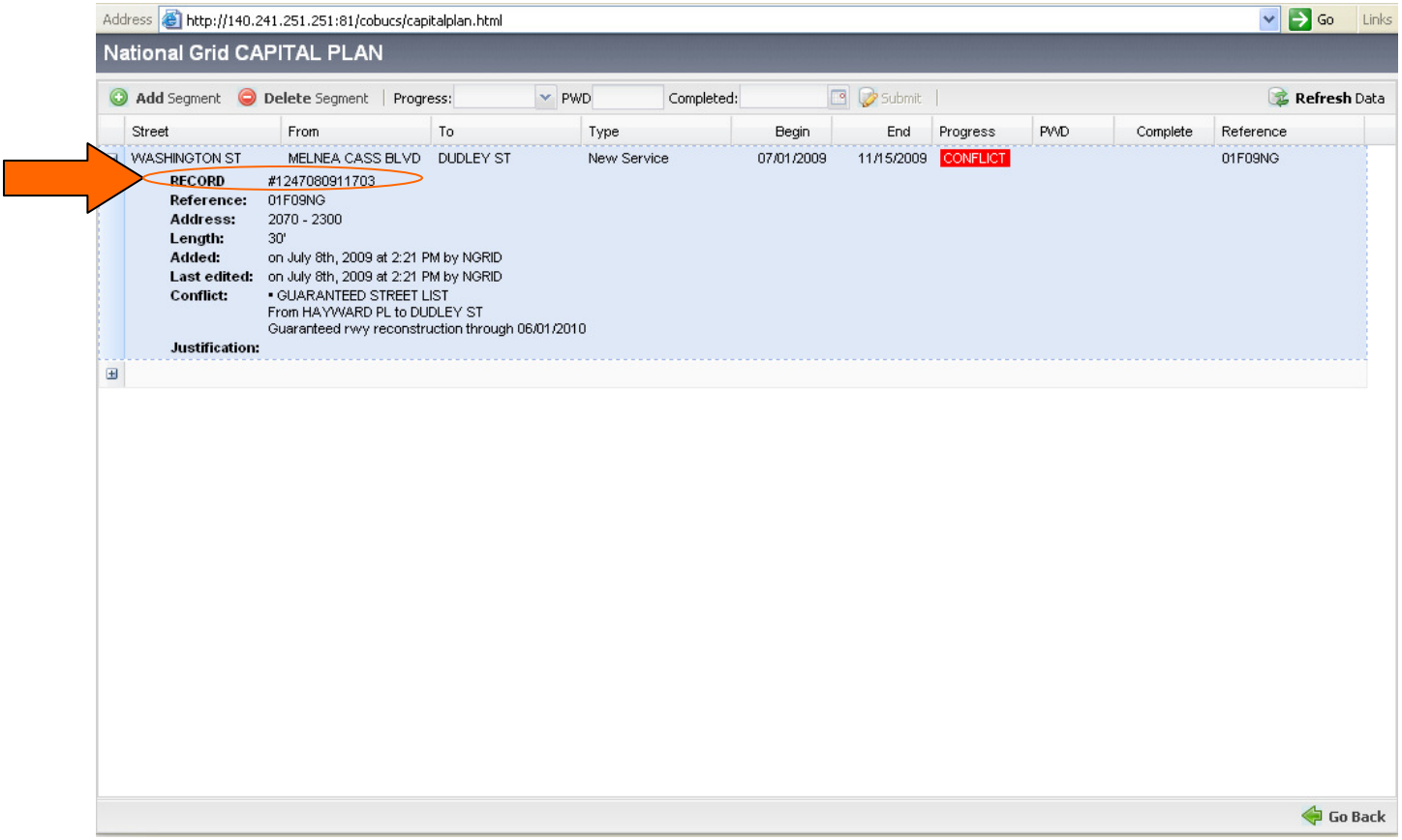
   A. If at any point you discover incorrect information while reviewing your proposed work locations, you must delete the proposed work entry and re-enter the work. Be sure to double-check all of the information before saving the information.

2) The explanation for why the proposed work is listed as being in Conflict will be noted in the Conflict section of the entry review (see 2 on above figure).

   A. On any proposed work that COBUCS determines is in conflict with our Guaranteed Street List, your company will be denied a permit for that location.

   B. If your company wishes to appeal the denial, they may submit to Commissioner Joanne Massaro of Public Works Department, detailing the reasons and justification for the need to breach a Guaranteed Street.

   C. On any proposed work that COBUCS determines is in conflict regarding the City's ARP, CRP, Recon, or ERP lists, you must **IMMEDIATELY** contact Mark Cardarelli by emailing him at mark.cardarelli@cityofboston.gov **AND** call the Public Works office at 617-635-4951.



Record Number for Public Works Permit Branch Review –

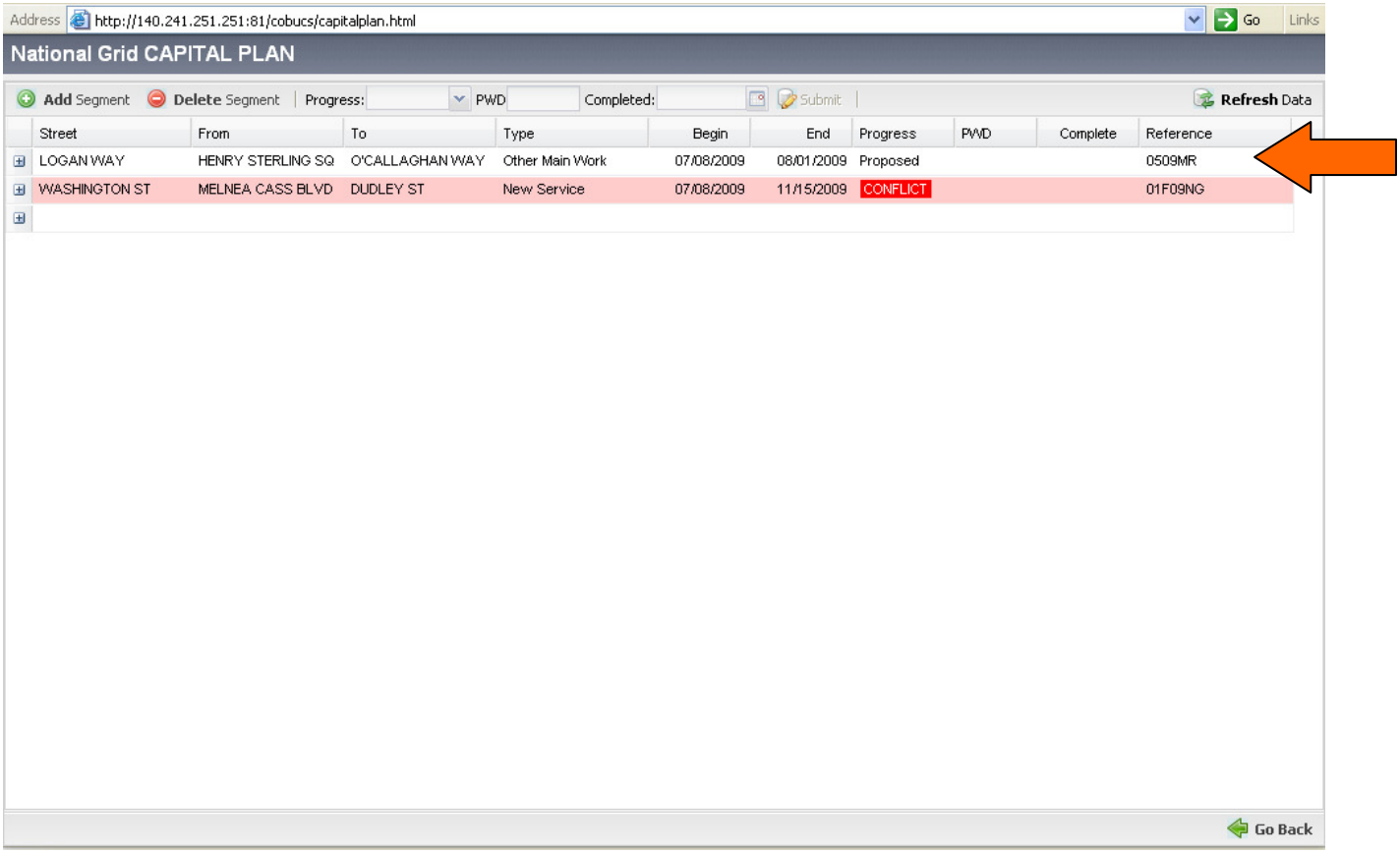
1) Within the details of your entered proposed work there is a Record entry (See above figure)

   A. This Record entry is the reference number used by the Public Works Permit Branch to verify your company's proposed work has been entered into COBUCS. This Record number will be requested by the Permit Branch before any Permit will be issued.

   B. Using a false Record number, or using a number for work not pertaining to the particular permit application will be seen as an egregious offense and no permits will be issued to your company. A meeting with Commissioner Massaro will be held to determine the course of action to follow.

2) Even if your proposed work is listed as in Conflict, do not remove the work location from COBUCS. The City of Boston will try to work with your company to allow work where able.

3) For locations that are **NOT** listed as in Conflict your company is able to request a permit immediately. Your company will still be responsible for all permit application processes, including but not limited to Jackie's Law permits, BTD regulations, and the City of Boston Permit Application processes as outlined in the Rules and Specifications for the City of Boston.



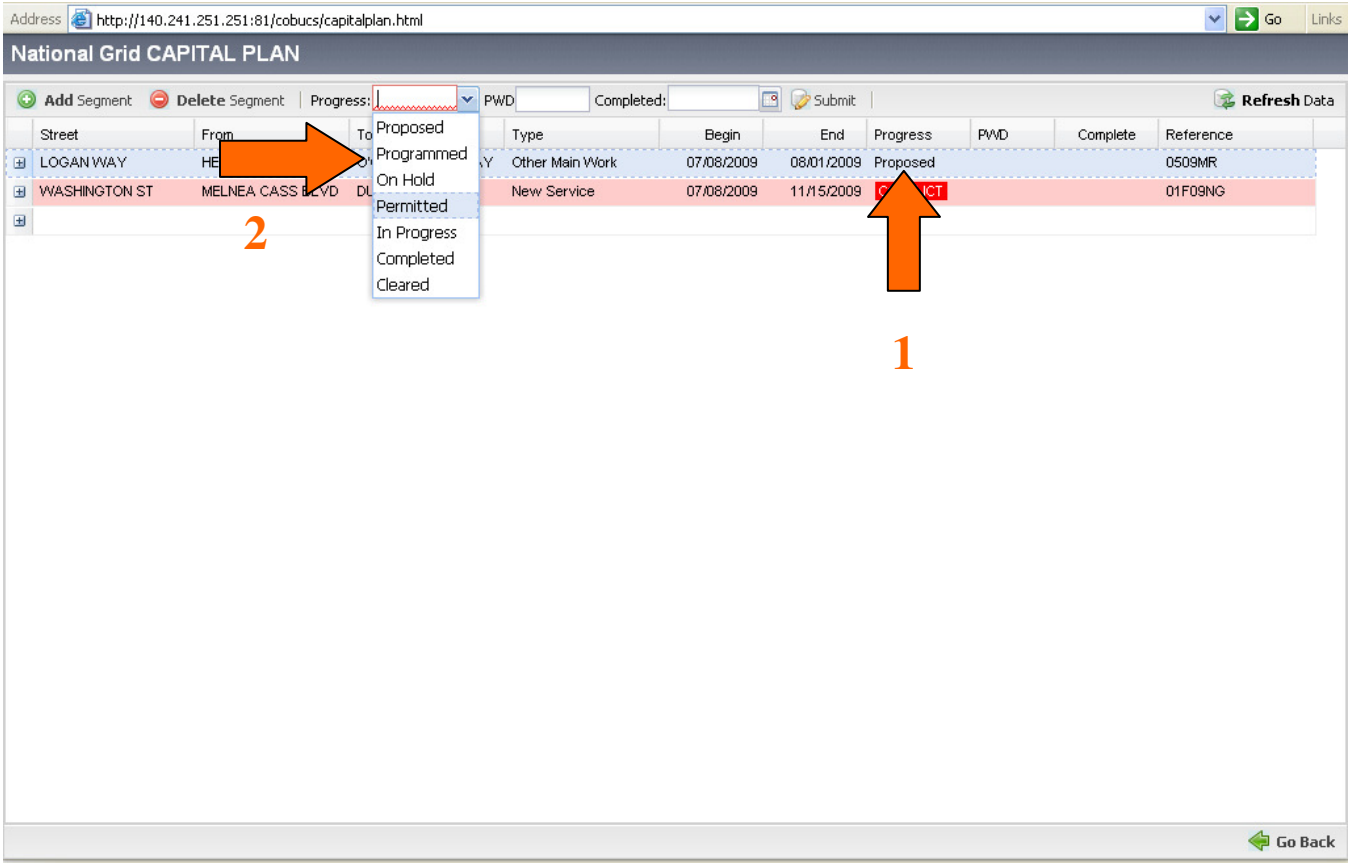
Updating Permitted Work –

1) Proposed work entries that are without Conflict are not in conflict with City of Boston planned, proposed, active, or guaranteed work. Your company will NOT receive notice if another utility intends to perform work at the location you have proposed.

   A. Locations without conflict are now included in your proposed Capital Plans.

   B. If the City enters a street location into COBUCS for a proposed Capital Project that falls within the limits of your proposed work, COBUCS will notify the City that it must coordinate with **your company** before any possible Capital Project is able to take place.

   C. Conflicting work between utilities is not recorded so that utility companies cannot fish for areas of work by requesting work on a street to see whether or not they conflict with another utility's work.



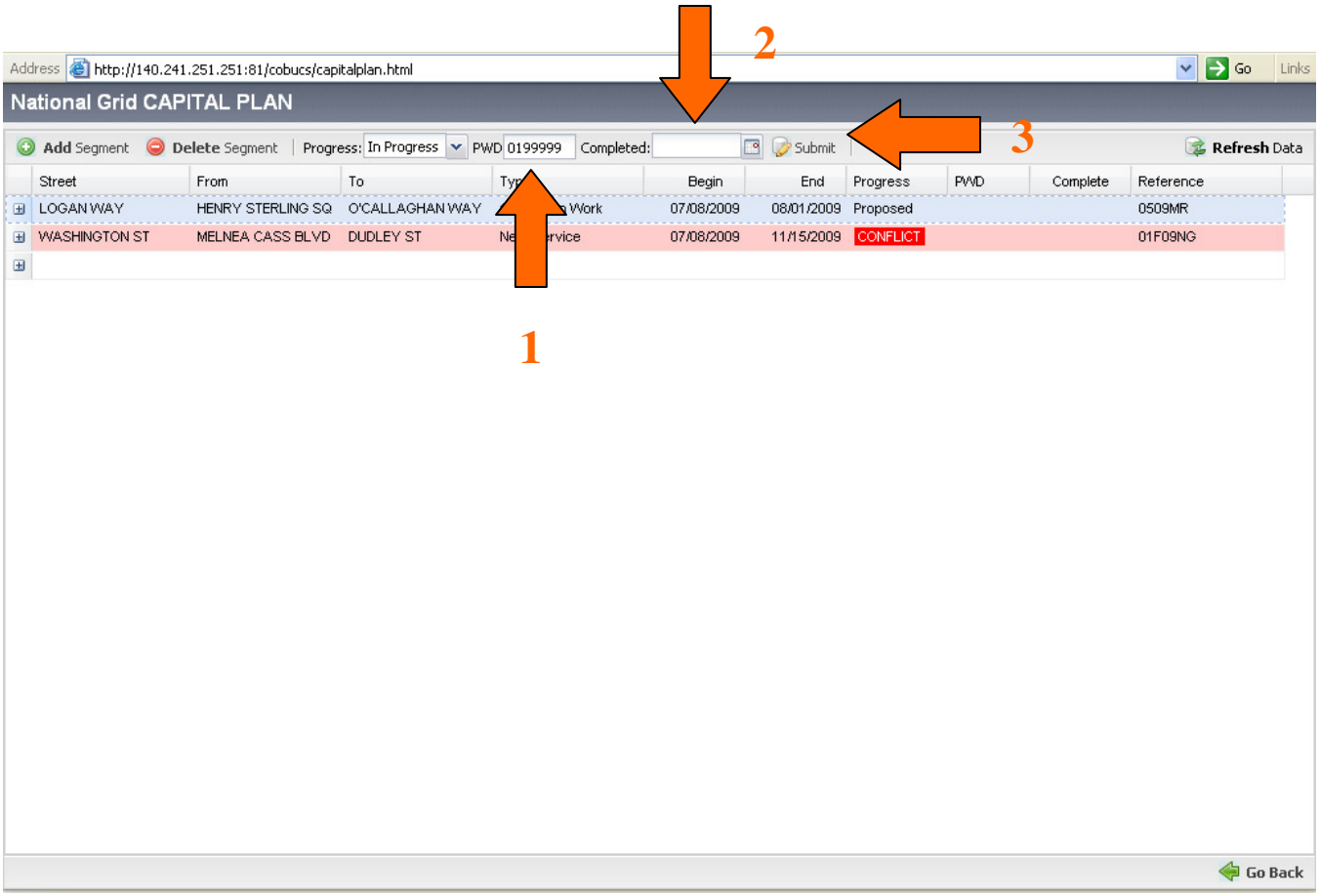
Updating Permitted Work Con't –

2) On all proposed work entered into COBUCS that is not met with some form of Conflict, the entry will automatically be labeled as Proposed in the Progress field (see 1 on above figure).

   A. Once your company has successfully completed the permit application process and has been issued a permit you should alter the Progress of the proposed work to reflect that the location is now permitted (see 2 on above figure).

   B. If your company intends to do work immediately after receiving a permit from the Permit Branch, change the status to In Progress

   C. For major projects requiring a large amount of clearance review by other utilities, it is recommended that your company notify the other utilities at the City of Boston Monthly Utility Coordination Meeting.



Updating Permitted Work Con't –

3) On work that has been issued a permit by the City of Boston Public Works Permit Branch, attach the permit number to the work by highlighting the entry, typing the seven digit code into the PWD field (see 1 on above figure), and pressing the Submit icon.

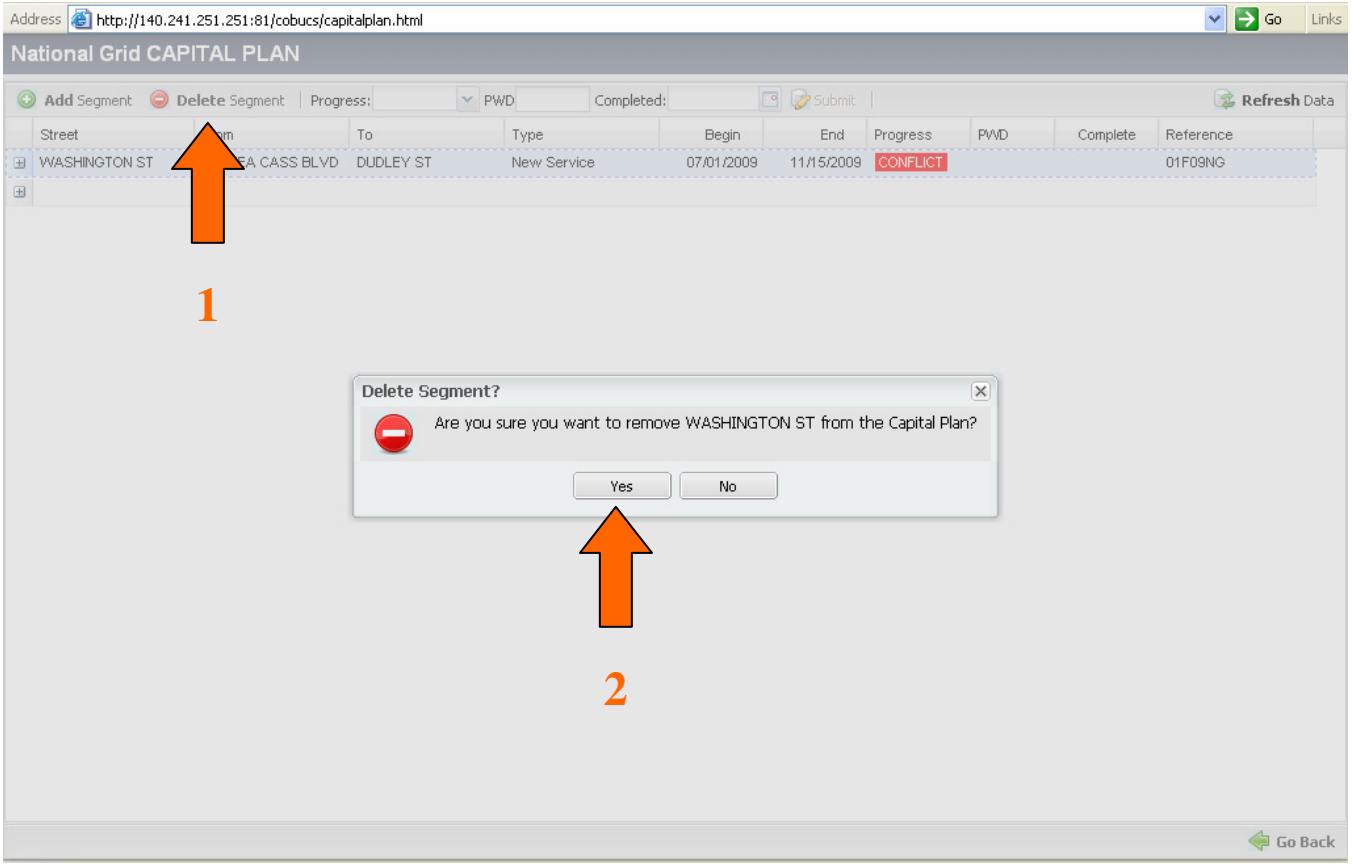
    A. You can change the information in the Progress and PWD fields as many times as needed, however once you submit the entry as Completed you will be unable to change the entry's progress further.

4) When completing work, be sure to enter the date the work was completed into the Complete field (see 2 on above figure). By changing the status of the work to Complete you are stating that your company has finished its repairs and has no further work to complete using the permit number provided for that location.

5) By clicking on the Submit icon (see 3 on above figure), COBUCS will update the information entered into the Progress, PWD, and Completed fields.

    A. By entering a date into the Complete field and setting your Progress as completed you are freeing that street, allowing the Public Works Department to once again schedule a Capital Program in the future for that location.

    B. If you have multiple permits at the same address, enter the information into COBUCS for each permit individually. Jackie's Law Permits do not need to be issued into COBUCS.



Removing Entries Entered Into COBUCS –

1) If for some reason you need to remove an entry from COBUCS, often due to work being canceled or inaccurate entries, simply select the entry and click on the Delete Segment icon located at the top left of the window (see 1 on above figure).

    A. You will be prompted to verify that you wish to remove the entry permanently. This cannot be undone if you select Yes.

    B. If you accidentally remove an entry you wished to keep, you must re-enter the information for that location once more into COBUCS. There is no recovery system for deleted entries.

2) Please do not remove completed entries. The Public Works Department is working on a system to automatically remove Completed work from your entry table.

City Of Boston Utility Coordination Software

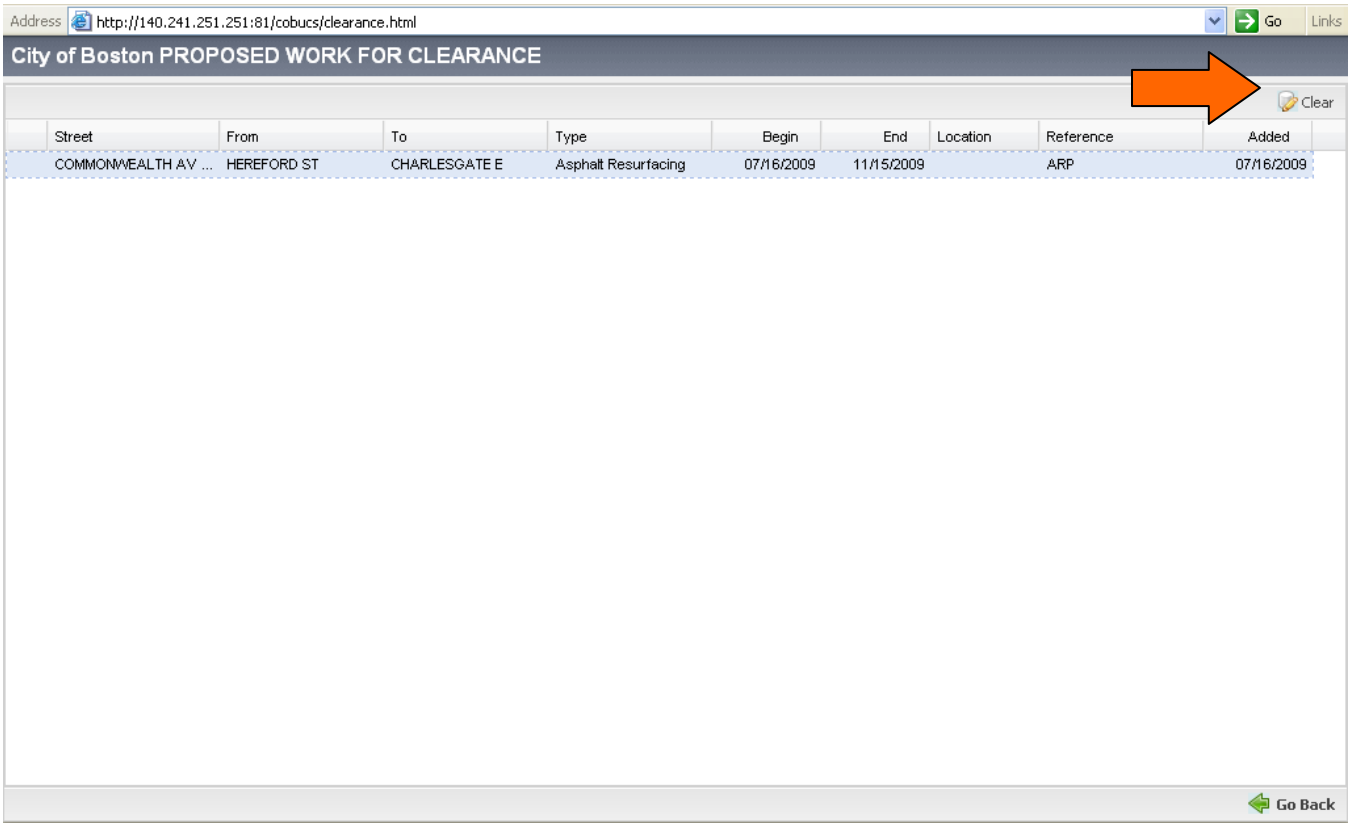
COBUCS

Clearing City of Boston PWD Proposed Capital Project Work –

1) Prior to COBUCS, clearing a Proposed City Capital Project involved an often complex and confusing transfer of spreadsheets back and forth. Now, with COBUCS you are able to submit your clearance review in just two simple steps!

2) To begin the clearance process start by selecting the City Clearance icon on the COBUCS starting menu (see above figure).

3) If you experience any problems opening the City Clearance tab please notify Mark Cardarelli immediately by emailing him at mark.cardarelli@cityofboston.gov.



Clearing CoB PWD Proposed Capital Project Work Con't –

1) Within the City Clearance window there will be a number of streets the City of Boston is requesting clearance on. It is your responsibility to review the limits of work for each location and verify that your company has absolutely no work needing to be performed within the proposed limits.

    A. If your company has proposed work that falls within the City of Boston's Capital Project location limits that information should already be entered into the COBUCS program under your Capital Plans.

    B. By entering your proposed work into your Capital Plans the Public Works Department will receive notice of your conflict.

2) If, after verification, your company has no work to perform within the proposed limits you can clear the street by selecting the Clear icon on the top right of the window (see above figure).

    A. **Clearing a street cannot be undone. If you receive work within the limits of proposed work after clearing the street you must contact Mark Cardarelli immediately by emailing him at mark.cardarelli@cityofboston.gov**.

    B. Delaying the deferral of proposed work even a single day by not entering your work into COBUCS could mean the difference between having your company's work completed prior to the City Project being completed, and being restricted from the location until the Guarantee period has passed.

City Of Boston Utility Coordination Software

COBUCS

Reviewing COBUCS Reports –

1) COBUCS offers three reports to be reviewed to better aid your company.

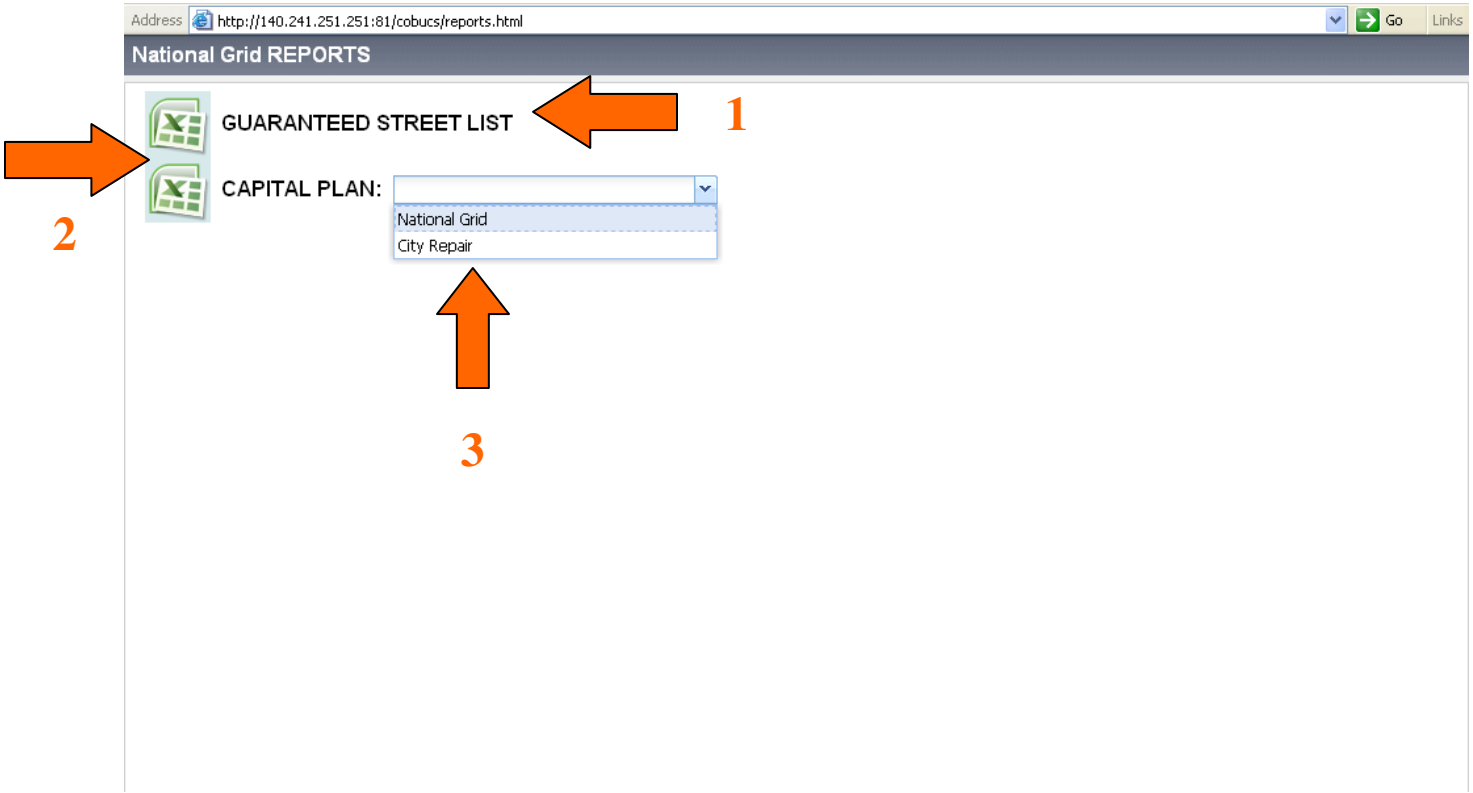
    A. The Guaranteed Street List

    B. City of Boston's Capital Plans

    C. Your Company's Capital Plans

2) To view a report, select the Reports icon on the COBUCS starting menu (see above figure).

3) If you experience any problems opening the Reports tab please notify Mark Cardarelli immediately by emailing him at mark.cardarelli@cityofboston.gov.



Reviewing COBUCS Reports Con't –

4) COBUCS has made available an updated list containing the City of Boston's Guaranteed Street List (see 1 on above figure). A Guaranteed Street is a street that has been paved within the past five years.

   A. Streets listed as being Guaranteed are restricted from utility work until the Guarantee Period has ended.

   B. On any proposed work that COBUCS determines is in conflict with our Guaranteed Street List, your company will be denied a permit for that location.

   C. If your company wishes to appeal the denial, they may submit to the Commissioner of Public Works, Joanne Massaro, detailing the reasons and justification for the need to breach a Guaranteed Street.

5) By viewing the Guaranteed Street List your company will be able to know in advance which streets can and cannot be worked on. This will save your company time, and will allow for no surprises when requesting a permit from the Public Works Permit Branch.

6) To view a report, click on the icon just left of the selection (see 2 on above figure).

7) COBUCS also allows your company to open a printable report detailing the City of Boston's proposed Capital Plan, as well as a copy of your own company's Capital Plan (see 3 on above figure).