

Appendix M-6

Comments Submissions

Comments Received Prior to September 2, 2014
Part 2 of 2

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: Scott Macfarlane

Address: 4677 Watch Hill Rd City: Marlinton State: WV Zip: 26104

Phone: (315) 682-6163 Email: ssmacfarlane@gmail.com

Comments:

1. It is worth considering building a boulevard that follows the train tracks, at least $\sim \frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{2}{3}$ of the way to West St./Fayette intersection from Rt. 81/RR crossing so that traffic heading down town does not need to use Almond St. This should be considered whether the viaduct is replaced by a boulevard, tunnel or depressed roadway as it will reduce congestion around ~~the~~ the Hill and Upstate.

2. Why not build an elevated freeway over the train tracks, which would drop down to tunnel under RR King & King and The Red House and Fayette St. to join the West St entrance.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Comments (continued from front):

3. If a tunnel is built, why not ~~run~~^{route} it along the train tracks (more or less) to join the West St. Entrance to 690. This would put the 690-I81 interchange in an industrial area. The tunnel would start near the I81-railroad track crossing, or south of there. Doing this would allow all of the ramps to be eliminated in between Almond & McBride and Genesee & 690, opening up an area for development that has renovation going on N, E, W and even S of it.

4. If the Viaduct is replaced by a boulevard, build a second along the rail berm to provide access to the downtown. Two boulevards are better than one. This is just a more focused version of my Comment 1.



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Name:

Margaret Mahoney

Address:

City:

Jamestown

State:

Zip:

13078

Phone: ()

Email:

Comments:

I am in support of the V-2, V-3, or
V-4 options.

No boulevards, depressed h'ways
etc.

Driving in the area without #81
would be a nightmare - not
any improvement to quality
of life.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

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Central New York simply cannot afford to divert I-191 around Syracuse.

Please support the **ACCESS SYRACUSE** plan.

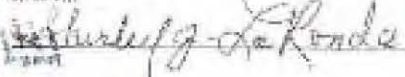
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Access Syracuse, a hybrid tunnel boulevard, will protect Syracuse residents in times of emergency and maintain a vital economic artery that local businesses and commuters rely on. It is a compromise solution that will allow traffic to flow easily, improve air quality and update the area's transportation network to meet current standards.

I urge you to explore the Access Syracuse plan.

Sincerely,


Joseph J. LaRocca
Syracuse

Central New York simply cannot afford to divert I-81 around Syracuse.

Please support the **ACCESS SYRACUSE** plan.

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John C. LaRocca
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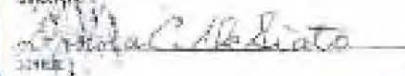
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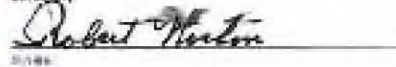
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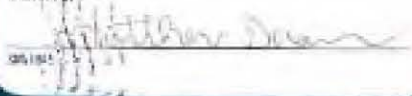
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Sincerely,


CHRISTOPHER MORAN

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BRIAN M. HUGHES

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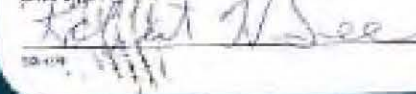
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Sincerely,

STEPHEN J. ...

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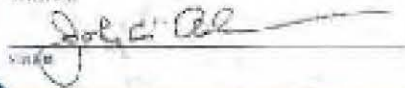
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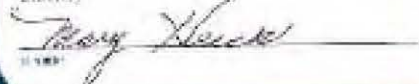
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MARY HIRSCH

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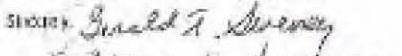
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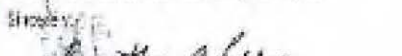
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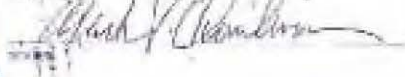
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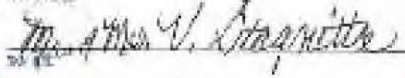
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Steven M. Smith

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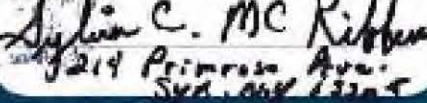
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Sylvia C. Mc Kibben
214 Princeton Ave.
Syracuse, NY 13205

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[illegible]

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Margaret A. Grady

TO: DOT

10/27/14

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Sincerely,

Bruce A. Beach

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01/18/18

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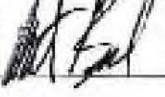
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2014.03.12

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ANTHONY J. SCORSONE

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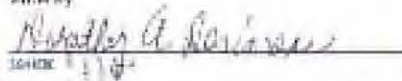
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TIMOTHY A. SCORSONE

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CHRISTINA SCORSONE

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JOHN SCORSONE

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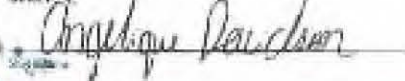
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Christopher D. Pancher
Syracuse, NY

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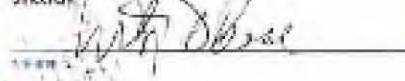
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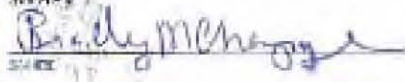
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Bradley McHenry
Syracuse, NY

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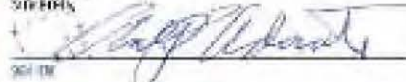
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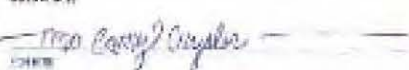
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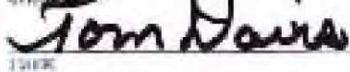
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[Name]

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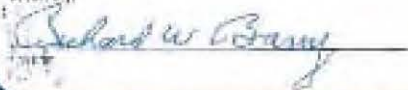
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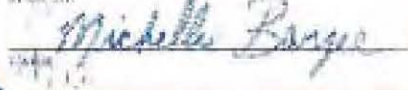
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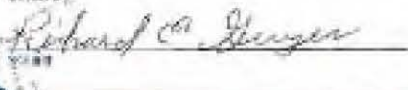
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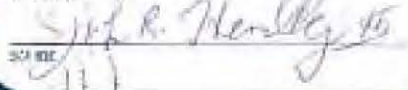
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Jeff R. Hendry
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DAVID L. ...

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Please support the ACCESS SYRACUSE plan.

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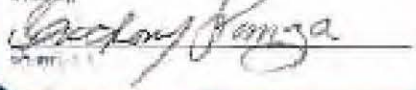
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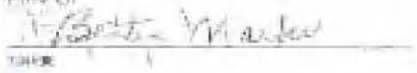
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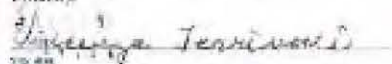
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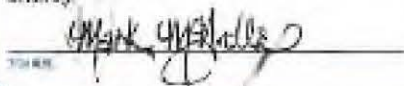
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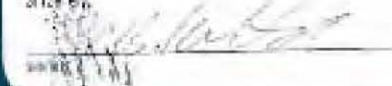
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Edward Butler
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*Keep I-19 AS IS THROUGH SYRACUSE
Just Fix up
what's BROKE
along it!
NO TURNING REQUIRED*

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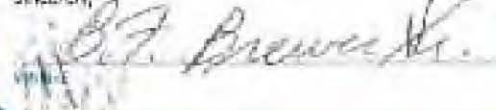
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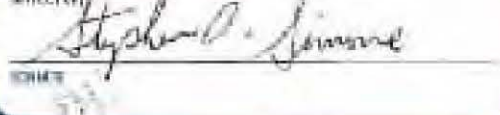
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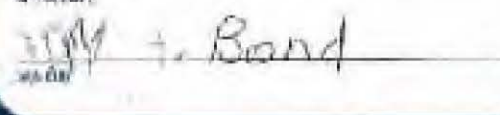
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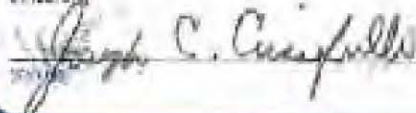
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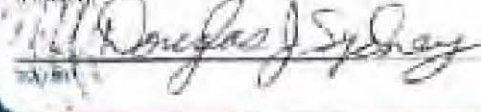
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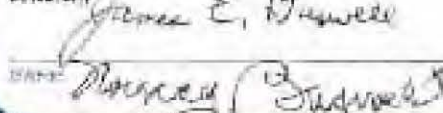
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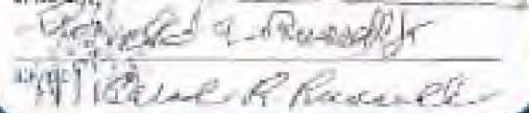
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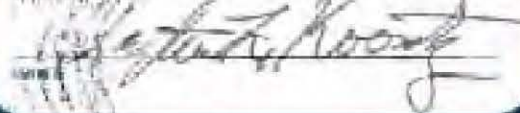
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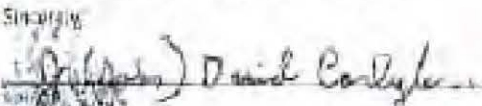
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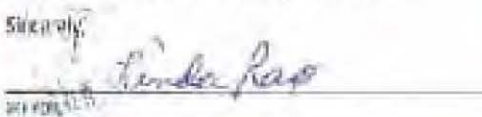
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MARK HOLE

05/15/02

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Sincerely,


[Name]

05/15/02

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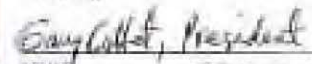
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Gary Collet, President
GEC Enterprises, Inc.

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Paul C. Perry
Syracuse, NY

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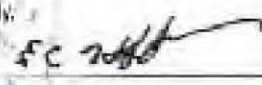
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Selma Kellam
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WILLIAM C. ADAMS

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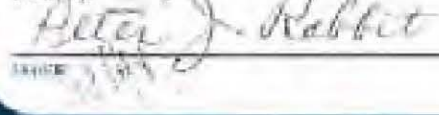
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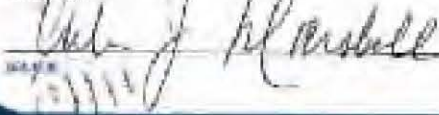
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JOHN J. MARSHALL

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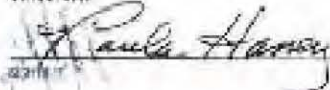
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Sincerely,


Paula Harvey

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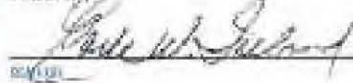
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Anthony Scarpino
Syracuse

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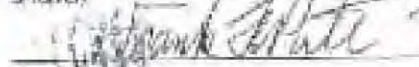
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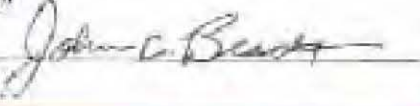
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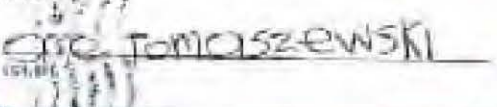
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Elizabeth G. Banta
DOT 100

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Kevin Michael
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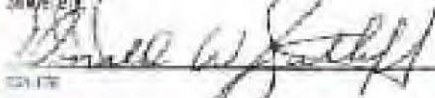
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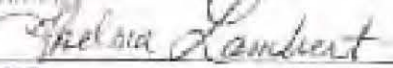
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SUSAN F. ROCKMAN
DOT Rep. Central New York

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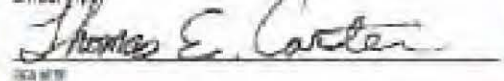
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Sincerely,


THOMAS E. CARTER
DOT Rep.

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Patricia P. Danvers

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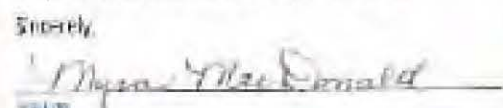
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Myra MacDonald

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CHRISTOPHER M. NIGGLI

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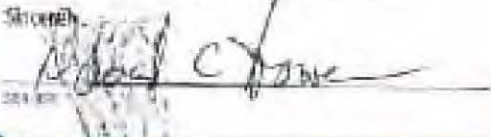
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STEPHEN PRINCI

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JOHN J. ...

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MARY LOU

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Mark A. Murray
Syracuse, NY

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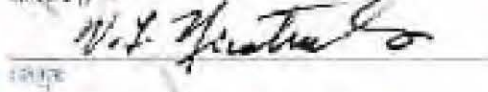
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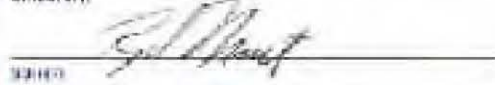
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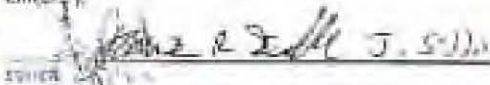
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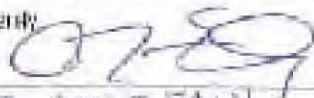
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COPIES: AMY T. ELZY

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TIMOTHY A. LERNER
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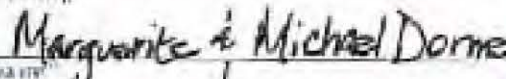
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MARGARITA & MICHAEL DORMER
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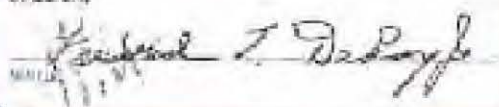
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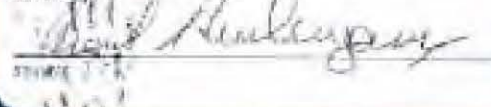
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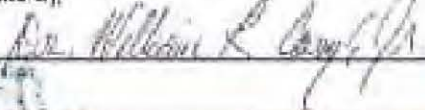
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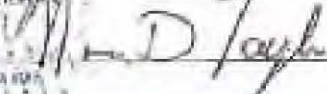
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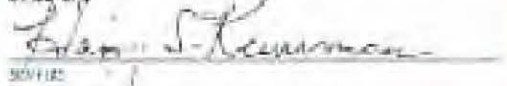
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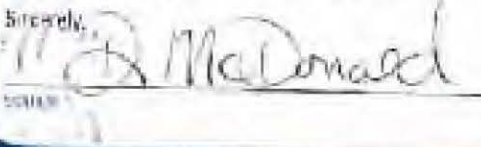
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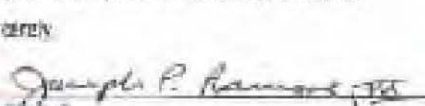
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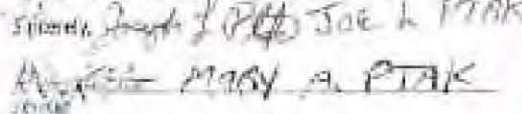
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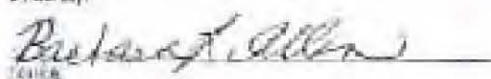
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BRIAN A. ALLEN

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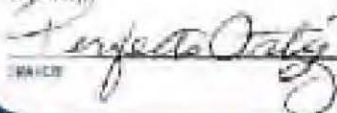
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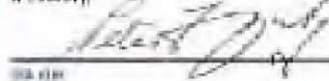
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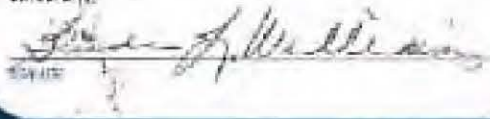
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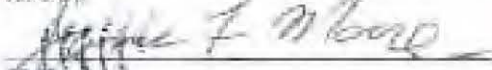
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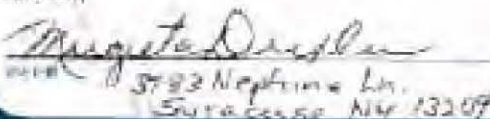
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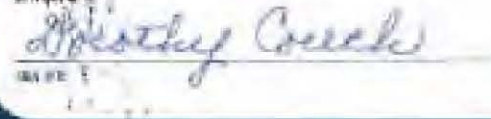
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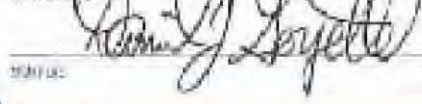
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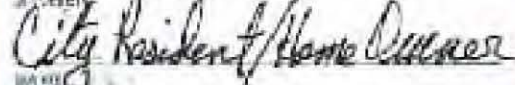
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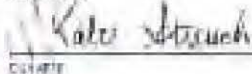
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Kevin Schuch

Central New York

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Donny J. Blum
Syracuse, NY

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JOHN R. FAY

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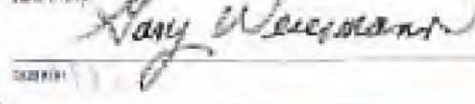
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GARY WEISSMAN

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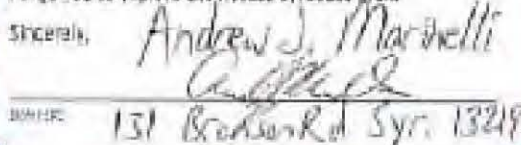
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ANDREW J. MARINELLI
131 Broken Rd. Syr. 13218

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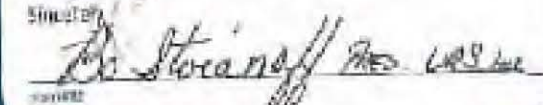
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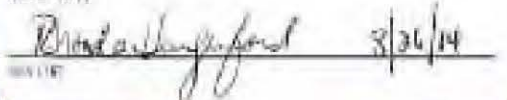
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VERIFIED

8/26/14

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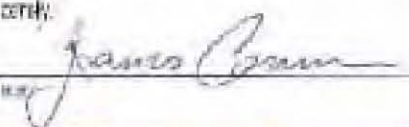
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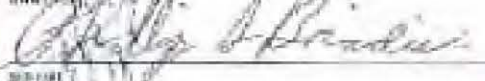
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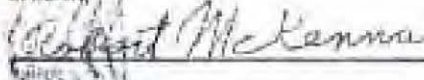
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03/04/10

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Judith F. Clark

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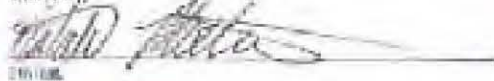
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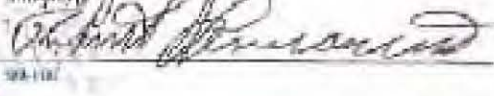
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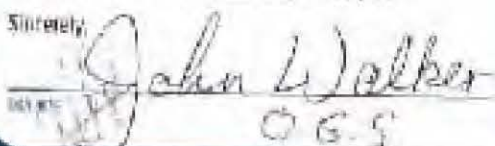
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I urge you to explore the Access Syracuse plan.

Sincerely,


J L Walker
OGS

Central New York simply cannot afford to divert I-191 around Syracuse.

Please support the **ACCESS SYRACUSE** plan.

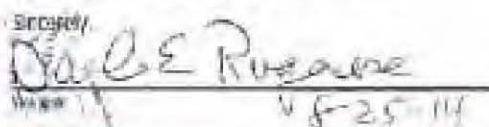
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David E. Rucione
V 8-25-14

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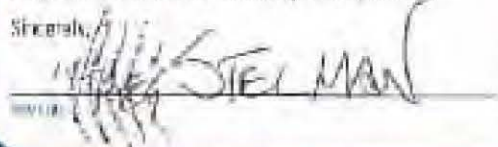
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Mike Steiman

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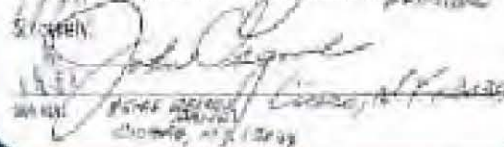
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John P. ...
Sincerely, 10/5/14

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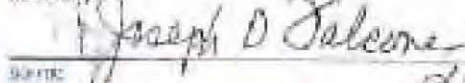
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Sincerely,


JOSEPH D. FALCONE

8/21/14

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M. J. MAR NICOLA

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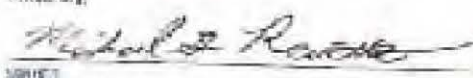
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MICHAEL J. ROCOCO

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John Brown

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Alfred Pedraza

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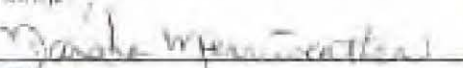
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Denise Imperatore

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Kathryn Murphy

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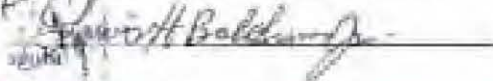
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Sandra L. Balderson
Joseph H. Balderson

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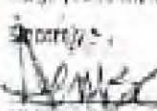
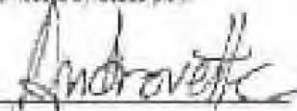
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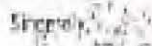
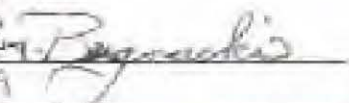
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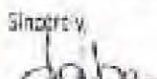
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Sincerely,

Patricia M.
H. SYR-NT 13212-3398
Patricia M. H.

03/14/11

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David H. Hart

03/14/11

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Sincerely,

*NO Tunnel
Bundick, Cicero NY*

03/14/11

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[Signature]

03/14/11

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Sincerely,


Sarah E. Smith

014-110

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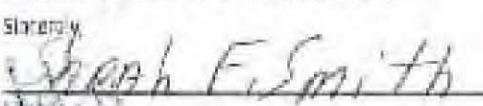
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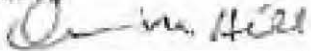
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DENNIS HILL

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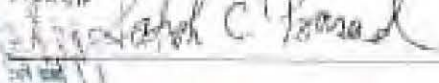
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Joseph C. Pardo
Syracuse, NY

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Eugene DeRosa Sr.
Syracuse, NY

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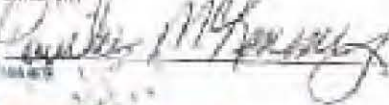
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Christopher M. Pardo
Syracuse, NY

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Margaret Pardo
Syracuse, NY

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Sincerely,

Mark D. Hansen
Syracuse, NY

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Patricia Engelbrecht
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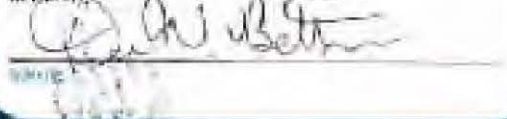
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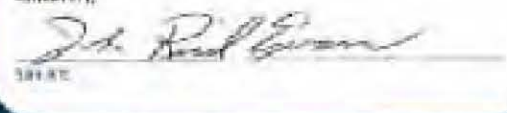
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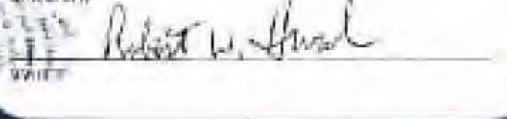
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Governor's Office
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RICK A. NORCIA
SENATOR

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GARY V. CORMIER
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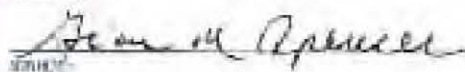
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Steven M. Spencer
Syracuse

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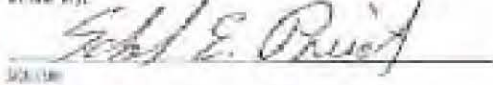
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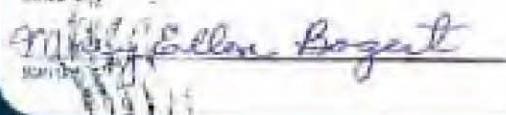
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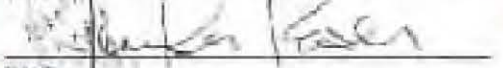
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As a Central New York resident, I understand how important Interstate 19 is to the region's economy, public safety and accessibility. Portions of I-19 must be repaired or replaced and there are several options on the table. The DOT must join local businesses, labor and elected officials in supporting Access Syracuse: the only plan that would protect our communities.

Access Syracuse, a hybrid tunnel-boulevard, will protect Syracuse residents in times of emergency and maintain a vital economic artery that local businesses and commuters rely on. It is a compromise solution that will allow traffic to flow easily, improve air quality and update the area's transportation network to meet current standards.

I urge you to explore the Access Syracuse plan.

Sincerely,


SENATOR

Central New York simply cannot afford to divert I-19 around Syracuse.

Please support the **ACCESS SYRACUSE** plan.

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Sincerely,


Robert J. Bove
Syracuse

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Sincerely,


Michael J. Bove
Syracuse

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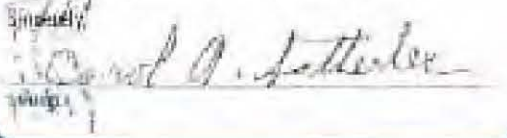
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Sincerely,


Carol A. Lattin
Syracuse

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Sincerely,


Andrew E. Ruggie
Syracuse



November 13, 2013

Jonathan D. McDade
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Federal Building,
11A Clinton Avenue, Suite 719
Albany, New York 12207

Debra Nelson
New York State Department of Transportation
50 Wolf Road
Albany, New York 12232

Dear Mr. McDade and Ms. Nelson,

My name is Tony Mangano, and my family and I own four hotels located at the Crossroads of New York State – Interstate 81 and the New York State Thruway. Over the years, my family has invested \$40 million in these and other businesses in Syracuse, and we employ more than 250 members of our community.

The future of Interstate 81 is absolutely critical to my business. Our hotels were all built and financed on the premise that our customers – predominantly people from out of town – must have quick and easy access to our front door. More than 90 percent of our customers come to us in their own vehicle, and a vast majority of them arrive via 81. During some periods of the year, almost 30 percent arrive without a reservation.

Even in today's high-tech world with GPS units right in our phone, no one wants to try to poke their way around in a strange city – sometimes in the dark or even in a snowstorm – to find a safe and comfortable place to stay. Interstate 81 is my "Main Street," and removing or diverting any part of it will hurt my business, as well as dozens of others that have set up shop near the interstate. It will also jeopardize hundreds of tourism-industry jobs.

Interstate 81 is not only for those of us who live and work in Onondaga County. We are the "Crossroads of New York State"; a unique and important feature only Syracuse can claim. Our City and County have thrived because of that. Easy access to key destinations, such as The Oncenter, Armory Square, Destiny USA, The Zoo, the Airport, and the Regional Transportation center are just as important as easy access to a downtown office, apartment or local hospital. A major part of this community's future is in tourism, and we need to ensure our visitors can easily access and navigate our area. Adding miles, congestion and confusion to a visitor's trip will make them think twice about stopping or staying in Syracuse again.

There is no question that I-81 needs immediate attention and substantial investment. However, erasing 50 years and millions of dollars in previous investment and progress built around the present highway is not our only option. We have an opportunity to improve an already efficient transportation system – to build on our past successes – and we can do it all without turning our entire community upside down.

We urge the state to please fully research and consider other options, such as a tunnel, depressed highway, cut and cover, or an elevated 81 with iconic features that will help Syracuse grow and preserve the businesses, jobs and investment already here.

Thank you,



Anthony G. Mangano



Carmen Emmi

Partners in:

Syramada Hotel Corporation (Ramada Syracuse)
Emmi Commerce Park Development Company (Homewood Suites Syracuse)
Etna Development Company (Hampton Inn Liverpool)
Buckley Road Development Company (Super 8 Motel Liverpool)

From: Tony

Sent: Friday, August 29, 2014 3:24:38 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)

To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities; Frechette, Mark (DOT); jonathan.mcdade@dot.gov; Nelson, Debra (DOT)

Subject: Submission for I-81 Scoping

Please see attached, hard copy being sent via US Mail.

Tony Mangano

Ramada Syracuse



Direct Office [\(315\) 671 5960](tel:(315)6715960)

Direct Office Fax [\(315\) 671 5979](tel:(315)6715979)

Ramada Syracuse [\(315\) 457 8670](tel:(315)4578670)

Cell Phone [\(315\) 491 6691](tel:(315)4916691)



August 29, 2014

Mark Frechette, PE
New York State Department of Transportation,
Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, New York 13202

Jonathan D. McDade
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Federal Building
11A Clinton Avenue, Suite 719
Albany, New York 12207

Debra Nelson
New York State Department of Transportation
50 Wolf Road
Albany, New York 12232

Dear Mr. Frechette, Mr. McDade and Ms. Nelson,

My family owns four hotels currently located at the crossroads of New York State, the Ramada Syracuse, Homewood Suites, Hampton Inn and Super 8 Motel of Liverpool. Over the past 30 years, my family has invested over \$40 million in these and other businesses in Syracuse, and we employ more than 250 members of our community.

The future of Interstate 81 is absolutely critical to our businesses. Our hotels were all built and financed on the premise that our customers – predominantly people from out of town – must have quick and easy access to our front door. More than 90 percent of our customers come to us in their own vehicle, and a vast majority of them arrive via I-81. During some periods of the year, almost 30 percent arrive without a reservation.

Removing I-81 from our doorstep will greatly endanger the financial viability of our businesses and the livelihood of our 250 employees. We are adamantly opposed to diverting any traffic from the present location of I-81. We urge you to discard all of the "boulevard" options or any option that includes a realignment or diversion of I-81 traffic from its present location. We believe these options will create more harm than good for not only our businesses, but the entire regional community.

Please fully research and re-consider other options, such as the community-based initiative "Access Syracuse" plan or any of the three viaduct options still under review.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anthony G. Mangano'.

Anthony G. Mangano

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carmen Emmi'.

Carmen Emmi

Partners in:

Syramada Hotel Corporation (Ramada Syracuse)
Emmi Commerce Park Development Company (Homewood Suites Syracuse)
Etna Development Company (Hampton Inn Liverpool)
Buckley Road Development Company (Super 8 Motel Liverpool)

Save81.org's Official Submission 9.2.14

Save81 Community <community@save81.org>

Tue 9/2/2014 4:31 PM

Retain

To: dot.ny.moJ81Opportunities <dot.ny.moJ81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>;

cc: Nelson, Debra (DOT) <Debra.Nelson@dot.ny.gov>; Frechette, Mark (DOT) <Mark.Frechette@dot.ny.gov>;

 **1 attachment**

Save81.org Official Submission - FINAL - 9.2.pdf;

Dear Mr. Frechette and all at NYSDOT,

Please find our official submission attached. Please also confirm receipt of this document at your earliest convenience.

**Best,
Save81**



441 Electronics Parkway
Liverpool, New York 13088

September 2, 2014

Mr. Jonathan McDade
New York Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Building
7th Floor, Room 719
Clinton Avenue and N. Pearl Street
Albany, New York 12207

Ms. Debra Nelson
NYSDOT
50 Wolf Road
Albany, New York 12232

Re: I-81 Project – Syracuse Area Corridor Second Scoping Comment Period

Dear Mr. McDade and Ms. Nelson:

We are pleased to be given the opportunity to submit this comment letter to the Federal Highway Administration ("FHWA") and the New York State Department of Transportation ("NYSDOT") pursuant to the Federal Register Notice appearing in Volume 78, No. 165 at page 52819 on August 26, 2013 (the "NOI") and the "Scoping Initiation Packet" as well as the "Draft Scoping Report" dated June 2014 in connection with the "I-81 Viaduct Project". We previously submitted comments by letter dated January 17, 2014 and note that Maser Consulting, P.A. submitted comments by letter dated January 16, 2014 and Market & Feasibility Advisors submitted an assessment titled "Economic Impacts of Proposed Replacement of I-81 through Central Syracuse with a Boulevard" dated January 17, 2014. These comments and report are being submitted again to assure they are duly considered and addressed. Accordingly, they are attached as **Appendix A**.

Our additional comments are as follows:

1. The range of alternatives presented in the Draft Scoping Report is too narrow and has been prematurely narrowed as a result of the publication of the Draft Scoping Report (we are unclear how it relates to the Scoping Initiation Packet and how it comports to the numerous FHWA/NYSDOT public statements that the Scoping Initiation Packet would be revised and republished for public review and comment).

2. We have separately prepared and submitted a letter relating to the Access Syracuse Plan. As set forth in that letter, we believe it is the best way to accomplish both the highly-publicized transportation and non-transportation goals of the project. This includes improving connectivity between downtown neighborhoods, stimulating economic development, promoting bicycle and pedestrian usage and increasing public spaces while at the same time retaining the current interstate highway alignment running through the City.
3. The Draft Scoping Report treats cost as a determinative factor, which is not permitted. Moreover, all cost projections are unsupported conclusions, as no basis is provided for the cost estimates, rendering it impossible to determine to what extent, if any, costs of maintenance and operation are included, as well as how the options compare to each other, including but not limited to long term economic development and lifecycle costs. FHWA and NYSDOT have not identified what costs have been considered in their estimates. Is it viaduct specific? Or does it include other areas? Is it direct costs only or does it also include indirect costs? If it does include indirect costs, what are they? What of long-term benefits? None of this is provided. This lack of information forecloses any meaningful review.
4. FHWA and NYSDOT have not done any medium or long term economic analysis of any of the alternatives, either locally or regionally. This is arbitrary, short-sighted and fails to meet regulatory requirements to permit decision-making for the future. In other words, if the cheapest alternative results in substantial future costs to state and local agencies in costs, repair, maintenance, constrained or inhibited economic growth (in-City or in the region), emergency services delays and more, those future costs must be factored into any sort of cost analysis. What is presented as the cheapest option to construct does not necessarily bear any relation to the ultimate costs to be borne by taxpayers.
5. The screening process applied to date is flawed in that FHWA and NYSDOT have not “weighted” the criteria so as to do a meaningful screening. It is absurd to place the same weight on “property acquisition” as “purpose and need.” The public need to maintain and enhance the interstate highway system far outweighs the number or cost of property acquisitions. It should be given far greater weight. Moreover, an alternative which meets to a greater degree all of the various objectives, even if it is more expensive, should not be discarded because it exceeds a single arbitrary threshold. For example, The Access Syracuse Plan effectively combines retaining the existing highway alignment and establishment of an accessible surface level boulevard. It should not be summarily discarded because it will potentially take longer or be more expensive to build than the street-level alternatives. This is especially true where, as noted above, The Access Syracuse Plan better achieves the desired objectives of downtown revival and sustained long-term local and regional economic growth than would any of the street-level alternatives. This reasoning applies to other alternatives as well. There needs to be appropriate weight given to the various evaluation criteria.

6. The Scoping Report cannot be a substitute for a robust alternatives analysis. Proper traffic, engineering and regulatory analysis is needed to evaluate whether to make major changes to the interstate highway system.

The Scoping Report is a NEPA tool, one which is used once FHWA and NYSDOT have established a short list of alternatives that they have analyzed from a traffic and engineering perspective and concluded, at least preliminarily, that the alternatives work and that, if selected, would meet interstate highway system requirements. That has not been done here.

NEPA is being improperly used to complete that analysis to the exclusion of requirements applicable to the Interstate Highway System. The result is to impart non-engineering and non-traffic considerations into the initial screening of available options. That is not the purpose of NEPA (which is to identify and analyze environmental impacts relating to the short list of alternatives chosen). It violates the interstate highway system regulatory and deliberative requirements relating to making changes to the interstate highway system. Those requirements are paramount and cannot be ignored.

7. The costs associated with the design, repair and maintenance of the de-designated stretch of I-81 (if one of the alternatives that contemplates de-designation is selected) would fall to the local municipalities through which it runs or to Onondaga County or some combination thereof. While we made this observation in our initial letter, it bears noting that recent comments of NYSDOT have underscored this concern. Likewise, local street improvements necessitated by the surface level alternatives might also fall to the municipalities or county. An August 22, 2014 article in the Post-Standard indicates that a NYSDOT spokesman stated that “NYSDOT will begin the process of identifying funding for the viaduct project as the Final Environmental Impact Statement is developed. It’s likely that the funding will be a combination of federal, state and potentially even local funds, but it’s too soon to say how that would break down.”

To the extent that any portions of I-81 are re-designated as a state route, and that any other roads are to be constructed or improved, FHWA and NYSDOT must explain how the costs associated with design, repair and maintenance will be borne by the state.

Local stakeholders, including the local governments involved, must know how this project will be funded and a commitment must be made by FHWA and/or NYSDOT that all costs would be paid by them now and into the future and that the costs will not be pushed down to local governments. This is especially true where, as here, NYSDOT/FHWA are considering de-designation of interstate highways and placing the resultant roads (with their parking lanes, bike lanes, sidewalks and landscaped medians) under New York State or local jurisdiction.

8. No basis has been provided to support the establishment of a cost ceiling of 2.5x the cost of the rehabilitation alternative. This precludes meaningful public input and is arbitrary. The \$800,000,000 figure is not substantiated and the fact that rehabilitation

implementation would be over a “multi-year period as funding permits” adds strong doubt to the validity of this number. There are many factors beyond cost which must be considered for a project of this scope and magnitude including, critically, engineering feasibility and performance (which is not discussed as a criteria). Further, the agencies have not made known what resources are available for this project.

9. The screening process presented in the Draft Scoping Report is also flawed because it inconsistently applies the criteria by which the alternatives are evaluated. For example:
 - a. The Draft Scoping Report concludes that the rehabilitation alternative would be implemented “over a multi-year period as funding permits” (in Table A-1 it is expressed as a “long period as funding permits”). These comments evidence a prejudice against the rehabilitation option as the Report does not indicate an implementation window or funding contingency language for any other proposed alternative. Further, this language is inconsistent with what has been presented in neighborhood meetings, as slides presented at those meetings indicate the construction duration of the rehabilitation alternative to be 2-3 years. It makes no sense that the most limited alternative with the lowest cost (other than the no-build) is subject to a funding contingency while the other options are not.
 - b. The street-level alternatives have been identified and passed the screening-evaluation even though FHWA/NYS DOT have not determined that they can work from a traffic operations/capacity perspective. This may be the most stark example of all of FHWA and NYSDOT’s disregard for the interstate highway system regulatory framework and of their pre-determination regarding the street-level alternatives.

Local Planning issues, which are driving the process to date, cannot form the basis for the decision before the agencies, nor can it be used to screen alternatives. Rather, the requirements of the Interstate Highway System as set forth in federal laws and regulations must be paramount. Alternatives may not be eliminated or selected until those factors are determined, at least preliminarily.

- Alternative SL-1: Notwithstanding the Maser Analysis previously submitted, NYSDOT continues to assert that the lanes on Almond Street can be reduced (from 8 to 6) and that the smaller road will be able to accommodate all of the added former I-81 traffic. Maser has indicated that the lanes will need to increase from 8 to 10, 11, or 12 lanes to accommodate the added traffic.
- Alternative SL-2: The Scoping Report states that: “Preliminary traffic analysis will be undertaken to determine the potential

effects of Alternative SL-2 on local and interstate operations. It is possible that some options for the southbound local street or streets (e.g. Townsend Street, State Street, Clinton Street, West Street or University Avenue) would be dismissed because they fail to result in reasonable traffic operation.”: Pages 3-17;

- Alternative SL-3: Contains the same language as Alternative SL-2 (Pages 3-18, 3-19) and leads to the same conclusion/result.

In other words, NYSDOT hasn’t analyzed whether the street-level alternatives work from a traffic perspective and doesn’t know what design elements may be needed, what property may need to be acquired or what the costs might be. Nevertheless, it “passed” each alternative in its screening. Such a conclusion is wholly unsupported and renders the entire screening process suspect and arbitrary.

- c. The agencies are using right of way needs as a determinative factor in the alternatives analysis, despite project engineering being in a preliminary stage and media reports that project officials contend that it is unclear where a replacement might go and what buildings it might affect. This approach is arbitrary and capricious.

The fact that engineering is preliminary and the design remains unclear flies in the face of the certainty suggested in the Draft Scoping Report. Clearly, the takings figures are unsupported conclusions being used as determinative criteria. It is simply arbitrary to conclude which lands are needed to be acquired before a determination is made as to what is being built and where. It makes it worse when alternatives are rejected based on such arbitrary evaluation.

The numbers provided in this analysis suggest a project design that is far more advanced than what exists now, or than has been shared with the public. For example, for each of the street level alternatives, it is stated that “several non-standard highway features, such as narrow shoulders and tight curves, may need to be corrected, pending an investigation of the accident history along this stretch of I-81.” To the extent that such corrections are not yet known, how can it be said that takings estimates are accurate? To use this analysis as a determinative factor is inappropriate and at best, premature. Even assuming the estimated takings are accurate, the pass/fail threshold established is entirely subjective and arbitrary.

- d. Alternative V-5 is eliminated from consideration solely because it allegedly eliminates east-west access on East Genesee Street beneath the new viaduct (though no effort is made to explore any potential re-

routing of the street). The Report seems to ignore that all of the street level alternatives, none of which were eliminated from consideration, also require the closing of intersections, such as:

- Alternative SL-1 (the Boulevard) will close:
 1. Jackson Street where it crosses Almond Street;
 2. Erie Boulevard. A new overpass is needed. It was not explained why a new overpass or other routing could not be used to continue East Genesee Street in Alternative V-5.
 3. Water Street. A median barrier would prevent east-west traffic along Water Street from crossing the “new” surface-level street.
 4. McBride Street. McBride Street would be closed from Water Street to Burnett Avenue.
 5. In addition, it is unknown what, if any, other downtown streets or intersections may need to be closed, redesigned or otherwise modified.
- Alternative SL-2 (One-way traffic on Almond Street and Other Local Streets) will close:
 1. Jackson Street where it crosses Almond Street.
 2. In addition, it is unknown what, if any, other downtown streets or intersections may need to be closed, redesigned or otherwise modified.
- Alternative SL-3 (Two-way traffic on Almond Street and Other Local Streets) will close:
 1. Jackson Street where it crosses Almond Street.
 2. In addition, it is unknown what, if any, other downtown streets or intersections may need to be closed, redesigned or otherwise modified.

10. The analysis of the street level options is flawed.

- a. The negative impacts on access to key regional destinations by dedesignation of I-81 through the City are not considered:
 - Hancock International Airport;
 - Destiny USA;
 - St. Joseph’s Hospital;
 - Central New York Multi-Modal Transportation Center;
 - Central New York Regional Market;
 - New York State Fairgrounds;
 - Onondaga Lake;
 - New York State Thruway – Exit 36.
- b. The street-level options do not “maintain or enhance vehicle access to the interstate highway network”. In fact, access is hindered in that vehicles will either have to make longer trips around the City on re-

designated I-481 or experience the slower travel times associated with the street-level alternatives, resulting from increased conflicts with local roads, travel control devices and pedestrians/bicyclists.

- c. None of the street-level alternatives address the identified geometric and operational deficiencies or the structural deficiencies and bridge ratings in the I-81 viaduct priority area. Rather, the deficiencies are avoided by removing the roads from the interstate highway system. In place of these requirements, FHWA and NYSDOT have stated that all of the “de-designated” stretches of road will be classified as “urban arterial roadways”. As discussed more fully below, aspects that are purported to support the street level alternatives violate FHWA and NYSDOT classification/planning requirements and are inconsistent with the existing downtown traffic network as it exists today.

- Almond and State Streets today are classified as “principal arterial roadways.” That means they are designed to serve a large percentage of travel to minimize travel time and distance. Principal arterials play a unique role in providing a high degree of mobility and carry a high proportion of travel. For principal arterials, the concept of service to abutting land should be subordinate to the provision of travel service to major traffic movements. Direct access to adjacent land should be purely incidental to the primary function of the principal arterial. *See FHWA Functional Classification Guidelines and Highway Functional Classification Concepts, Criteria and Procedures, 2013 Edition.*

Changing any of these classifications would have deleterious traffic and related impacts throughout the local network, all of which would need to be thoroughly evaluated, including dislocation and disruption to existing residents and businesses. Retaining these classifications would require that design and operation be focused on the efficient movement of vehicles, and any consideration of local accessibility, pedestrian and bicycle movements and connectivity must be subordinate to that. Design cannot be driven by efforts to create such conflicts, all of which are at cross-purposes to the mobility function of a “principal arterial”.

- To the extent that the street level alternatives remove or redesignate the classification of any downtown streets, serious questions are raised, among them:
 - a. Classification of the surface level options as urban arterials would appear to preclude the objectives of any surface level option.

- b. No analysis is provided as to whether the street-level alternatives can meet the standards for an urban arterial. To the extent any one of them elevates local accessibility over mobility, the standards cannot be met.
 - c. The purported benefits of the street-level alternatives are simply wholly inconsistent with that of a principal arterial.
 - d. The entire arterial system in the City and Region would need to be re-examined as part of this process, including the environmental impact review.
- FHWA guidance also points out that there are usually multiple arterial routes serving a particular urban area, radiating out from the urban center to serve the surrounding region.
 - a. Redesignating Interstate 481 as 81 flies in the face of that purpose – it moves I-81 (the current core) several miles away and will require that the classification and therefore design of roadways along and near the re-routed interstate, be changed. This would undoubtedly have significant adverse environmental impacts, including traffic, socioeconomic and community impacts in areas located miles away from the street-level alternatives.
 - b. Relocating traffic to 481 is contrary to the intended purpose of minimizing travel time and distance.
- The removal of I-81 from the center of the city would destroy the existing higher arterial system, not augment it.
- FHWA guidance also notes that a basic tenet of the functional classification system is continuity – a roadway of higher classification should not connect to a single roadway of lower classification. Terminating the interstate system to the north and south of the downtown area and funneling the traffic to a roadway of lower classification – or around the city entirely - would violate this basic tenet, creating the potential for devastating traffic consequences.
- d. As detailed above, the street level options result in substantial impacts to local streets. The agencies cannot fairly conclude that any of the alternatives “maintain the local street connections within or adjacent to

the I-81 Viaduct priority area”. Table A-7 and A-8 are simply inaccurate in that they fail to identify the closure of Jackson Street.

- e. The report concludes that the street level alternatives would provide enhanced bicycle and pedestrian surface connections on streets across and along the I-81 Viaduct. However, it appears that pedestrian and bicycle enhancements “could” be (as opposed to would be) accomplished. Even if they are, these enhancements would be dangerous. Pedestrian/bicycle conflict with vehicles would be created where none currently exist. Only the grade separation options would permit enhanced bicycle and pedestrian surface connections while minimizing the chance for conflict.
11. The Report states that the environmental analysis will describe how the project would affect emergency service access both along the highway and on local streets. No alternatives should be eliminated from consideration prior to this analysis. It defies logic that an alternative could be discarded simply for an arbitrary, unsubstantiated review of the project’s purpose and need, its projected takings, its constructability or its cost. That the emergency service impacts – truly a matter of life and death - are not a part of this analysis is shocking and irresponsible. Particularly with respect to the surface level options, we have significant concerns that the timeliness of emergency responses will be adversely affected by extended intra-city trips caused by a failure to maintain local street connections (despite the Report’s summary conclusion otherwise), traffic delays/heavy traffic volumes and the incompatibility of terminating an Interstate Highway at a roadway designed to function at a lesser classification. The surface level options create conflict with cross streets and pedestrians/bicyclists where none currently exists, and where none would exist if a grade separation option were selected.
 12. No information has been provided to support the conclusion that the boulevard will spur additional development here and elsewhere in downtown. The attached economic analysis concludes that re-designation would induce sprawl and result in a 10% job loss. **See Appendix A.**
 13. All of the street level alternatives will create significant sprawl pressure along the periphery of the City along the newly designated I-81, violating “green” and “smart growth” principles and the New York Smart Growth Law. Compounding this threat of sprawl is the economic stagnation that will result so long as FHWA and NYSDOT leave the street level alternatives on the table. Investment in downtown will be stalled during the decision making process, and ultimately flee to the new I-81 corridor should any of the street level alternatives be adopted.

This letter should be made part of the FHWA/NYSDOT NEPA and SEQRA record. We strongly believe that the alternatives analysis being engaged in by FHWA and NYSDOT as part of the NEPA/SEQRA process is contrary to law and fundamentally flawed. The development of alternatives must be revisited prior to engaging in an environmental review. Those alternatives must include The Access Syracuse Plan and other reasonable alternatives that better satisfy the project's goals, purposes and objectives.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anthony Mangano". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Anthony" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Mangano".

Tony Mangano
Save81.org
On behalf of Save81.org's charter members

Appendix A

Save 81 letter dated January 17, 2014

Maser Consulting, P.A. letter dated January 16, 2014

Market & Feasibility Advisors assessment dated January 17, 2013



441 Electronics Parkway
Liverpool, NY 13088

January 17, 2014

Mr. Jonathan McDade
New York Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Building
7th Floor, Room 719
Clinton Avenue and N. Pearl Street
Albany, New York 12207

Ms. Debra Nelson
NYS DOT
50 Wolf Road
Albany, New York 12232

Re: I-81 Project – Syracuse Area Corridor

Dear Mr. McDade and Ms. Nelson:

We are pleased to be given the opportunity to submit this letter to the Federal Highway Administration ("FHWA") and the New York State Department of Transportation ("NYSDOT") pursuant to the Federal Register Notice appearing in Volume 78, No. 165 at page 52819 on August 26, 2013 (the "NOL") and the "Scoping Initiation Packet" in connection with the "I 81 Viaduct Project" as defined in the Scoping Initiation Packet.

At the outset, we note that as of this writing, no detailed alternatives have been developed for this complex project. NYSDOT seems to be engaged in decision making driven by an artificial timeline rather than a careful study of alternatives and potential impacts. Consequently, we are unable to provide complete comments at this time for a project which has yet to be adequately defined. We understand that the period for written comments will be kept open until January 17, 2014 and that a scoping meeting and comment period will be scheduled after alternatives have been developed. Accordingly, our present comments focus only on the project's currently stated goals, objectives and initial ill defined proposed alternatives. As recommended by NYSDOT on the project website, we plan to submit additional written comments on the detailed alternative solutions and environmental issues at the time of the actual scoping meeting, after FHWA and NYSDOT have responded to these initial comments and presented the alternatives to the public in sufficient detail.

We also want to note that it is our view and understanding that the materials made publically available prior to the November 13, 2013 meeting, described as a “Scoping Initiation Packet” is not intended to be and fails to serve as a scoping document for NEPA/SEQRA purposes. Accordingly, the November 13, 2013 sessions cannot function as a scoping meeting for NEPA/SEQRA purposes. A scoping document which defines detailed alternatives must still be formulated and a scoping meeting held once the alternatives are sufficiently defined.

Our comments are as follows:

1. The alternative involving de-designation of that portion of I-81 through the City of Syracuse and replacing it with an at-grade arterial or other surface level roadway (the “De-designation Option”) should be eliminated and not considered further. As set forth in the letter from Maser Consulting P.A. dated January 17, 2014, the De-designation Option fails to meet the purposes, goals and objectives which have been identified by FHWA and NYSDOT in connection with the Syracuse region I-81 corridor and fails to meet FHWA requirements, in addition to creating a host of unintended consequences.

NYSDOT’s prior evaluations were misleading and flawed. Even a cursory review by Maser shows that the De-designation Option would require an at-grade arterial to be at least 12 lanes wide. That is approximately 200 feet and is three times wider than existing Almond Street. Such an arterial would exacerbate, not eliminate, any existing actual or perceived barrier between University Hill and downtown Syracuse. Even the De-designation Option supporters would reject such an option. This obvious fact was overlooked by NYSDOT in its prior evaluations.

Moreover, the De-designation Option fails to address numerous deficiencies and problems in the existing interstate highway network which fail to meet FHWA standards. Rather than addressing them, the De-designation Option simply avoids them by removing the FHWA requirements. That is not sound transportation planning.

All of these concerns can be corrected by rejecting the De-designation Option now and not considering it further.

2. We support the non-transportation goals and objectives that have been identified to date, including improving connectivity between downtown neighborhoods, stimulating economic development, promoting bicycle and pedestrian usage, and increasing public spaces. We believe these can be achieved while at the same time retaining the interstate highway running through the City. Any one of the grade separation alternatives can be designed to accomplish both transportation and non-transportation goals. The De-designation Option cannot.
3. The I81 viaduct project, and FHWA and NYSDOT funding of same, must be about short term and long term transportation planning for the entire region. While we agree that local land-use planning should be considered to avoid or minimize unintended negative

impacts, transportation planning must remain the primary consideration. If the two cannot be accomplished together, transportation planning must prevail.

4. We believe that the costs associated with design, repair and maintenance of the de-designated stretch of I-81 (which stretches approximately 12 miles from the I-81/I-481 southern interchange to the I-81/I-481 northern interchange) would fall to the local municipalities through which it runs or to Onondaga County or some combination thereof. The De-designation Option would remove this stretch of road from FHWA oversight and funding as an interstate highway. FHWA may have no obligation to provide future funding. Who would pay? In the event the De-designation Option were adopted, a commitment must be made by FHWA and/or NYSDOT as part of the De-designation Option that all such costs would be paid by them now and into the future, and that the costs of same would not be pushed down to local governments.
5. NYSDOT has publicly stated that cost is and will be a driving factor in identifying and considering alternatives. The De-designation Option appears to be favored by NYSDOT because it is reportedly the cheapest option. Under the circumstances, and as expressed repeatedly by our elected officials and the public, the I-81 corridor improvements are an opportunity to do something “transformational” and rejuvenate the Syracuse region. Syracuse needs transformational, not cheap! Based on the preliminary costs that have been published, no alternative should be rejected based on cost. In this case, cost should not be considered as a screening factor in identifying or evaluating options. For this and other reasons, NYSDOT’s prior screening analyses must be rejected and new analyses completed.
6. NYSDOT’s presentation of materials in the prior I-81 Corridor Study and other materials prepared in connection with the I-81 Challenge have been slanted in favor of the De-Designation Option. NYSDOT has seemingly pre-judged the De-Designation Option as the preferred alternative. Analyses of the various alternatives should be re-done using an objective, balanced analysis. Additionally, FHWA should assume a more proactive role in order to assure that the integrity of the interstate system is being adequately safeguarded.
7. As this project affects the interstate highway system, FHWA requirements mandate that alternatives must be sufficiently developed to permit an engineering and operational analysis of all proposed changes to the interstate system. The corridor study does not satisfy such review requirements. FHWA guidance strongly recommends that for a complex project such as this, an engineering and operational analysis for one or more proposals be both prepared and approved by FHWA prior to expending significant time and resources on any required NEPA/SEQRA review. These requirements and recommendations should not be ignored. This analysis should be completed and FHWA approval obtained before the scoping document is prepared. To spend time and resources on an environmental review and to invite the public to comment on alternatives which have not been subject to FHWA’s required operational and engineering review is a waste of NYSDOT’s, FHWA’s and the public’s time and resources.

8. In regions such as Syracuse, the interstate highway system is the backbone of its economic health and well-being. Economic development occurs in and around it, and has for decades. An abandonment of the interstate highway system would result in urban decay and ultimately sprawl along other interstate highway corridors.

The interstate highway backbone determines where people live, where businesses locate, and where and how people travel from one point to another. The De-designation Option would remove one or more vertebra, which would significantly weaken if not break the back of Syracuse. Any further consideration of the De-designation Option must include detailed analyses of how it would affect the local economy, including impacts on municipal revenues, impacts on job creation, impacts on businesses, impacts on housing and demographic/population shifts and impacts on sprawl.

9. It is premature to commence any formal environmental impact review pursuant to NEPA or SEQRA. The alternatives being considered have not been sufficiently developed. It is impossible for the public or anyone else to identify and/or assess possible impacts under the current circumstances. Neither FHWA nor NYSDOT has described critical elements of each alternative:
 - a. What exactly is being proposed, even if only conceptually?
 - b. Where does it start? Where does it end?
 - c. How would it integrate into the existing surrounding community and road system?

The alternatives described in the meeting in November 13, 2013 and posted on the I-81 website state that the environmental impact statement process will “explore”, “investigate”, “consider” and/or “address” various factors and issues in connection with each alternative. No analysis was presented to support any of these alternatives. Neither NEPA nor SEQRA is a vehicle to answer these questions. Each is a vehicle to identify and assess and mitigate environmental impacts once the above questions, factors and issues have been answered, at least preliminarily.

Prior to proceeding with the EIS process, FHWA and/or NYSDOT must better define each alternative and then, and only then, undertake formal scoping pursuant to NEPA and SEQRA. That is the only way to provide stakeholders and the public a meaningful opportunity to participate in the environmental impact review process as required by NEPA and SEQRA.

10. Even more fundamental than the lack of sufficiently described alternatives, it appears that the scope of the purposes, goals and objectives are ever-changing. The I-81 Corridor Study cites the need to examine the entire 12-mile corridor; it then focuses in detail on the “viaduct priority area”, which excludes the ill-defined “outer segments”; the NOI focuses only on the I-81 viaduct and now, the Scoping Initiation Packet is at odds with the NOI, as it describes an area “from about Van Buren or Castle Street to about Hiawatha Boulevard”. This is classic impermissible segmentation. The varying inconsistent descriptions of the project make it obvious that it is impossible to segment

and study a piece of the project rather than the whole. The identification and consideration of impacts associated with the I-81 Corridor would undoubtedly be understated or even missed altogether by focusing the current environmental impact review on a segment of the overall corridor. This responsibility cannot be avoided by claiming it would be examined later or that rehabilitation of one or more segments is sufficient.

11. The entire I-81 interstate system is integrated and interrelated. Any one of these alternatives for the “viaduct” area (or whatever area it is) may make rehabilitation of another segment, or the environmental impacts associated with rehabilitation, unworkable. Accordingly, the environmental impact review needs to encompass the entire I-81 Corridor Study Area so as to not preclude such future work. To the extent FHWA and NYSDOT choose to impermissibly segment, they must clearly identify the segment to be included. They have not done so to date. They must also assure that environmental impacts associated with or otherwise affecting other segments are fully evaluated, and changes made to them as warranted. In fact, FHWA requirements mandate that the engineering and operations analysis and the required environmental review consider all changes to the interstate system, both short term and long term, and that all be analyzed together. It is not permissible for FHWA and NYSDOT to pick and choose segments of the corridor for detailed analysis; they must consider the entire integrated corridor.
12. The scope and magnitude of any environmental impact review for the De-designation Option would be much greater than alternatives that maintain grade separation.
13. All local, state and federal permits and approvals for each alternative, especially the De-designation Option, must be identified. Absent a defined project and alternatives, such identification is impossible. Therefore, it is premature for NYSDOT to invite cooperating and participating agencies to a project that hasn’t been defined. NEPA and SEQRA must progress in a logical sequence, not simultaneously and in strict compliance with the established procedures. All such agencies must be kept informed in writing as to the various stages of review and input sought and considered regarding environmental impacts and mitigating measures.

This letter should be made part of the FHWA/NYS DOT NEPA and SEQRA record. We strongly believe that any objective or thoughtful consideration of the issues surrounding the De-designation Option will lead to the inescapable conclusion that it should not be considered further. If FHWA and NYSDOT determine to continue to pursue it, the critical issues raised in this letter need to be carefully and thoroughly weighed by FHWA and NYSDOT pursuant to NEPA and SEQRA. We look forward to providing additional comments, including presenting comments on the scope of environmental impacts to be examined for the specific alternatives that are ultimately formulated and made available at a later date.

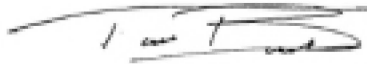
Very truly yours,



Dave Arnold
President
Cayuga Labor Council



Jim Bright
Owner
Dunk and Bright



Todd Buchko
General Manager
Wonderworks DestinyUSA



Roger Burdick
Owner
Driver's Village Auto Group, Cicero



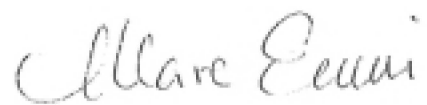
Barry Carr
Coordinator
Clean Communities of Central NY



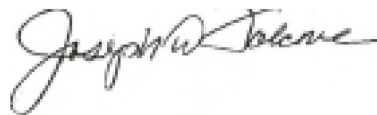
Carmen Emmi, Jr.
Owner
Homewood Suites, Liverpool, NY



Joseph Emmi
Partner
Buckley Road Development Co.



Marc Emmi
Partner
Hampton Inn Liverpool, NY



Joseph D. Falcone
Owner
Dominick Falcone Insurance



Debra L. Gallagher
Executive Director
North Area Volunteer Ambulance Corps, Inc.



Jim Gallagher
President
Advanced Hotel Management Co.



David Heymann
General Manager
Sheraton Syracuse University



Steve Hughes
Owner
Tim Hortons, Syracuse N.Y.



Phil Jakes-Johnson
Director of Sales and Marketing
Solvents and Petroleum Services, Inc.



Bruce Kenan
Partner
DestinyUSA



Minch Lewis
Former Auditor
City of Syracuse



Anthony G. Mangano
President
Syramada Hotel Corporation



Gary May
Owner
May's Fleet Sales and Service



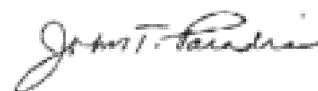
Todd M. May
Southern Wine & Spirits of Upstate N.Y., Inc



Mark Nicotra
Town Supervisor
Salina



John Sposato
President
Sposato Companies



John Paradis
President
Stadium International



Craig Peterson
Owner
Peterson Plumbing, Liverpool, N.Y.



Richard Sykes
President
RHS Holdings LLC

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Edward J. Wagner". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Edward J. Wagner
Town Supervisor
Dwasco Town Board



Engineers
Planners
Surveyors
Landscape Architects
Environmental Scientists

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January 16, 2014

Mr. Jonathan McDade
New York Division Administration
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Federal Building
7th Floor, Room 719
Clinton Avenue and N. Pearl Street
Albany, NY 12207

Ms. Debra Nelson
New York State Department of Transportation
50 Wolf Road
Albany, NY 12232

Re: Interstate 81
Scoping Session
MC Project No. 12100167A

Dear Mr. McDade and Ms. Nelson:

We are writing on behalf of Save81.org to offer the following suggestions with respect to the disposition of I-81 within the greater Syracuse Area.¹ We note that after numerous public information sessions, report preparation and technical memoranda development, the I-81 Corridor Study of this past July designated what are described as the two viable alternatives for the treatment of I-81. The first is de-designation of that portion of I-81 (from the I-81/I-481 southern interchange to the I-81/I-481 northern interchange) and replacing it, in part, with a principal urban arterial (generally referred to publicly as a “boulevard”). The second is the reconstruction of the viaduct to bring it up to current standards. Subsequent public statements by the NYSDOT suggest that additional alternatives are still under consideration.

What follows represents our professional opinion as to the approach that should be taken in any further evaluation considering the limited data that is available on the alternatives. It should be noted that while only two alternatives were described as viable, there may be other alternatives or hybrids thereof that may prove to be of equal or greater overall benefit.

At first glance, the boulevard option may appear to be an appropriate alternative. However, we disagree and believe this option should be eliminated from consideration because on its face it

¹ This letter supercedes a letter we previously prepared dated November 2013.



fails to meet the purposes, goals and objectives of the Project and will not meet Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) standards for an interstate highway.

Current New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) data indicates that the viaduct section of I-81 between E. Adams Street and Harrison Street services over 50,000 vehicles per day (vpd). In the vicinity of I-690 and south of E. Adams Street, nearly 80,000 vpd are serviced. Trucks represent 16% of these AADT volumes. Shown on Figure No. 1 are the 2010 AADT volumes for that section of the viaduct between Taylor Street to the south and I-690 to the north. As shown at the south end, some 73,424 vpd were observed with some 85,753 vpd recorded at the north end. It should be noted that the corridor in this area currently has 4-non interrupted flow lanes for traffic at the viaduct level and with 8 lanes provided at grade on Almond Street (5 northbound and 3 southbound) between E. Adams Street and Harrison Street.

The boulevard, as proposed, could not support this level of traffic activity and meet the project objectives. In fact, the boulevard would have to support not only the existing street level traffic but also as much as 88% of the traffic currently carried on the elevated viaduct. Shown on Figures No. 2 and 3 are the AM and PM Peak Hour Volumes, respectively, along Almond Street, Townsend Street and State Street and at their intersections with E. Adams Street and Harrison Street. As identified, with a boulevard scenario, Almond Street would be expected to service between 7,000 and 9,000 vehicles during the AM Peak and PM Peak Hours under interrupted flow conditions. These volumes represent historical traffic conditions only, without allowance for normal growth in future years.

Moreover, traffic impacts in the vicinity would include unacceptable operating conditions on nearby roads such as Harrison Avenue, E. Adams Street, Almond Street, Townsend Street, and State Street. To address this, significant road improvements, land acquisition and/or changing traffic patterns within the downtown area would be required. These would eliminate on-street parking, preclude bike lanes and/or disrupt existing downtown organizations, businesses and residents.

It should be noted any alternatives that retain a grade-separated operation, i.e., splitting high speed highway traffic from low speed local surface traffic would accommodate existing and future traffic levels in the most safe, efficient and least disruptive manner. As discussed in greater detail below, the selection of any one of the grade separation alternatives can be planned, designed and implemented to meet both the transportation goals and the non-transportation goals and objectives that have been identified, e.g., improving connectivity between neighborhoods without displacing them, strengthening economic development, promoting bicycle and pedestrian activity and increasing public spaces all with lesser need for land acquisition. As such, we believe that any of the grade separation alternatives is far superior to the boulevard approach.



Boulevard Option

Below is listed a number of issues related to the boulevard alternative to which consideration should be given:

- The transition from expressway to boulevard would significantly impair the integrity and functionality of the existing interstate highway/roadway network. With up to 12% of the traffic on I-81 considered as “through” traffic (per the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council), if displaced to I-481, would mean that some 88% of the existing traffic volume would be displaced to the boulevard, far in excess of the capacity it could provide.
- The boulevard alternative would fail to improve congestion, mobility and traffic safety on the existing interstate highway network. In fact, congestion on I-481 and I-690 east and west of I-81 might actually increase once the restrained capacity of the boulevard induces delays along that corridor.
- To accommodate current and projected future traffic volumes along this corridor, a grade separation (I-81 above or below Almond Street) must be retained. Replacing such with a boulevard would require 12+ lanes (at grade) for through and turning traffic movements within a significantly increased right-of-way (220± feet width) to support future volumes. The required increased right-of-way width needed would likely displace residents in the Pioneer Homes and Toomey Abbott Towers area as well as businesses and institutional facilities along Almond Street. As stated previously, in this corridor there are currently 4 lanes divided and elevated and 8 lanes at grade.
- Shown on the attached Figures No. 4 through 7 are examples of boulevard geometry required to meet such levels of activity. Please note, Queens Boulevard (Queens County, New York)/NYS Route 25 shown on Figures No. 4 and 5 supports 40,000 vpd and the Grand Concourse (Bronx County, New York) shown on Figures No. 6 and 7 supports 20,000 vpd, both substantially fewer vehicles than the contemplated boulevard would be expected to handle (over 80,000 vpd). As shown, nearly 170 feet of pavement is required to support the 40,000 vpd on Queens Boulevard. The Grand Concourse has nearly 145 feet of paved surface; some dedicated to bikeways. In each case, in excess of 180 feet is required for right of way. Shown on Figure No. 8 is the required paved area for such a boulevard. Also shown is the necessary right of way to accomplish such a design.
- In the event the boulevard were constructed with less than the required number of travel lanes, the entire local and regional roadway network would be disrupted, including the interstate highway system. Motorists would avoid the boulevard, instead using other local roads or upstream interchanges, resulting in significantly increased volumes on roads that are not designed to accommodate them. Such impacts are impracticable, if not impossible, to fully predict at this time but intuitively would be significant and adverse.



All such types of impacts would need to be identified and thoroughly examined prior to committing to a boulevard option. In fact, a key factor as part of an evaluation of a potential change to access to an interstate system is the consideration of the “area of influence.” This area is based upon operational (capacity) and safety issues. This area must be expanded sufficiently to evaluate all affected regions. This is particularly important where there exists a coordinated signal system or a local roadway network that might be impacted. In this instance, the area of influence can be far reaching and must be established to assist in making an informed decision.

The existing surface roadway network within the viaduct area south of the I-690/I-81 Interchange consists of roads of varying functions, width, on-street parking provisions, driveway points of access, pedestrian facilities, transit facilities, etc., all of which influence the capacity and operational characteristics. As always, there is a tradeoff between access and mobility. Some roads are constructed as 4-lane divided roads with raised landscaped medians with no on-street parking. Others are two-way facilities with on-street parking permitted on one or both sides. Still others are one-way, two-lane roads with limited on-street parking. Right-of-way vary as well.

Introduction of a boulevard in this area would therefore affect the carrying capacity of each roadway differently. On-street parking may need to be eliminated perhaps to such an extent as to require the construction of parking decks. One way streets may, of necessity, have to become two-way roads and certain two-way facilities may need to transition to one way, all to support the increase in surface traffic.

Depending on the extent of the increase in traffic, additional right-of-way may be required. This is particularly significant in an area that is already fully developed with the potential for requiring significant traffic improvements, changed traffic patterns and displacement of businesses and perhaps residences. So, the establishment of the area of influence is key to any successful alternative evaluations.

To gain a general understanding of the traffic impacts in the immediate vicinity, we have performed a preliminary SYNCHRO screening for the AM and PM Peak Hours along selected nearby roads to which traffic would likely be diverted. The screening was performed along Almond Street, Townsend Street, and State Street. It used established publicly available existing traffic volumes. A detailed description of the screening and methodology is attached.

The screening results are shown in Table No. 1. They show unacceptable operating conditions (for purposes of this letter, Levels of Service E or F) along the Almond Street corridor during the AM and PM peak hours in each of the scenarios evaluated and unacceptable operating conditions at Townsend Street during the AM and PM Peak Hour in one of the scenarios. Delays could be expected to increase significantly at certain locations. For example, at the Almond Street intersection with Harrison Street during the



PM Peak Hour, under Alternate 1, without improvements to Almond Street would experience delays which would produce queues extending beyond adjacent intersections. At Townsend Street and E. Adams Street, under Alternative 2, during the PM Peak Hour the delays would also result in queues extending beyond adjacent intersections.

It must be emphasized that this screening exercise, as bad as it shows the traffic would be, likely significantly underestimates the severity of the actual traffic operating problems. It assumes no growth, it has not examined all of the roads, intersections and traffic movements in the existing road network, and it has not made any accommodations for bicycle, pedestrian and/or bus route traffic. Those factors will all add vehicles and/or delay to the SYNCHRO analysis, making the projected traffic conditions even worse than shown in Table No. 1. None of these factors were included in this preliminary screening and all of which could negatively impact Levels of Service, delays, queues and travel times.

To address the unacceptable operating conditions, road improvements would be needed at virtually every intersection along Almond Street, State Street, Townsend Street, and others. Taking into account the extensive downtown Syracuse development, such improvements would require that existing on-street parking be eliminated, sidewalks and bus stops be eliminated or limited, buildings be demolished (in whole or in part) and/or existing two-way streets be re-designed as one-way streets. Any combination of the above would likely dramatically adversely affect the existing organizations, businesses and residences along and near those roads.



TABLE NO. 1

WEEKDAY PEAK AM HIGHWAY HOUR			
ALMOND STREET			
	<i>Existing</i>	<i>Alternate 1</i>	<i>Alternate 2</i>
at Harrison Street	C [31.5]	F [164.1]	D [53.3]
w/ 12 Lane Section	---	E [55.3]	C [22.8]
at E. Adams Street	D [48.2]	F [205.6]	E [62.6]
w/ 12 Lane Section	---	E [79.2]	D [45.2]
TOWNSEND STREET			
	<i>Existing</i>	<i>Alternate 1</i>	<i>Alternate 2</i>
at Harrison Street	B [12.8]	B [19.0]	C [24.1]
at E. Adams Street	C [31.3]	C [20.0]	F [218.3]
STATE STREET			
	<i>Existing</i>	<i>Alternate 1</i>	<i>Alternate 2</i>
at Harrison Street	A [8.3]	B [14.7]	B [16.5]
at E. Adams Street	A [6.6]	A [9.0]	C [20.7]

WEEKDAY PEAK PM HIGHWAY HOUR			
ALMOND STREET			
	<i>Existing</i>	<i>Alternate 1</i>	<i>Alternate 2</i>
at Harrison Street	E [69.7]	F [320.4]	F [126.9]
w/ 12 Lane Section	---	F [148.5]	D [51.8]
at E. Adams Street	C [34.0]	F [266.6]	E [65.7]
w/ 12 Lane Section	---	F [96.5]	D [35.5]
TOWNSEND STREET			
	<i>Existing</i>	<i>Alternate 1</i>	<i>Alternate 2</i>
at Harrison Street	A [9.3]	B [17.2]	C [20.8]
at E. Adams Street	C [33.9]	C [33.1]	F [319.3]
STATE STREET			
	<i>Existing</i>	<i>Alternate 1</i>	<i>Alternate 2</i>
at Harrison Street	A [8.5]	B [14.6]	B [12.8]
at E. Adams Street	B [12.3]	D [37.2]	D [44.6]



- The integrity and functioning of the I-81/I-690 interchange would be fundamentally altered. The replacement of the current high speed directionalized interchange to a “typical” low speed interchange (boulevard to interstate) cannot be readily accomplished. This treatment would require detailed investigation since it would directly impact adjacent streets and neighborhoods. In addition, the reconnection to I-81 would result in significant conflicts due to merging traffic. It is noted that various sections of the interstate system often cited as successfully being replaced by boulevard type streets throughout the country are where the boulevard-type street replaced a spur or interstate terminus. This would not be the case in this instance, where the boulevard-type street would replace an existing through-traffic carrying interstate highway segment.
- Transformation of this section of the I-81 Corridor into a street-level arterial would significantly impact the interstate network within central New York for the sake of creating a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile boulevard. The negative impacts to the interstate network through discontinuity would be far greater than the perceived local benefits that might result from conversion to a boulevard.
- Conversion to a boulevard would fail to improve connectivity in the immediate vicinity. Instead, it would increase perceived and actual barriers by enlarging the divide, inhibiting crossing of the divide by both vehicles and pedestrians, and by inhibiting movement of commerce to, from, and within the City.
- De-designation and discontinuance of I-81 would require diversion of personal and commercial vehicles around the city via existing I-481, significantly increasing travel time, fuel consumption, air pollution, and contributing to sprawl that is contrary to the New York Smart Growth Law.
- Air quality would deteriorate considerably and noise levels would increase due to idling, stopping/starting of slowed traffic along with associated increases to travel time caused by a boulevard option. Vehicular emissions from numerous closely spaced idling and slow moving vehicles on a boulevard would generate far greater particulates and other air emissions.
- The intersections of Almond and E. Adams Streets have long been an air quality non-attainment area. This is principally driven by the heavy stop and start traffic on Almond Street and the city streets that intersect with Almond Street. Slow moving and stopped/idling vehicles contribute considerably greater amounts of air contaminants than does traffic moving at highway speed. Introducing 88% of I-81 traffic into this mix would have a major detrimental impact on air contamination in this area.



- Traffic safety would deteriorate, not improve. Conflicts between vehicles and between vehicles and pedestrians/bicycles would significantly increase, resulting in increased accidents, property damage and injuries. The physical environment including road grades, alignment, lighting, pavement conditions, length of crosswalks are important factors to consider. Also important contributing factors to safety are high traffic volumes, high heavy vehicle (truck) volumes and travel speeds.
- The cost to demolish the viaduct and to construct the boulevard and all related improvements may not be funded by FHWA because such cost would no longer be facilitating or be related to the interstate highway system. If so, the costs would be borne wholly by New York State and/or the City of Syracuse. Funding and decommissioning would increase expenditures of state and local dollars.
- The costs of repair and maintenance for the non-viaduct portion of I-81 to be “de-designated” as well as the cost of increased maintenance on the street network in the vicinity of the boulevard might be borne wholly by the City (within the City) and shared by New York State and towns outside the City. These costs would likely be significant and would inevitably result in increased taxes or a significant deterioration in the repair and maintenance of the road network that would negatively affect the entire local and regional economy.



Grade Separated Alternatives

One of the key benefits of grade separation is to facilitate the movement of goods and services in an efficient way and to avoid the impacts associated with unnecessary interaction between local and through traffic. In short, the idea is to embrace mobility while at the same time reducing congestion on local roadways. With the grade separation reconstruction alternate access points to the local network can be accommodated where required or most desired. As part of a replacement program, the grade separated alternative can introduce transition points (ramps) between the elevated section and surface street in a way to enhance pedestrian/transit/bicycle opportunities. Well planned and designed grade separations can accomplish what the boulevard alternative suggests vis-à-vis pedestrian/bicycle/transit treatments however, the grade separation alternatives most importantly reduce potential conflicts between vehicular traffic and pedestrian/bicycles that could exist under the boulevard alternate by simply maintaining the separation of nearly 60,000 vehicles a day from the local street network. Furthermore, the grade separation alternatives reduce delay, travel times, air pollution, noise, etc., all part of the purpose for their development in the first place.

Below we've listed some general items that need to be addressed/considered:

- The existing substandard interstate highway design features have yet to be identified
- The “area of influence” needs to be established for each alternative.
- Other existing interstate highway “deficiencies”; such as security, mobility, operation, safety, capacity, etc. need to be identified.
- Certain alternatives have apparently been eliminated or labeled as being disfavored even though they clearly meet the purposes, goals and objectives of the Project. All alternatives should be revisited and subjected to a thoughtful balanced evaluation.
- None of the build alternatives identified to date have been sufficiently defined or developed to permit meaningful environmental impact review. More definition of each alternative is needed, including establishment and objective application of screening criteria. All alternatives that generally follow the existing I-81 viaduct corridor must be fairly and reasonably evaluated in light of the purposes, goals and objectives of the Project. Review criteria also need to be identified and fairly applied. This requires that a bridge, tunnel, depressed highway and other yet-to-be-identified options be evaluated as part of the EIS process.
- All local, state and federal permits and approvals need to be identified for each alternative to be analyzed.



To the extent a boulevard option is considered, each of the substantive environmental impacts identified in Schedule A (attached) must be identified/evaluated within the entire regional area to be affected, which is identified on Figure No. 9. The scope and magnitude of impacts and geographic area and population affected would necessarily be significantly greater. The impacts of the boulevard option would be that far-reaching given the fundamental restructuring of and disruption to the entire existing highway system that would inevitably result in major changes to commuter patterns, population centers and the local and regional economy. Such scope and magnitude must be determined prior to commencement of environmental impact review.

To the extent the options retaining the grade separation are considered, each of the substantive environmental impacts identified in Schedule B must be identified/evaluated within the entire area to be affected. It is readily apparent that the scope and magnitude of impacts would be far less across the board than those of the boulevard option.

We trust the Department will give thoughtful consideration to these suggestions.

Very truly yours,
MASER CONSULTING P.A.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'A. Peter Russillo'.

A. Peter Russillo, P.E., PTOE
Sr. Project Manager

Maser Consulting professionals provide a full range of services to assist municipalities, authorities, counties and state agencies. The firm has provided municipal engineering and planning services to numerous municipalities and counties in the capacity of Engineer-of-Record, Planner-of-Record, Planning/Zoning Board Engineer and Planner, Conflict Engineer, Consulting Engineer and Planner, Utilities Authority Engineer, Geographic Information System Professional, Environmental, Traffic and Survey Consultants.

APR/jr
Enclosures

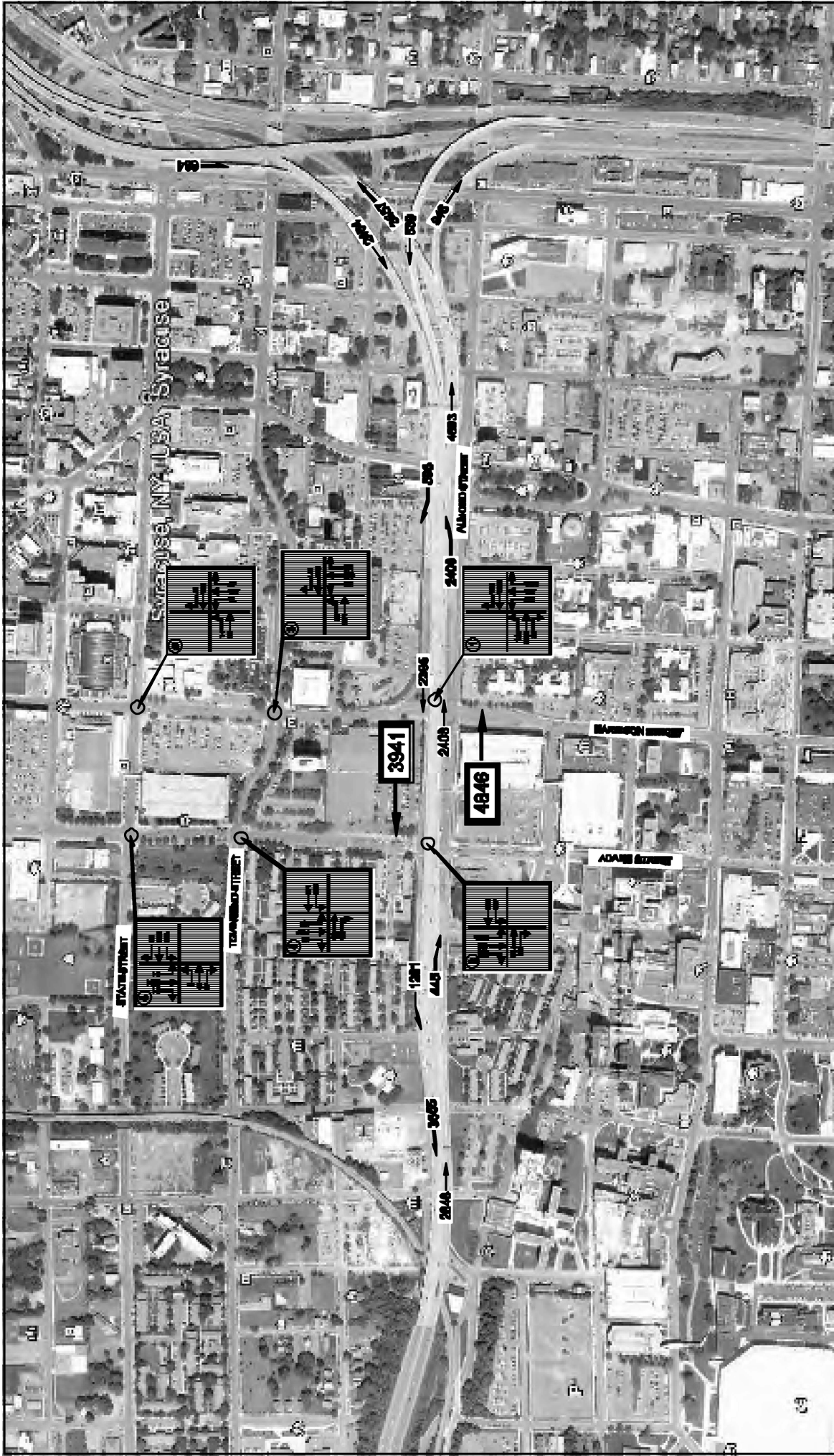


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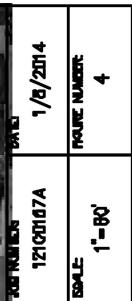
FIGURES





 MASER CONSULTING, P.C. Geotechnical, Planning & Environmental Engineers 1000 N. 10th Street, Suite 100 Syracuse, NY 13204 Tel: 315.477.1100	WESTCHESTER OFFICE 11 Broadway Hightstown, NJ 08520 Phone: 609.434.7500 Fax: 609.434.7200 e-mail: solutions@westconconsulting.com		EXISTING TRAFFIC VOLUMES PM PEAK HOUR CITY OF SYRACUSE, ONONDAGA COUNTY, NEW YORK	DATE: 1/8/2014 PROJECT NUMBER: 3
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 Consulting, Planning & Engineering Services 440 West 11th Street, Suite 100 New York, NY 10014 Tel: 212-691-1000 Fax: 212-691-1001 www.maserconsulting.com	 WESTCHESTER OFFICE 11 Broadway Hightstown, NJ 08520 Phone: 609-434-7500 Fax: 609-434-7501 email: info@maserconsulting.com	 QUEENS BOULEVARD, QUEENS, NEW YORK	<table><tr><td>JOB NUMBER</td><td>12100107A</td><td>DATE</td><td>1/8/2014</td></tr><tr><td>SCALE</td><td>1"=80'</td><td>PAGE NUMBER</td><td>4</td></tr></table>	JOB NUMBER	12100107A	DATE	1/8/2014	SCALE	1"=80'	PAGE NUMBER	4
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STREET VIEW
 QUEENS BOULEVARD, QUEENS, NEW YORK

JOB NUMBER 12100167A	DATE 1/8/2014
SCALE N.T.S.	FIGURE NUMBER 5



 MASER CONSULTING, P.A. Geotechnical, Structural & Environmental Engineers 100 West 42nd Street, 10th Floor New York, NY 10018-3601 405 of 111 Offices in 10 Countries	WEST-ESTER OFFICE 11 Broadway Hightstown, NJ 08520 Phone: 609-434-7300 Fax: 609-434-7304 e-mail: sales@west-ester.com	 PLAN NORTH	AERIAL VIEW GRAND CONCOURSE, BRONX, NEW YORK	DATE 12/01/07A 1/8/2014 SCALE 1"=70' FIGURE NUMBER 6
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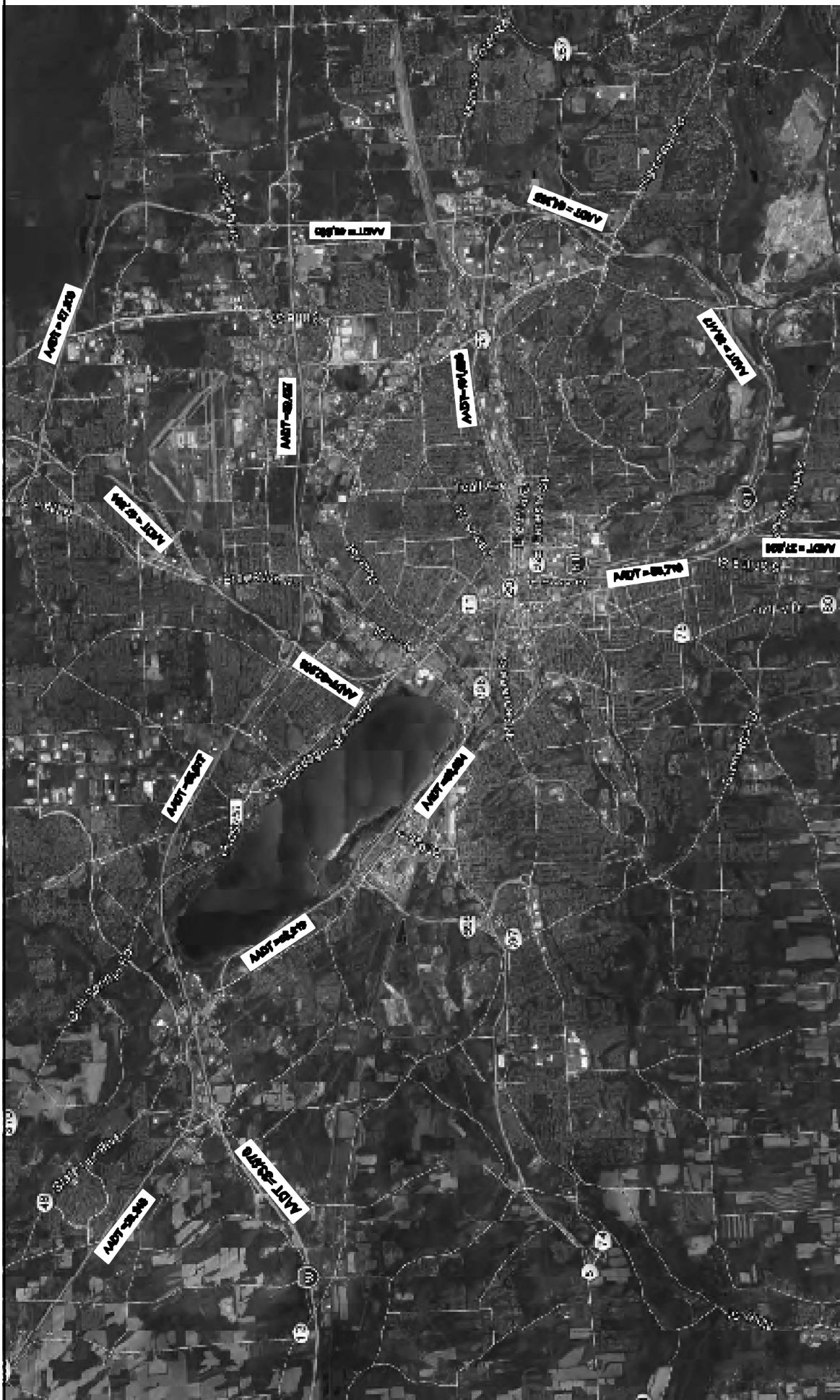


STREET VIEW
 GRAND CONCOURSE, BRONX, NEW YORK

JOB NUMBER 12100167A	DATE 1/8/2014
SCALE N.T.S.	FIGURE NUMBER 7



 MASER CONSULTING Geotechnical, Structural & Environmental Engineers 1000 N. 10th Street, Suite 100 Syracuse, NY 13204 Phone: 315.462.7200 Fax: 315.462.7201 www.maserconsulting.com	WEST-ESTER OFFICE 11 Bedford Highway, NY 13202 Phone: 315.462.7200 Fax: 315.462.7201 www.maserconsulting.com	 PLAN NORTH	REQUIRED PAVEMENT AREA BOULEVARD ALTERNATIVE CITY OF SYRACUSE, ONONDAGA COUNTY, NEW YORK	JOB NUMBER 12100107A	DATE 1/6/2014
				SCALE 1"=400'	PAGE NUMBER 6



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AREA MAP
AADT EXPRESSED IN VEHICLES PER DAY (VPD)
CITY OF SYRACUSE, ONONDAGA COUNTY, NEW YORK

DATE: 1/8/2014
PROJECT NUMBER: N.T.S.

DATE: 1/8/2014
PROJECT NUMBER: 9



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DESCRIPTION OF THE SCREENING AND METHODOLOGY



We have performed a preliminary SYNCHRO analysis for the AM and PM Peak Hours using record traffic volume data, i.e., without consideration of future growth. This examination was undertaken to assist in understanding the potential magnitude of impacts that would be associated with the contemplated elimination of the viaduct and replacement with a boulevard. The analyses were completed under three conditions:

- Existing Geometric Conditions
- Alternate 1
100% Diverted Traffic on Almond Street w/ and w/o added lanes on Almond St.
- Alternate 2
30% Diverted Traffic on Almond Street w/ and w/o added lanes on Almond St.
35% Diverted Traffic on Townsend Street w/ and w/o added lanes on Almond St.
35% Diverted Traffic on State Street w/ and w/o added lanes on Almond St.

The terminology used in identifying traffic flow conditions is Level of Service. A Level of Service "A" represents the best condition with little or no delay and a Level of Service "F" represents the worst where volume exceeds capacity. A Level of Service "C" is generally used as a design standard. In order to identify an intersection's Level of Service, the average number of vehicle delay (in seconds) is computed. [Additional information concerning signalized intersection Levels of Service can be found as an attachment.]

The results of these analyses are shown on the Table No. 1 for the overall intersection operation. Six intersections were examined:

1. Almond Street/Harrison Street
2. Almond Street/E. Adams Street
3. Townsend Street/Harrison Street
4. Townsend Street/ E. Adams Street
5. State Street/ Harrison Street
6. State Street/ E. Adams Street

In considering the contemplated removal of the viaduct and development of a boulevard for Alternate 1, we've assumed all viaduct traffic to divert to Almond Street. This equates to an additional 1,971 vehicles northbound and an additional 2,192 vehicles southbound during the AM Peak Hour and 2,403 vehicles northbound and 2,395 vehicles southbound during the PM Peak Hour. We've placed this traffic on through movements only as diverted traffic is "through" traffic only. The traffic that has this area as its origin or destination are part of the surface volume already.

The analyses were rerun assuming the addition of two (2) through lanes in each of the northbound and southbound directions on Almond Street to handle additional through traffic. This is the maximum extent of widening that could occur without the need for obtaining additional right of way for the road itself. However, this does not include the lanes necessary or desirable for bike lanes/pedestrian walkways/bus turnouts, etc.

Simply adding lanes to Almond Street would not result in improved Levels of Service. Traffic would of necessity migrate to adjacent north/south roadways predominately, Townsend Street and State Street.

Alternate 2 considers this migration assuming 30% of the viaduct traffic would remain on Almond Street, 35% would move to Townsend Street and 35% would shift to State Street.

Clearly, a review of the Table No. 1 indicates that even with extensive improvements to Almond Street in the form of additional through lanes and with the diversion of traffic to adjacent north/south roads, insufficient capacity exists to support elimination of the viaduct to service through traffic with many locations operating at a Level of Service "E" and/or "F" during one or both peak hours. This analysis has focused on the purely northbound and southbound movements without consideration of the improvements that would be required to convey diverted traffic to the adjacent parallel roadways – a further complication, which if appropriately considered in design analysis, would undoubtedly require additional land acquisition and disruption of existing homes and/or businesses.



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LEVELS OF SERVICE STANDARDS

LEVEL OF SERVICE FOR SIGNALIZED INTERSECTIONS

Level of Service (LOS) can be characterized for the entire intersection, each intersection approach, and each lane group. Control delay alone is used to characterize LOS for the entire intersection or an approach. Control delay and volume-to-capacity (v/c) ratio are used to characterize LOS for a lane group. Delay quantifies the increase in travel time due to traffic signal control. It is also a measure of driver discomfort and fuel consumption. The volume-to-capacity ratio quantifies the degree to which a phase's capacity is utilized by a lane group.

LOS A describes operations with a control delay of 10 s/veh or less and a volume-to-capacity ratio no greater than 1.0. This level is typically assigned when the volume-to-capacity ratio is low and either progression is exceptionally favorable or the cycle length is very short. If it is due to favorable progression, most vehicles arrive during the green indication and travel through the intersection without stopping.

LOS B describes operations with control delay between 10 and 20 s/veh and a volume-to-capacity ratio no greater than 1.0. This level is typically assigned when the volume-to-capacity ratio is low and either progression is highly favorable or the cycle length is short. More vehicles stop than with LOS A.

LOS C describes operations with control delay between 20 and 35 s/veh and a volume-to-capacity ratio no greater than 1.0. This level is typically assigned when progression is favorable or the cycle length is moderate.

LOS D describes operations with control delay between 35 and 55 s/veh and a volume-to-capacity ratio no greater than 1.0. This level is typically assigned when the volume-to-capacity ratio is high and either progression is ineffective or the cycle length is long.

LOS E describes operations with control delay between 55 and 80 s/veh and a volume-to-capacity ratio no greater than 1.0. This level is typically assigned when the volume-to-capacity ratio is high, progression is unfavorable, and the cycle length is long.

LOS F describes operations with control delay exceeding 80 s/veh or a volume-to-capacity ratio greater than 1.0. This level is typically assigned when the volume-to-capacity ratio is very high, progression is very poor, and the cycle length is long.

A lane group can incur a delay less than 80 s/veh when the volume-to-capacity ratio exceeds 1.0. This condition typically occurs when the cycle length is short, the signal progression is favorable, or both. As a result, both the delay and volume-to-capacity ratio are considered when lane group LOS is established. A ratio of 1.0 or more indicates that cycle capacity is fully utilized and represents failure from a capacity perspective (just as delay in excess of 80 s/veh represents failure from a delay perspective).

The Level of Service Criteria for signalized intersections are given in Exhibit 18-4 from the *2010 Highway Capacity Manual* published by the Transportation Research Board.

Exhibit 18-4

Control Delay (s/veh)	LOS by Volume-to-Capacity Ratio	
	v/c ≤ 1.0	v/c > 1.0
≤ 10	A	F
>10-20	B	F
>20-35	C	F
>35-55	D	F
>55-80	E	F
>80	F	F

For approach-based and intersection wide assessments, LOS is defined solely by control delay.



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SCHEDULE A

"Boulevard Option" Impacts

SCHEDULE A
"Boulevard Option" Impacts

1. Describe the "Boulevard Option"

- a. Identify the portion of I-81 to be de-designated
- b. Identify who will take over design/repair/maintenance responsibility of the de-designated road
- c. Identify who will fund demolition of the roadway/viaduct along the de-designated stretch of road
- d. Identify the source of funds for demolition
- e. Identify the design parameters of the boulevard, including:
 - i. Number of through and turn lanes in each direction, including shoulders
 - ii. Width of travel lanes
 - iii. Width of shoulders
 - iv. Design Level of Service of Arterials and Intersections
 - v. Bike lane/pedestrian walkway features
 1. Location
 2. Width
 3. Number
 4. Integration with the road
 5. Use of fencing
 - vi. Number of intersections planned and at what cross streets
 - vii. Improvements proposed at the cross streets
 - viii. Traffic signal design and operation including pedestrian signals
 - ix. Identify added rights-of-way needed on each/both sides to accommodate the new boulevard
 - x. Identify the parcels and uses to be affected

2. Traffic

- a. Identify improvements needed on other streets and at other intersections resulting from re-routed traffic/modified traffic patterns, including
 - i. Traffic signals and other traffic control measures
 - ii. Modification to sidewalks
 - iii. Added travel/turn lanes
 - iv. Added rights-of-way to be required
 - v. Lands and uses to be affected
 - vi. Identify who will fund changes

- b. Identify design alternatives to connect the boulevard to I-690 including
 - i. Traffic signals and other traffic control measures
 - ii. Guide signs, ground mounted and overhead structures
 - iii. Added travel lanes/turn lanes/ramps
 - iv. Added rights-of-way to be required
 - v. Lands and uses to be affected
 - vi. Identify who will fund changes
 - c. Identify all improvements needed to existing I-481 mainline and the existing I-481 interchanges to accommodate the new designation as I-81 and the new/re-routed traffic in both directions, including
 - i. Traffic signals and other traffic control measures
 - ii. Added travel lanes/turn lanes/ramps
 - iii. Added rights-of-way to be required
 - iv. Lands and uses to be affected
 - v. Identify new interchanges proposed or those to be eliminated or modified
 - vi. Identify who will fund changes
 - d. Identify all improvements needed to the non-viaduct (e.g. non-boulevard) portion of existing I-81 to accommodate the de-designation and new/re-routed traffic in both directions, including
 - i. Traffic signals and other traffic control measures
 - ii. Added travel lanes/turn lanes/ramps
 - iii. Added rights-of-way to be required
 - iv. Lands and uses to be affected
 - v. Identify new interchanges proposed or those to be eliminated or modified
 - vi. Identify who will fund changes
 - e. Establish Existing, Design Year No-Build and Design Year Build traffic volumes and geometries for all facilities influenced by the change.
 - f. Identify all intersections and interchanges that will experience increased or decreased traffic volumes as a result of the "boulevard", including anticipated mainline and intersection Levels of Service weave/merge/diverge analysis of all ramp and ramp junctions. If certain interchanges/intersections are not included provide the rationale for such exclusion.
 - g. Identify improvements to maintain or improve Levels of Service at each location throughout the useful life of the improvement.
3. Traffic Safety
- a. Establish base line accident rates for all facilities under evaluation on a per million vehicle mile or per million vehicle entry basis. Extrapolate rates for expected change in geometry/traffic volumes.

- b. Pedestrian/bike integration/accommodation
 - c. Multi-modal/mass transit implications, i.e., new routing, eliminated routes
- 4. Integrity of existing interstate highway system
 - a. Identify/assess impacts on operations at all existing northbound and southbound I-81 interchanges with I-690, I-90, I-481 and with local roads.
 - b. Identify effects on overall vehicle miles travelled as a result of the reconfigured traffic system, including but not limited to regional and interstate vehicular travel. This should be in the form of potential increases in travel time, increased fuel consumption and lost productivity.
 - c. Identify overall effects on movement of goods and services
 - i. Locally
 - ii. Regionally
 - iii. Interstate
- 5. Air Quality
 - a. Identify/assess air quality impacts – should be co-terminous with the traffic impact/TLOS studies.
 - b. Impacts on climate change/global warming
 - c. Impacts from increased vehicle idling time/stop/starts
- 6. Emergency Services
 - a. Identify/assess impacts to response times to the hospital from the north, south and west by ambulances and other emergency vehicles
 - b. Identify/assess impacts on recovery/survival of victims as a result of increased response times
 - c. Identify/assess impacts on existing fire department stations' response times within their covered areas where the established routes are affected by the Project
 - d. Identify/assess impacts of increased traffic congestion along the "boulevard" on fire department response times and assess alternate emergency vehicle travel routes to avoid traffic congestion along the boulevard
 - e. Identify/assess impacts to law enforcement response times as a result of increased traffic congestion along the boulevard and assess alternate law enforcement travel routes to avoid congestion along the boulevard
- 7. Energy and Climate Change
- 8. Community Character
 - a. Identify/assess impacts of "boulevard" on downtown Syracuse
 - i. Displaced residents/businesses in order to acquire sufficient right-of-way width and to build the required boulevard, including Environmental Justice and identify relocation alternatives

- ii. On the overall downtown roadway network resulting from increased traffic/degraded Level of Service (LOS) on City streets, including displaced residents/businesses to accommodate improvements and other changes to the roadway and pedestrian walkway network
- iii. Access to significant civic facilities
 - 1. Hospitals - potential delays in emergency response particularly during inclement weather (ice/snow)
 - 2. Hancock International Airport
 - 3. SU
 - 4. Carrier Dome
 - 5. Train Station
 - 6. NYS Regional Market
 - 7. Destiny USA
 - 8. NYS Fairgrounds
 - 9. War Memorial
- iv. Increased City costs to improve, repair and maintain the downtown roadway network – diversion of trucks onto city streets may result in more frequent need for repair/reconstruction also potential for truck/pedestrian interaction
- v. Local economic development plans and existing patterns of development
- vi. Decreased connectivity between downtown and neighboring communities
- vii. Connective corridor – will one exist without I-81?
- viii. Demand for downtown office space/residences
- 5. Identify/assess impacts of de-designating a 11+ mile stretch of existing I-81
 - i. Conversion of I-481 to I-81
 - 1. Increased development pressures along I-481 corridor
 - 2. Potential for SPRAWL
 - 3. Contrary to Smart Growth principles
 - 4. Effect on character of existing local governments through which I-481 (which would become I-81) traverses
 - 5. Availability/adequacy of existing infrastructure to accommodate inevitable growth/development pressures and traffic volumes
 - 6. NYS and local costs to repair and maintain the de-designated stretch of I-81
 - 7. Identify/assess the adequacy of recruiting funding sources to do so.
 - 8. Identify/assess impacts to commuting/travel patterns/traffic safety if those standards are reduced in any way.

ii. Land Use/Local Revenues

1. Impacts to businesses and other land uses along this stretch of road that rely on vehicular traffic, especially interstate or regional.
 - a. Evaluate the likelihood of them closing or relocating
 - b. If so, what is the impact on local governments resulting from lost tax revenues? This applies to the following local governments:
 - i. City
 - ii. County
 - iii. Salina
2. Changes to Commuting Patterns Without sufficient capacity traffic will divert to other interchange points near and far that may require additional improvement currently unforeseen. A Regional Network Evaluation is required.
3. Potential for population shifts
4. Consistency/Compliance with NYS Smart Growth Policies/Principles

9. Impacts to Local/Regional Economies

10. Land Use and Zoning

- a. Identify/assess impacts to lands located along the "boulevard"
- b. Identify/assess impacts to lands located along the remaining stretch of de-designated I-81
- c. Identify/assess impacts to municipalities located along or whose residents commute on or regularly use the remaining stretch of de-designated I-81
- d. Identify/assess impacts to land uses and other municipalities that may be affected by changed regional and interstate travel patterns
- e. Identify/assess impacts to lands and municipalities located along I-481 and those which will otherwise be affected by re-designation of I-481 to I-81

11. Noise and Vibration

12. Visual Resources

13. Historic and Cultural Resources

14. Construction, Maintenance and Protection of Traffic



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SCHEDULE B

"Maintain Grade Separation" Impacts

SCHEDULE B
"Maintain Grade Separation" Impacts

1. Describe the "Grade Separation" Options
 - a. Describe the options
 - i. Maintain the I-81 interstate highway designation along or very near the existing I 81;
 - ii. Maintain grade separation
 - a. Bridge(s) (perhaps further elevated tennie structure)
 - b. Tunnel
 - c. Depressed Roadway
 - b. Establish screening criteria/parameters
 - i. Identify the changes needed to upgrade to meet current interstate highway design/operational standards
 - ii. Establish screening criteria for options to permit objective assessment of each
 - c. Identify the source of funds for same
 - d. Identify the parameters for design of the grade separation for each option considered, including:
 - i. Number of travel lanes in each direction, including shoulders
 - ii. Width of lanes
 - iii. Width of shoulders
 - iv. Access control
 - v. Visual enhancement
 - vi. Bike lane/pedestrian walkway features
 1. Location
 2. Width
 3. Number
 4. Integration with the road, elevate above Almond Street
 - vii. Number of intersections planned and at what cross streets
 - viii. Improvements proposed at the cross streets
 - ix. Traffic signal design and operation
 - x. Identify added rights-of-way needed on each/both sides to accommodate the new grade separation design and ramping
 - xi. Identify the parcel and uses to be affected
2. Traffic
 - a. Identify improvements needed on other streets and at other intersections resulting from re-routed traffic/changed traffic patterns, including

- i. Traffic signals and other traffic control measures
 - ii. Added travel and turn lanes
 - iii. Added rights-of-way to be required
 - iv. Lands and uses to be affected
 - b. Identify design to connect the grade separation road to I-690 including
 - i. Ramps
 - ii. Traffic signals and other traffic control measures
 - iii. Added travel lanes
 - iv. Added rights-of way to be required
 - v. Lands and uses to be affected
 - c. Establish Existing, Design Year No-Build and Design Year Build traffic volumes and geometrics
- 3. Traffic Safety
 - a. Establish base line accident rates for all facilities under evaluation on a per million vehicle mile or per trillion vehicle entry basis. Extrapolate rate for expected change in geometry/traffic volumes.
 - b. Pedestrian/bike integration/accommodation, perhaps use of sidewalk bridges elevator/escalators
 - c. Multi-modal/mass transit
- 4. Air Quality
 - a. Identify/assess air quality impacts should be co-terminus with the traffic impact/LOS studies
 - b. Impacts on climate change/global warming
 - c. Impacts from increased vehicle idling time/stop/starts
- 5. Energy and Climate Change
- 6. Community Character
 - a. Identify/assess impacts of "Grade Separation" option on downtown Syracuse
 - i. Displaced residents/businesses in order to acquire sufficient right-of-way width and to build the required improvements, including Environmental Justice and identify relocation alternatives
 - ii. Local economic development plans and existing patterns of development
 - iii. Decreased connectivity between downtown and neighboring communities
 - iv. Connective corridor -- will one exist without I-81?
 - v. Demand for downtown office space/residences
- 7. Impacts to Local/Regional Economics
- 8. Land Use and Zoning
 - a. Identify/assess impacts to lands located along the "Grade Separation" option



- b. Identify/assess impacts to land uses and other municipalities that may be affected by changed regional and interstate travel patterns
- 9. Noise and Vibration
- 10. Visual Resources
- 11. Historic and Cultural Resources
- 12. Construction, Maintenance and Protection of Traffic



Economic Impacts of Proposed Replacement of I-81 through Central Syracuse with a Boulevard

January 17, 2014

Summary

This preliminary assessment has been prepared to evaluate the long-term macro-economic effects expected to result from the de-designation of a portion of I-81 through the City of Syracuse and replacing it with a boulevard or similar at grade roadway (the “Boulevard Option”). The report prepared by Maser Consulting P.A. dated January 16, 2014 should be referred to for an evaluation of the traffic consequences of the Boulevard Option.

As discussed in greater detail below, the Boulevard Option would:

- 1) Induce sprawl, violating “green” and “smart growth” principles by encouraging the relocation of existing development to undeveloped areas and by encouraging the abandonment of existing developed areas; and
- 2) Result in a loss of almost 10% (7,114) of the existing full time jobs in the existing I 81 corridor.

Economic Impact of Induced Sprawl

Rather than removing an urban barrier, the removal of I 81 and replacement with an at grade boulevard would impede local and regional connections, resulting in urban decay in the central areas serviced by current I-81 and induced sprawl along the I-481 corridor. Until this option is eliminated from consideration, economic stagnation will loom in the downtown area and areas south and north along the I 81 corridor, as businesses wait to see if the value of their properties will be damaged or destroyed.

The Boulevard Option would substantially impede vehicular movement into and through Syracuse. Connectivity would be adversely affected in that access into and out of the central area and between peripheral areas would be restricted. Vehicular and pedestrian movements within Syracuse would be restricted by widened and congested surface streets. These traffic consequences are detailed further in the above referenced Maser Consulting report.

The removal of I-81 would sever northern and southern portions of the city from each other and from the city center, destroying the connectivity that Syracuse residents and businesses



Market & Feasibility Advisors

currently enjoy. The loss of the current I 81/I 690 interchange would further segment each quadrant of the community. Consequently, new travel patterns would emerge as individuals seek a continuous trip to avoid the frequent stops and congestion created by the boulevard.

Under this scenario, north-south vehicular travel would shift to other unimpeded routes, principally to current I 481 and new suburban interstate interchanges, resulting in greater vehicle miles travelled and sprawl. Businesses in the northern and southern areas would suffer as their markets shrink. Employment and tax generation would likely be impacted. Ultimately, businesses and residents would choose to relocate along the current I-481 corridor to regain the connectivity they currently enjoy, inducing substantial sprawl outside of the city and decay within its core. This sprawl would tax the infrastructure of suburban communities that were never intended to serve as commercial hubs. Communities that host these interchanges might not necessarily receive a net benefit. As businesses and services exit the central area, creating the need for expansion of infrastructure and roads, water and sewer, schools and amenities in suburban communities, the well documented cost of growth would likely result in changing conditions where taxpayers in suburban Syracuse communities would be unexpectedly impacted. Growth might also result around the I-690 and I-90 interchange to the west and the current I-81/I-481 interchange to the north.

It is ironic that those touting the Boulevard Option champion it as a “green” and “New-Urbanist” concept when in reality it is the opposite. Severing the northern and southern communities from the rest of the metropolitan area would result in longer drives, suburban relocation, and the loss in value of existing infrastructure and residential patterns leading to decreased property values, decreased property tax collection and dislocation of existing businesses and facilities.

By way of example, demand would be created for new hotel rooms in the area of the current I-690/I-481 interchange merely because the location of the through-interstate had been relocated. This would be sprawl without actual growth, which would result in the waste and decline of current businesses, residential and hotel properties around I-81.

The fleeing of hotels from the I-81/downtown area would also negatively impact convention business, as this business relies on its proximate hotel inventory in room count and variety by market segment. Conventions are a critical part of a city’s tourism economic impact. Each convention attendee spends hundreds of dollars in the host community beyond hotels during their visits. Syracuse already faces challenges in this business. New limitations in room count and variety by market segment would severely damage convention viability.

The Boulevard Option would place pressure on Hancock International Airport and the Intermodal Transportation Center because both would be incongruously removed from the Interstate highway system to and through the community.



Were the Boulevard Option to be constructed, the current I-481 corridor would eventually become the new center of commerce, as it effectively became a bypass highway. Time and again bypass roads with similar configurations have been shown to draw community growth away from central areas resulting in sprawl and less efficient deployment of community assets.

Removal of the Boulevard Option from consideration now is critical, because in the meantime, no substantial investment along either the current I-81 or I-481 corridors will occur because of the far-reaching and dramatic effects that such a decision would have. At any time this would be damaging but is especially so at this time as the national economy continues to emerge from recession and the credit supporting investment in these corridors will simply go elsewhere. This economic stagnation will loom for as long as the Boulevard Option remains on the table. Early elimination of this option would minimize the damage caused by such stagnation.

Corridor Employment Impact

The greatest and most valuable concentration of employment in the Syracuse area lies within one mile of I-81 between the northern and southern I-481 interchanges. While only 17 percent of the region's population lives in this area, 30 percent of the jobs are located here. The core Downtown and Hill area contains 44% of the employment in the corridor. The efficient movement of people into and out of this corridor and, more specifically, the core Downtown and Hill areas, is critical to the functioning of the City.

Substantial portions of the industries which drive the local and regional economy are located in this corridor, including:

- 39% of the finance, insurance and real estate industry employment professionals who often travel throughout the region during their workday;
- 50% of the health services employment, which requires unimpeded inbound and outbound connectivity at all times;
- 59% of utility employment, which requires unimpeded connectivity, especially in inclement conditions;
- 38% of communications employment, which requires unimpeded inbound and outbound connectivity, especially in inclement conditions;
- 34% of transportation industry employment, which requires unimpeded inbound and outbound connectivity;
- 35% of government employment, inclusive of police, fire and other first responders;
- 56% of legal services employment;



Market & Feasibility Advisors

- 27% of entertainment employment, which rely on regional connectivity;
- 20% of retail employment, which rely on high traffic flows and easy access for business;
- 16% of hotels and lodging employment which rely on tourism traffic;
- 17% of construction employment and
- 21% of wholesale trade.

In fact, most of these businesses, and therefore the employment, is located in this corridor for the very reason that it has unparalleled connections throughout the region.

The severing of I-51 would result in unacceptable traffic conditions in the Downtown and the Hill areas while at the same time channeling Interstate highway traffic away from the city core. The above industries are dependent on existing I-81 to effectively connect the north-side, south-side and downtown to the entire region. Were this connectivity lost, the value of locating a business in and investing in the corridor would be substantially eroded. Consequently, employment in all sectors, regardless of their degree of dependency on I-81 for personnel or resources would be substantially deteriorated. Based on our analysis, we project replacing I 81 with a boulevard in the area contemplated by the DOT would result in a net loss of 7,114 jobs which is a loss of almost 10% of the jobs in what is now the I-81 corridor. The chart below provides a further industry by industry breakdown:



Potential I-81 Corridor Impact¹

	2012 Corridor Employment	Dependency on Interstate for Personnel or Resources	2012 Corridor Employment without Interstate	Impact
Retail Trade	9,852	Moderate	8,867	(985)
Fire	6,105	High	5,189	(916)
Hotels & Lodging	453	Very High	227	(226)
Automotive Services	779	Low	740	(39)
Entertainment	1,202	High	1,022	(180)
Health Services	15,010	Low	14,260	(750)
Legal Services	1,357	High	1,153	(204)
Education & Libraries	9,372	Low	8,903	(469)
Other Services	12,225	Moderate	11,003	(1,222)
Agriculture & Mining	258	Low	245	(13)
Construction	2,338	Moderate	2,104	(234)
Manufacturing	3,455	Moderate	3,110	(345)
Transportation	3,013	High	2,561	(452)
Communication	1,027	Moderate	924	(103)
Utility	1,660	Moderate	1,494	(166)
Wholesale Trade	2,603	High	2,213	(390)
Government	8,567	Low	8,147	(420)
Total	79,276		72,162	
Net Gain (Loss)				(7,114)

Conclusion

The Boulevard Option must be removed from further consideration, as it is currently deterring investment in the corridor area in anticipation of its displacing impacts. The sprawl and job loss associated with the Boulevard Option would be a crippling blow to the entire metro Syracuse area.

¹ Source ESRI & MFA; Central I-81 Corridor is a two mile wide corridor with I-81 at its center.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Since August 2013, Save81.org has demonstrated strong community-wide support for maintaining Interstate 81's current path and Interstate Highway designation through Central New York, either via the Access Syracuse tunnel-boulevard hybrid plan or a rebuilt elevated highway.

Save81.org has collected 3,743 signatures on its petition to preserve I-81 in the region and currently has 3,413 followers on Facebook. Additionally, hundreds have written in support of the Access Syracuse plan, urging the DOT to fully analyze it as a potential option for the future of I-81.

Moreover, the entire Central New York delegation in the State Legislature has called on the DOT to keep Access Syracuse on the table and fully review it as an option for I-81.

Included in this packet is a detailed analysis of the Access Syracuse plan as well as several documents demonstrating support for the plan. Save81.org believes Access Syracuse can be the consensus solution for which our community has been searching and has the potential to bring stakeholders from all sides together. A summary of each of these items is included below.

We thank the DOT and FHWA for allowing Save81.org and the entire community this opportunity to submit formal comments for the I-81 project record. We hope that officials will thoroughly consider these materials as we enter the next phase of this important process.

Access Syracuse Plan

Formal submission, including map, of the Access Syracuse tunnel-boulevard hybrid plan.

Traffic Analysis

Analysis of a boulevard, prepared by Maser Engineering, that shows the traffic problems a boulevard-only plan would create.

Recent Polling

A summary of recent polling during the past year indicating overwhelming support for maintaining I-81's current form and function through Central New York.

Lawmaker Letter

Letter from July 3, 2014 signed by Senators DeFrancisco and Valesky, and Assemblymembers Magnarelli, Barclay, Finch, Oaks, Roberts, and Stirpe urging the DOT to consider the Access Syracuse plan.

Carmen Emmi Letter to the Editor

July 7, 2014 letter to the editor of the Post-Standard signed by Carmen Emmi stating the benefits of the Access Syracuse plan.

Greg Lancette Letter to the Editor

July 17, 2014 letter to the editor of the Post-Standard from Greg Lancette stating the benefits of the Access Syracuse plan.

Senator DeFrancisco Letter to the Editor

July 11, 2014 letter to the editor of the Post-Standard from Senator DeFrancisco stating that the Access Syracuse plan should not be dismissed

Mark Nicotra and Tony Mangano Letter to the Editor

August 3, 2014 letter to the editor of the Post-Standard signed by Mark Nicotra and Tony Mangano stating how Access Syracuse will save properties that might be destroyed by other plans.



441 Electronics Parkway,
Liverpool, New York 13088

September 2, 2014

Mr. Jonathan McDade
New York Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Building
7th Floor, Room 719
Clinton Avenue and N. Pearl Street
Albany, New York 12207

Ms. Debra Nelson
NYSDOT
50 Wolf Road
Albany, New York 12232

Re: I-81 Project – The Access Syracuse Plan

Dear Mr. McDade and Ms. Nelson:

We are submitting this comment letter to the Federal Highway Administration (“FHWA”) and the New York State Department of Transportation (“NYSDOT”) in connection with the “I-81 Viaduct Project”. Its focus is on “The Access Syracuse Plan”, which has been discussed publicly over the past 2 +/- months.

The Access Syracuse Plan

During the scoping process, members of the public have developed an alternative known as The Access Syracuse Plan as the best way to accomplish both the highly-publicized transportation and non-transportation goals of the project. This includes improving connectivity between downtown neighborhoods, stimulating economic development, promoting bicycle and pedestrian usage and increasing public spaces while at the same time retaining the current interstate highway alignment running through the City. A copy and description of The Access Syracuse Plan is attached as **Appendix A**.

The Access Syracuse Plan is a hybrid tunnel-boulevard plan that includes a shortened tunnel and incorporates a “boulevard” desired by some commenters. Attached in Appendix A is a depiction of The Access Syracuse Plan, as modified through August 25, 2014. This plan would improve the connectivity between the University Hill area and downtown while maintaining I-81's

interstate highway designation and alignment. The elevated portion of I-81 and the flyover ramps at I-690 would be removed and replaced with a street level boulevard and the interstate would be partially buried in a tunnel and partially constructed as a recessed highway. This plan would keep traffic flowing through the City and best preserve the integrity of the local street grid accommodating into, within, and through traffic, local traffic and bicycles and pedestrians. The “boulevard” concept that some view as a benefit to downtown would actually be more bicycle and pedestrian friendly in The Access Syracuse Plan, as it would not need to bear the burden of an estimated 70,000 vehicles per day, permitting a more “human-scale” boulevard.

The Access Syracuse Plan represents both short and long-term “big thinking” in an effort to reach a broad consensus about what is best for the interstate highway system, the City of Syracuse and the Region. Cost alone cannot be the determining or even a dominant factor in this effort.

The Access Syracuse Plan was initially proposed in July 2014. Based on discussions with and comments from interested parties, including elected officials, The Access Syracuse Plan has been refined to reduce cost while at the same time preserving or enhancing the above-identified comparative advantages to the “street-level” alternatives. A portion of the tunnel at the northern end has been converted to a recessed highway and the tunnel has been extended at the southern end so as to retain existing road connections there. As presented, The Access Syracuse Plan is conceptual only and it is sufficiently flexible to permit continuing modification and refinement as the project proceeds.

The Access Syracuse Plan is far superior to the “street-level alternatives” in meeting the various local planning and community objectives for the project as well as the safety and transportation objectives.

- Better Mobility – The Access Syracuse Plan would maintain the continuity of I-81, which the street level alternatives eliminate. This continuity would provide for enhanced mobility within the City and the region, allowing for growth and redevelopment in the downtown area that would otherwise be pushed to the periphery in each of the street level alternatives. To the extent mobility is decreased by the street-level alternatives, the need for additional arterials in the downtown area may increase thus creating more real or perceived barriers in the downtown area as accessibility is reduced.
- More Land Available - The Access Syracuse Plan would result in more land being made available for redevelopment along the Almond Street corridor than the street-level alternatives. The street-level alternatives would not free up any lands – all available Right-of-Way (and we believe additional land) would be needed to accommodate the traffic volumes of the street-level roadway system.
- Better Accessibility - The Access Syracuse Plan would make the streets along the Almond Street corridor more accessible. The Access Syracuse Plan would not add significant new traffic volumes to the surface level road, and would not require closure of existing connections along the central portion of the Almond Street corridor (Water Street is not part of that). This would permit incorporation of features to improve accessibility. The street-level alternatives would not do so.

Instead, the street level alternatives would increase traffic volumes by up to 100% along the Almond Street corridor, which would require additional travel and/or turning lanes - at least one and in some cases more – and closure of existing street connections along the Almond Street corridor.

- Induced Downtown Growth – The Access Syracuse Plan would not only free up more land, it would make existing lands in the downtown area more attractive for development. It would improve traffic flow in the immediate area, remove the psychological barrier of the viaduct, and make the area more accessible. None of the street-level alternatives would do this. In fact, the street-level alternatives would discourage or prevent downtown growth because of increased traffic volumes and resulting gridlock in and around downtown.

We applied the screening criteria that the agencies have developed and expressed in the Draft Scoping Report, namely Purpose and Need, Right-of-Way, Constructability and Cost to The Access Syracuse Plan. It meets the “Reasonable/Pass” standard for each element as detailed on the table included at **Appendix B**. Accordingly, it must be considered in the going-forward analysis of alternatives.

This letter should be made part of the FHWA/NYSDOT NEPA and SEQRA record. We strongly believe that going forward alternatives must include The Access Syracuse Plan, which best satisfies the project’s goals, purposes and objectives.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anthony Mangano", written in a cursive style.

Anthony Mangano

Appendix A

The Access Syracuse Plan

Save81.org was formed to state the case for preserving the function and designation of Interstate 81 as the principal north-south artery that carries vehicular traffic into, out of, and through the Central New York community, including the city of Syracuse.

If Interstate 81 were to be removed from the core of the community, as some proposed alternatives suggest, the consequences would be dire - inflicting economic pain on an already fragile Central New York economy, disrupting well-established and critical travel patterns, increasing emergency service response times, increasing travel time and distances, fuel consumption, air pollution and suburban sprawl. **Save81.org's** goal is to convince the responsible public officials to adopt any one of the many proposed alternatives - or a new solution to be found, or a hybrid combination - that will preserve I-81's present function and designation.

As the community dialogue has proceeded, many sides and many opinions have emerged. **Save81.org** believes unless a consensus approach can be agreed upon, the Central New York community will be deprived of its voice and others will make the decisions for us.

For this reason, after studying the DOT-proposed options and after listening to the many voices of the community, **Save81.org** worked with respected traffic engineering professionals to develop what is known as **The Access Syracuse Plan** – a hybrid combination of features from various options under consideration, with some new twists.

The Access Syracuse Plan was introduced to the public in early summer 2014. Since that time, public input has contributed to improvements that are now incorporated into the plan.

The Access Syracuse Plan would preserve the function and designation of Interstate 81 within its existing corridor by:

1. Placing part of Interstate 81 within this corridor below ground in a tunnel,
2. Placing part of Interstate 81 below grade in a recessed highway configuration,
3. Rebuilding Almond Street above the tunneled portion into the boulevard that many have envisioned,
4. Eliminating the high-flying and land-hungry flying ramps that presently connect the southern leg of I-81 with the western and eastern legs of I-690, and replacing that function with ramps forming a modified diamond interchange configuration,
5. Introducing a traffic circle where Erie Boulevard and the newly configured Almond Street boulevard would intersect.

Discussion:

1. Any boulevard-only solution would place 70,000 vehicles per day onto Almond Street or a combination of Almond Street and other parallel streets, with no acceptable way to flow

traffic from one to the other. Heavy traffic congestion would occur, and any Almond Street boulevard thus created would be a far cry from the boulevard envisioned by many, resembling more the Queens Boulevard in Queens, New York or the Grand Concourse in The Bronx – vast 10- to 12-lane-wide wastelands of asphalt. **The Access Syracuse Plan** would avoid that consequence by preserving Interstate 81 below ground, and permitting construction of a street-level boulevard closer in design to that which is envisioned by its supporters.

2. The overhead viaduct would be removed.
3. The relatively light traffic movements between I-690 and the southern leg of I-81 would be connected by way of the street-level Almond Street Boulevard.
4. Little or no land acquisition would be required, in marked contrast to all of the viaduct and boulevard-only options under consideration.
5. Connectivity of every street that presently intersects with Almond Street would be preserved except for one block of Water Street, in marked contrast to all of the other options under consideration. Because of this, dispersion of traffic throughout the downtown and University Hill areas would be greatly improved.
6. Street level air quality, emergency response times and pedestrian and bicycle safety would be improved, in marked contrast to all of the boulevard-only options under consideration.
7. While much less expensive than any of the other tunnel options under consideration, **The Access Syracuse Plan** would not be the least expensive of all options, but whatever option is implemented will be with us for the next 50 or 60 years. Viewed in that context, money should not be the overriding consideration.

The modified Access Syracuse Plan

The original **Access Syracuse Plan** was to be tunneled throughout the central city corridor. Public input contributed to a modification, which resulted in the recessed highway stretch being introduced, allowing significant further saving of cost.

In the original **Access Syracuse Plan**, two cross-streets near the Carrier Dome would have been impacted. Community input from the immediate neighborhood and from Assemblyman Sam Roberts suggested a southerly lengthening of the tunnel to avoid cutting off those cross-streets. This has been incorporated into the modified **Access Syracuse Plan**, resulting in only one cross-street being impacted throughout the entire corridor – that of one block of Water Street, between McBride and Almond Streets – a significant improvement to the plan.

The Access Syracuse Plan incorporates all of the features being urged by various voices in the community. **Save81.org** believes it is a consensus plan that the whole community can endorse.

THE ACCESS SYRACUSE PLAN

MODIFIED VERSION - AUGUST 28, 2014



Appendix B

Analysis of The Access Syracuse Plan Based on Preliminary Screening Criteria Developed by FHWA/NYS DOT

	Reasonable/Pass(✓) or Not Reasonable/Fail (X)	Description
Purpose and Need		
Will the alternative address identified geometric and operational deficiencies in the I-81 Viaduct Priority area?	✓	Access Syracuse would improve geometric and operational deficiencies as compared to current conditions.
Will the alternative maintain or enhance vehicle access to the interstate highway network and key destinations (i.e. I-690, central business district, hospitals and institutions)?	✓	Access to local streets would be better achieved than any other alternative presented. Access to key local destinations would be better achieved than any other alternative presented. Access to key regional destinations will be maintained through preservation of the existing interstate highway alignment. Existing connections to I-81 and I-690 will be maintained. Alternative vehicle access means may be established.
Will the alternative address structural deficiencies and improve bridge ratings in the I-81 Viaduct priority area?	✓	The viaduct would be removed, and replaced with a combination of tunnel and recessed highway, which combination would meet FHWA standards. The boulevard section would meet applicable FHWA, NYSDOT and/or local design standards.
Will the alternative maintain the local street connections within or adjacent to the I-81 Viaduct priority area?	✓	Yes, better than all other alternatives, including the street-level alternatives. All existing street connections would be preserved, except one block of Water Street between McBride and Almond

		Street (which is not part of the central Almond Street corridor).
Will the alternative provide enhanced bicycle and pedestrian surface connections on streets across and along the I-81 viaduct?	✓	The viaduct would be removed, and a new two-way street would be constructed. The new surface street and its intersections with east-west streets would include pedestrian and bicycle enhancements such as wider sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and safety improvements.
PURPOSE AND NEED – PASS (✓) or FAIL (X)	✓	
Right-of-Way		
Can the alternative be built without substantial property acquisitions?	✓	The Access Syracuse Plan would require less acquisition than all other alternatives and in fact would result in a net gain of land area.
RIGHT-OF-WAY –PASS (✓) OR FAIL (X)	✓	
Constructability		
Can the alternative be constructed without difficult means and methods, a long duration, or an inability to maintain adequate traffic flow?	✓	Construction of the tunnel and recessed highway may take longer to build than the other alternatives, but not significantly so. Construction methods to deal with soils, groundwater and utilities are well-established and manageable.
CONSTRUCTABILITY – PASS (✓) OR FAIL (X)		
Cost		
Is the projected construction cost reasonable?	✓	The costs will be significantly less than the tunnel alternatives that were rejected. And taking into account the benefits of construction to the City, County and Region, reasonable.

COST—PASS (✓) OR FAIL (X)	✓	
OVERALL – PASS (✓) OR FAIL (X)	✓	

Expert analysis: The boulevard option “should be eliminated from consideration”

In response to the state Department of Transportation’s request for public input, Save81.org submitted a Traffic Analysis to the Department that was prepared by national engineering firm Maser Consulting, P.A.¹.

Maser analyzed a variety of alternatives for the future disposition of Interstate 81 through Onondaga County and Central New York. Maser concluded that the so-called “boulevard” option should be eliminated from consideration because it would fail to meet the purposes, goals and objectives of the I-81 project and would not meet Federal Highway Administration standards for an interstate highway.

Other alternatives may prove to be of greater benefit

Based on limited data publicly available, Maser’s professional opinion is that, while only two alternatives have been described by the DOT as viable, “there are other alternatives or hybrids thereof that may prove to be of equal or greater overall benefit.”

A boulevard could not support the traffic load

Maser reported that the I-81 corridor through the center of Syracuse *presently* carries between 50,000 and 86,000 vehicles per day on the raised I-81 viaduct level (4 non-interrupted flow lanes). Truck traffic makes up approximately 16% of this volume or as much as 14,000 trucks per day. Almond Street, immediately below I-81, is furnished with 8 lanes for travel (5 northbound lanes and 3 southbound lanes).

They report, “the boulevard, as proposed, could not support this level of traffic activity and meet project objectives.” In fact the boulevard would have to support 88% of the traffic currently carried at the raised I-81 level.

Traffic at street level would nearly double

With up to 12 percent of the traffic on I-81 considered “through traffic,” which would be diverted to I-481 under the boulevard plan, 88 percent of existing traffic would be diverted to street level — far in excess of the capacity a boulevard could provide, according to the Maser study. Without counting future growth in traffic levels, traffic at street level would nearly double to about 10,000 vehicles in the AM Peak and PM Peak hours.

Moreover, a boulevard would fail to improve congestion, mobility and traffic safety on the existing interstate highway network. In fact, they observe, it could increase congestion on I-481/I-690 east of I-81 once delays on the boulevard materialized because of insufficient capacity.

¹ Maser Consulting, P.A. is a professional engineering consulting firm that provides services to municipalities, authorities, counties and state agencies. Maser operates 15 offices in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Florida.

A boulevard would require acquisition of land to accommodate 12 or more lanes

Most troubling, Maser's analysis concludes that the boulevard plan as currently proposed would fall far short of supporting current and future traffic levels in the area and would require 12 or more lanes to sufficiently handle projected traffic flow – a situation that would be, in Syracuse terms, an unimaginably and unacceptably broad expanse of blacktop, stop-and-go traffic and greatly increased air pollution at the level where people live, work, and try to walk.

More land, not less, would be required. This increased right-of-way width would almost certainly displace residents in the Pioneer Homes and Toomey Abbott Towers area, as well as existing businesses and medical institutions.

Such a boulevard would also fail to improve connectivity in the immediate downtown area surrounding the elevated highway. Instead, it would increase any perceived or actual barriers by enlarging the divide and inhibiting movement of commerce to, from, and through Syracuse.

Alternatively, traffic would be diverted, resulting in gridlock

Alternatively, the Maser study finds, the increased surface traffic load would have to be diverted to existing city streets, all of which in combination could not accommodate the additional burden of vehicles.

In terms used in traffic analysis, Level of Service "F"² would be experienced at multiple intersections along Almond Street, Townsend Street, State Street, Harrison Street and East Adams Street. In terms used in the everyday world, the word for that is *gridlock*.

In practical terms, Level of Service F would result in vehicle movement stalled through multiple traffic signal cycles at each of the impacted intersections.

In other words, *gridlock*.

The Maser analysis states, "To address this, significant road improvements, land acquisition and/or changing traffic patterns within the downtown area would be required." These would eliminate on-street parking, preclude bike lanes and/or disrupt existing center city organizations, businesses and residents.

A boulevard would increase air pollution, fuel consumption and sprawl

The study notes that diverting I-81 would require movement of commerce around the city on I-481, which would significantly increase travel time, fuel consumption and air pollution as well as contribute to sprawl that is contrary to New York State's Smart Growth Law.

² Defined as "Failure", "Forced or Breakdown Flow"; a constant traffic jam.

Air quality would deteriorate dramatically and noise levels would likely increase due to idling and stopping and starting of slowed traffic, along with associated increases in travel time.

The Maser analysis finds that traffic safety would also deteriorate as accidents between vehicles and between vehicles and pedestrians or bicycles would significantly increase, resulting in increased accidents, property damage and injuries.

A boulevard would increase the burden on taxpayers

Maser observes that the cost to demolish the elevated highway and to construct and maintain a boulevard and related improvements might not be funded by the Federal Highway Administration because the construction would not be related to the interstate highway system. In that event, resulting costs would be passed on to the state and/or the city.



Mr. Mark Prechelt
New York State Dept. of Transportation
333 E. Washington St.
Syracuse, NY 13202

Dear Mr. Prechelt:

As the Federal Highway Administration and the New York State Department of Transportation move forward into the next phase of the Interstate 81 project, Save81.org believes it is crucial that officials consider the opinions of Central New York residents as they begin to narrow down the potential options for the highway's future.

In the past year, Save81.org has commissioned two scientific polls to gauge where the community stands when it comes to the future of I-81 in our community. The results of these polls reveal a clear and overwhelming trend: Central New York residents want a solution for I-81 that maintains the highway's current form, path and function through the region.

In an August 2014 poll conducted by Global Strategy Group, 63 percent of respondents supported repairing or rebuilding I-81 and maintaining it as an elevated highway. Only 32 percent said they opposed that plan.

By contrast, 55 percent of residents said they opposed replacing I-81 with a street-level boulevard and re-routing I-81 traffic around the city. Just 39 percent said they would support this type of boulevard and reroute option.

Additionally, 50 percent of area residents said that the DOT should formally include the Access Syracuse tunnel-boulevard hybrid plan as an option for full study and evaluation. This option would maintain I-81's current alignment through the region via a tunnel while removing the elevated highway.

The poll, which was conducted from August 17-20, interviewed 401 residents from the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County and has a margin of error of 4.9 percent.

These recent results follow closely with past polling efforts. A November 2013 poll conducted by The Parkside Group on behalf of Save81.org found that 55 percent of voters preferred

retaining I-81 in its current designation as a highway through Syracuse. That poll, conducted from November 1-3, 2013, surveyed 402 residents from throughout Syracuse and Onondaga County and also had a margin of error of 4.9 percent.

And an informal July 2014 online poll conducted by Syracuse.com found that an overwhelming majority of respondents – roughly 65 percent – supported I-81 options that maintained I-81 in its present alignment.

In that poll, building new elevated bridges was the most popular option, at 33 percent, followed closely by removing the bridges and building an I-81 tunnel, at 31 percent. By contrast, only 35 percent supported options that would remove and reroute I-81 around the city in some fashion, including only 24 percent support for a boulevard option.

The results of these surveys clearly demonstrate that the vast majority of Central New York residents want a solution for I-81 that maintains its present alignment and function.

Save81.org could not agree more.

We have long held the position that disrupting I-81's path through the region with a street-level boulevard that re-routes the highway around Syracuse will damage our economy by putting businesses and jobs along the I-81 corridor at risk. A boulevard-only plan will also increase traffic congestion, extend commute times, endanger public safety and harm the environment.

For these reasons, Save81.org continues to maintain that any solution for I-81 must preserve the highway's present alignment and Interstate Highway designation.

We thank the Federal Highway Administration and the state Department of Transportation for allowing Save81.org the opportunity to submit these poll findings and your continued outreach to community stakeholders and residents. We hope that this information will be useful to your efforts and be strongly considered as we move into the next phase of the I-81 project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Anthony Mangano". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Anthony" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Mangano".

Tony Mangano
On behalf Save81.org's charter members

NEW YORK
STATE
SENATE
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247



July 3, 2014

Joan McDonald, Commissioner
New York State Department of Transportation
50 Wolf Road
Albany, New York 12232

Re: Interstate 81

Dear Commissioner McDonald:

Thank you for briefing us and others on the DOT's scoping alternatives last Tuesday, June 24, 2014. We are writing to follow up on that briefing and on the attached letter we sent to your attention on December 6, 2013. We remain consistent in our position that Interstate 81 must continue to exist through the City of Syracuse.

We have listened to the objectives and desires of the various stakeholders and believe that the Access Syracuse Plan, the plan given to you at the end of the June 24, 2014 meeting, would meet the objectives of everyone involved. It is a "hybrid" solution that includes a shortened tunnel and incorporates the "boulevard" desired by a number of commentators. Significantly, the Access Syracuse Plan hybrid solution would provide improved connectivity between the University Hill Area and downtown, while maintaining the Interstate status of Route 81 into and through the city. Also, it enables keeping many more cross streets open than any of the previous proposed pure boulevard or tunnel options, it eliminates the enormous cost of high-flying ramps at Interstate 690, and it also requires less land acquisition.

Based on the feedback we have received and the merits of the Access Syracuse Plan, we strongly urge its serious consideration, inclusion in the DOT's Final Scoping Document and full analysis in the Environmental Impact Statement process. This plan uniquely addresses the needs and the stated purpose of the Interstate 81 project. Most importantly, the plan will result in the much sought after community-wide consensus needed to reach a final solution.

Commissioner McDonald
July 1, 2014
Page 2

We appreciate the heightened attention your office has paid to this project over the past several months and thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Senators/Assembly Members



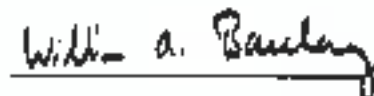
John A. DeFrancisco
50th Senate District



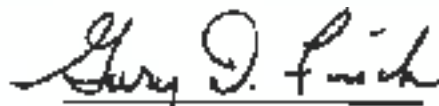
William B. Magnarelli
129th Assembly District



David J. Valesky
53rd Senate District



William A. Barclay
120th Assembly District



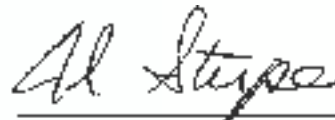
Gary D. Finch
126th Assembly District



Bob Oaks
130th Assembly District



Samuel D. Roberts
128th Assembly District



Al Stirpe
127th Assembly District

Sen. John DeFrancisco: I-81 editorial was too hasty to dismiss tunnel/boulevard combo (Your letters)
Published 07/11/14 on syracuse.com

To the Editor:

I read with great interest your editorial in the July 10, 2014, issue of The Post-Standard titled "An Interstate 81 Compromise Worth Arguing Against." I am truly amazed at how quickly the editorial board members can analyze such a complex issue that is of such importance to the community, and dismiss outright an option that could unify the community on the future of the I-81 project.

It's even more amazing that the compromise proposal that you so quickly rejected is supported by every Central New York state legislator – both Democrats and Republicans – and both representatives of the city and suburbs alike. The insight of the members of the editorial board in arriving at such an expeditious decision is something truly to behold.

Your claim that this compromise was accomplished by "Central New York politicians lining up behind an I-81 plan cooked up by Destiny USA" clearly was intended to anger your readers because of the negative feelings held by many toward the Destiny USA executives. Good try. But it's simply not true, and your reporters were told just that. The fact is that the "Save 81" group of businesses and many others have been seeking a solution, since the New York state Department of Transportation first announced the I-81 project, and that one option would result in a break in I-81 in the city of Syracuse. Destiny USA is simply one of numerous businesses that hold this position.

What's almost amusing is that the editorial board members intentionally seek to anger the general public by claiming that big, bad Pyramid is behind the compromise, when for years The Post-Standard slavishly played Pled Piper to Pyramid's overreaching demands for a tax deal. Moreover, it's simply absurd to claim that I have fallen behind a Destiny plan when I have shown little love for Destiny's demands in the past. The fact of the matter is, all of the state legislators, including myself, believe that this compromise solution is the best, whether Pyramid agrees or not.

Presently, there are two camps on this issue – those that want to remove the viaduct and replace it with a boulevard, and those that simply want the final solution to allow traffic through the city to remain at interstate speed. The compromise would call for the boulevard, together with about a 1.2 mile tunnel from south of the city to around Butternut Street, at which point it would connect with northbound 81. This compromise would satisfy both camps and provide for the connectivity between the University area, the hospitals, and downtown. It would also provide for through traffic by way of the I-81 tunnel to support businesses that rely on the Interstate, and avoid traffic pouring into the city before it could connect again with I-81.

As far as the cost is concerned, it likely would be more expensive than simply knocking down the viaduct and building a six-lane highway through the city.

However, Central New Yorkers will be living with the new I-81 solution for at least 75 years. Amortizing the additional costs over that time frame is a small price to pay for a solution that is supported by the community and which accommodates all of the stakeholders - most importantly Central New Yorkers and the traveling public.

The Post-Standard should do what it continually demands of legislators, namely to allow the proposal to be given a full and open review so that the correct decision can be made.

Sen. John DeFrancisco
50th Senate District
Syracuse

Interstate 81: Access Syracuse plan could be the solution we need (Your letters)

Published 07/17/14 on syracuse.com

To the Editor:

Last week, Central New York's delegation in Albany showed strong leadership by urging the state Department of Transportation to fully explore a newly proposed tunnel-boulevard hybrid plan as a solution for Interstate 81. We believe the DOT must listen to our representatives and explore the plan for further discussion, which could serve to unite the various goals of all I-81 stakeholders.

Since forming nearly a year ago, Save81.org has called for an I-81 solution that will work best for the entire community. The Access Syracuse Plan, a tunnel-boulevard hybrid, may be the consensus solution our community has been searching for. While the plan is in its infancy and still requires discussion and feedback from the community to iron out details and determine costs, we believe the plan's principal elements will suit our region well and fulfill all of the goals of the I-81 project. As Sen. Chuck Schumer has said, this project demands big thinking and community consensus to achieve its goals.

Replacing the elevated portion of I-81 and the flyover ramps at I-690 with a beautifully landscaped boulevard and a hidden tunnel would greatly improve the area's appearance and remove perceived divisions between area neighborhoods. The plan would also greatly improve connectivity between the University Hill area and downtown while maintaining I-81's crucial Interstate Highway designation.

The Access Syracuse plan would preserve the street grid better than any other option currently being considered, impacting far fewer cross-streets than any of the boulevard-only or tunnel-only options examined by the state Department of Transportation. It would keep traffic flowing into and throughout downtown and keep it easy for Central New Yorkers to get where they need to go. This would be great for the area's workers, visitors and business owners.

The Access Syracuse boulevard could be designed to include bike lanes and sidewalks that will keep cars, pedestrians and bicyclists moving in harmony and able to navigate downtown with greater ease and safety.

We have been encouraged by the reaction Access Syracuse has received from the bipartisan group of lawmakers who have called for further exploration of the idea. Save81.org looks forward to meeting with community groups, residents and elected officials to discuss how all of us can refine and improve the plan to truly make this a community-driven solution.

Access Syracuse is an ambitious plan that could be the answer to I-81. The DOT needs to listen to our leaders, fully consider the plan and allow for the community to provide its feedback.

Carmen Emmi
Save81 Member
Clay

Interstate 81: Why not consider the hybrid Access Syracuse Plan? (Your letters)

Published 07/17/14 on syracuse.com

To the Editor:

On behalf of over 6,000 working families, we of the Central & Northern New York Building Trades wish to state our support for the Access Syracuse Plan for Interstate 81 recently espoused by Sen. John DeFrancisco and the Save 81 coalition.

Concerning a project of this magnitude, it is essential to remember that cost alone should not be the determining factor. A variety of concerns, both short- and long-term, should be taken into account. Interstate 81 needs to be modernized, and this plan accomplishes that, as was the original intention of the project.

Under current proposals for the restructuring of Interstate 81, anywhere from six to seven surface streets would be terminated. Under the Access Syracuse Plan, this number is greatly reduced to two or three. The existing schemes would also result in further acquisition of land from neighboring properties. The Access Syracuse Plan not only lowers this figure, but actually provides a net gain of land freed from the Interstate 81 jurisdiction.

Furthermore, the Access Syracuse Plan is an excellent compromise solution. With its incorporation of both tunnel and boulevard, it is a plan individuals on all sides of the debate can agree to and benefit from. This applies to residents, commuters and businesses. All of which make up the composition of Save 81—a diverse alliance of townships, business owners, community organizations, portions of the construction industry, politicians and many others. The one thing they all have in common, however, is a genuine concern for the future and success of Syracuse.

And a belief that the Access Syracuse Plan for Interstate 81 is an excellent road to helping achieve this. Taking this into consideration, we strongly urge officials of the New York State Department of Transportation to consider the viability of this plan.

Gregory Lancette

**President, Central & Northern New York Building Trades
Syracuse**

Interstate 81: Boulevard-tunnel combo will save buildings from demolition (Your letters)

Published 08/03/14 on syracuse.com

To the Editor:

We read with interest the July 29 Post-Standard article about a local group's efforts to identify properties that might be demolished to make way for one of the I-81 options. While interesting, it was not as informative as it could be considering the group explored only the most disruptive of the options on the table.

The DOT responded by noting that this analysis was not a DOT product and repeated the agency's view that it is too soon to know what properties would be razed. In any event, we believe it would be instructive to compare this view of the projected impact with that of Save81.org's "Access Syracuse" tunnel-boulevard hybrid proposal.

Right off the top, roughly a third of the buildings affected in this local group's analysis would result from the DOT's plan to connect the long-missing movements between I-690 and I-81. But these impacts are a part every option the DOT is considering, not just the viaduct options. And there may well be better and less disruptive ways to make this connection.

Additionally, none of the other buildings shown on this plan would have to be demolished if the Access Syracuse plan is adopted. Access Syracuse proposes to access I-690 by way of a surface-level boulevard, meaning that none of the land-hungry, high-flying access ramps required by all of the DOT's viaduct and tunnel options would be required.

And under the Access Syracuse plan, the pedestrian-friendly boulevard desired by many could actually become a reality. By contrast, in all of the DOT's boulevard-only options, 70,000 vehicles per day would flood downtown Syracuse streets, resulting in greatly increased traffic congestion, fuel consumption, air pollution and noise pollution, and worse conditions for pedestrians. For perspective, consider Queens Boulevard in New York: 12 lanes of pavement, carrying 40,000 vehicles per day.

Because the Access Syracuse plan is a hybrid solution that's designed to preserve the best aspects of all of the other options. The tunnel aspect would preserve I-81's vital function of providing access into and through the entire community, particularly downtown Syracuse. The boulevard above it would affect far fewer cross streets than any of the other options, including the DOT boulevard options. It would truly connect and reconnect the streets of downtown Syracuse and create a pedestrian-friendly environment.

And while Access Syracuse may not be the least expensive plan, because it is a hybrid solution, it would not cost as much as any of the DOT's previously explored tunnel-only options.

This is our community, and our community will live with the outcome of the I-81 dialogue for as many as 75 years into the future. We only have one opportunity to do this job right. We owe it to those who come after us to fully explore and evaluate the Access Syracuse plan.

Save81.org has said from the beginning that our goal is not to support any of the options previously presented, but to work with the community to find the best solution. At the same time, we strongly believe that eliminating I-81 from the heart of the community would cripple our already fragile economy.

For this reason, we have searched for a better idea, and we believe Access Syracuse is that idea. Of course, there still may even be better ideas yet out there. Together, we need to seek them out and fully evaluate them.

Merk Nicotra and Tony Mangano
Save81.org members



Dr. Paul Kronenberg, Chairman

David A. Mankiewicz, President

January 13, 2014

Ms. Joan McDonald, Commissioner
New York State Department of Transportation
50 Wolf Road
Albany, New York 12232

Dear Commissioner McDonald,

University Hill Corporation is a private not for profit corporation whose members include the medical and educational institutions, business groups, churches and other major stakeholders in the University Hill area of Syracuse. Founded in 1963, the University Hill Corporation undertakes specific projects that maintain the excellence of the community's education and medical facilities, enhances the Hill's business districts and strengthens its residential neighborhoods. We work on projects in comprehensive planning, parking and transportation, security and cooperative services. You can learn more about University Hill Corporation on its website at www.University-Hill.com.

University Hill is located directly adjacent to Interstate 81, and the Harrison/Adams interchange serves as the area's main access point to I-81 and I-690. The future of Interstate-81 is very important to us and our members are anxious to see a solution which will substantially improve upon the existing condition and will provide a new main entryway to University Hill.

We appreciate the opportunity that the Department has created for stakeholder organizations to provide input on the scope of the environmental impact statement for the project. Our comments are attached for your review.

We look forward to working with you and your staff on this important project. Please feel free to contact me if you or your staff needs any information with respect to University Hill. I have signed up to be a member of the stakeholders committee. I am positive that we can find a solution that will meet the needs of our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Mankiewicz', written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

David A. Mankiewicz
President

cc: Hon. John A DeFrancisco
Hon. David Valesky
Hon. William Magnarelli
Hon. Sam Roberts
Hon. Al Stirpe
Ms. Debra Nelson
Mr. Joseph Flint
Mr. Carl Ford
Ms. Diane Lombardi

The University Hill Corporation is a private, not for profit organization whose membership includes the educational and medical institutions, the business groups, religious organizations and major stakeholders throughout the University Hill neighborhood in the city of Syracuse. University Hill's employers provide jobs for more than 20,000 people, and its institutions educate over 20,000 students each year. It is one of the most economically dynamic areas of the region, with over \$700 million in capital investments having been completed in the past year, under construction now, or scheduled to begin within a year. It also is a major research center in the northeast, and in addition to the research done by the medical and educational institutions it is the location of New York State's Center of Excellence for Environmental and Energy Systems, and the newly completed Biotechnology Research Center. It is the home of one of the largest indoor stadiums in the United States, the 50,000 seat Carrier Dome which is located on the campus of Syracuse University. University Hill's medical institutions provide most of the region's inpatient medical care, and four of our institutions, the Veterans Administration Medical Center, University Hospital at SUNY Upstate Medical University, Crouse Hospital, and the New York State Office of Mental Health's Hutchings Psychiatric Center provide acute health services to many people who live outside the metropolitan area, and travel significant distances to secure health care. Students come from all over the world to attend University Hill's educational institutions, so questions of access are critical to us, and the interstate highway system is a major asset.

The University Hill area is adjacent to the elevated viaduct of Interstate 81, and has a major access point to I-81 and I-690 at the Adams/Harrison interchange. The institutions, businesses, and not-for-profits generate a large percentage of the traffic that use the elevated portion of interstate 81. Several of our member organizations have made significant investments on both sides of I-81, most notably Syracuse University which purchased and renovated the Warehouse in downtown Syracuse, and SUNY Upstate Medical University, which houses many of its medical practices and students in the "Presidential Plaza" area, or as designated by Upstate as "Campus West". We hope that NYSDOT will recognize this significant investment by University Hill's members, and favor a transformative solution that will greatly enhance the perception and experience of the center of the city.

We appreciate the deliberate process which Commissioner McDonald and the New York State Department of Transportation have created to consider the future of I-81 as it passes through the city. As an educational center, we value the discussion and debate that must take place in order to find the best solution for the region's transportation needs. We want that discussion and debate to be driven by facts, and not opinions. The future of I-81 is a major transportation, economic and urban design issue, and it needs full attention and study before any decision about its future is made. We respect the Commissioner's request that at this point we articulate the values and issues that are most important to us and to refrain from endorsing specific solutions and we believe that at this time no viable option should be removed from consideration until all of the facts are analyzed and evaluated. We also offer our assistance in that inquiry, as our institutions have highly skilled people and institutional

resources invested in fields such as planning, urban design, environment and engineering that can make significant contributions to the knowledge of the transportation system.

We offer the following observations about the transportation system in general and interstate -81 in specific that are important to us:

1. Any replacement of the I-81 viaduct must eliminate the barrier wall created between University Hill and its adjacent neighborhoods.

Since its construction in the early 1960's, interstate 81 has divided the city of Syracuse in half, particularly separating University Hill from Downtown and the Southeast Gateway neighborhood. Its construction led directly to the demolition of important neighborhood fabric, the displacement of residents, and the relocation of businesses. That outcome should not be repeated in any replacement of the highway. The current form of interstate 81 creates a barrier wall between University Hill and its western neighbors. In its current configuration it has created space that is poorly lit, unsafe, and unattractive under it and adjacent to it. Any replacement of the highway must seek to overcome these significant problems.

2. Access to the University Hill area is of paramount concern

Some of the options outlined in the NYSDOT/SMTC study actually reduce the qualities of access and connectivity that are important to University Hill. The NYSDOT/SMTC analysis indicated that two of the proposed solutions-the tunnel and the depressed highway do not offer access to Adams and Harrison Streets. NYSDOT needs to be mindful that the emergency room access for University Hospital is located along Adams Street and for Crouse Hospital along Irving one block from the intersection with Adams. Access to Adams and Harrison Streets must be preserved as it provides the major entrance to the medical and educational institutions and to the Crouse Marshall business district. The NYSDOT/SMTC analysis also noted that these same solutions would sever seven major streets in University Hill, including Almond Street, East Fayette Street, East Water Street, Erie Boulevard, Washington Street, McBride Street, and Van Buren Street. These closures are unacceptable as they would isolate the northern portion of University Hill from Downtown and the north side neighborhood. It should be noted that the northern section of University Hill is where most of the available developable land in University Hill is located, and this would isolate Loguen's Crossing (the former Kennedy Square site) which is planned to be the location of a multi-million dollar investment and a prominent "Start-Up New York" site. This would undermine the future growth of University Hill. If the tunnel or depressed highway options are to be considered, they must be located in such a way that connectivity to University Hill is enhanced, not negatively impacted.

3. Creating multiple access points from the interstate system will reduce the concentration of traffic, and make the viaduct replacement problem easier to solve.

In its current configuration, concentrating the interchanges for both I-690 and I-81 to University Hill at Adams and Harrison Streets generates a serious level of congestion along our major



streets that access the highways. We would like to see increased access points to the interstate system to and from University Hill to more effectively disperse traffic to the highways and arterials that surround it. We applaud NYSDOT and the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council's (SMTC) recommendation that additional access to University Hill be considered by the construction of a dedicated interchange with I-690, at a point remote from the Adams/Harrison ramp. We recommend that NYSDOT also consider the benefit of creating an interchange that would provide University Hill traffic better access to I-481. This will provide several major benefits: (1) it will provide multiple access points for emergency vehicles that need to get to University Hill institutions, speeding the delivery of critical care patients to the emergency rooms, (2) it will reduce the number of vehicles that currently use the viaduct but actually do not need to be there¹, (3) it will improve safety by reducing the quick lane changes and weaving currently required for drivers seeking to access I-690 east and west from the Harrison Street on ramp. Since NYSDOT/SMTC analysis indicates that accidents at the current I-81/I-690 interchange are five times more likely than along the rest of the interstate system, we believe that this separation of on-ramps and dispersal of traffic could generate a significant safety benefit.

4. Enhance mass transit to reduce the overall number of vehicles using the system.

NYSDOT and USDOT should give serious consideration to enhancing mass transit as a significant component to a new transportation solution for the center of Syracuse. As noted in the NYSDOT/SMTC study, most of the traffic on the viaduct consists of vehicles with a local destination or origin, or both. NYSDOT should be aware that Syracuse has one of the highest concentrations of jobs in the center city, with 37.7% of its jobs located within three miles of the city center. This ranks the Syracuse metro the 8th highest of the top 100 metropolitan areas in the United States². There are several major destinations such as University Hill, Downtown, the Lakefront and Destiny USA, the Northside and our sister anchor institution St. Joseph's Hospital concentrated in close proximity to one another. Major entertainment, cultural and transportation venues such as the Carrier Dome, OnCenter, Armory Square, Alliance Bank

¹ Consider that many of our employees live in the northern suburbs and access their place of work via the elevated portion of I-81. Some of them are going to work in locations that are located north of Adams Street, so they actually drive past their destination and have to make left turns on Almond, Irving or Crouse to double back to their place of employment, and in the afternoon drive south toward Harrison Street to once again access the highway system to return to the north. Right now, their next closest access point would require them to drive through downtown to get to University Hill without driving the distance that is forced by the elevated highway. Those trips could be eliminated from the elevated portion of the highway if there was an earlier opportunity to access the northern portion of University Hill. Similarly, some traffic from the eastern suburbs uses I-481 to reach the interchange for I-81 north, and then exit at Adams Street. If there was a direct access to University Hill from I-481, that traffic that uses the viaduct could be reduced as well.

² Source: Kneebone, Elizabeth. 2009. Job Sprawl Revisited: The Changing Geography of Metropolitan Employment. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution



Stadium, the Regional market, the regional transportation center and the airport are also aligned along major corridors that lead to the heavily populated northern and eastern suburbs. This makes the Syracuse metropolitan area a viable location for an enhanced mass transit system. The construction of an enhanced system could benefit everyone by reducing traffic on all of the major highways and arterials, by reducing pollution, and by providing additional transportation options to the major employment centers for low income residents, and also providing transportation for college students who are an important constituency of University Hill. Much of the growing population of the city core is made up of young singles and empty nesters. These populations are among those that are driving less than previous generations, and would be beneficiaries of increased transit options.

5. Use the grid to reduce traffic volumes on the highways

Syracuse has a traditional grid network and multiple arterials that parallel the major highways as they pass through the city. These roads have carried local, regional and long haul traffic before the interstate system was built. Now many of these roads have a much higher capacity to carry traffic than that which is currently using them. NYSDOT should consider how these existing roads might be used to handle more of the existing traffic before it analyzes specific proposals for the I-81 viaduct. Improvements to the street network that might include physical upgrades, signage, traffic signal coordination, or extensions to connect roads might serve to reduce demand for traffic that is now traveling on the viaduct. Implementing alternatives outlined above could have an impact on the number of vehicles seeking to use the viaduct and reduce the size of the problem that needs to be solved.

6. Quality of Life needs to be an important part of the analysis.

University Hill is home to 13,000 residents, and many of the recent projects proposed for University Hill, Downtown and the North Side are based on the growing desire for center city residential locations. In recent years, Syracuse has been able to renovate many of its historic structures to accommodate this growing market. The center of the city has become one of the fastest growing residential neighborhoods in the region. We applaud NYSDOT for adopting the goal to "Provide transportation solutions that enhance the livability, sustainability, and economic vitality of greater Syracuse". Residential development exists or has taken place adjacent to the viaduct, whether it is in the form of affordable housing such as the existing Pioneer Homes, the newly constructed Campus West Student Apartments, or historic renovations such as the Nettleton Commons Apartments on the Northside. All of these projects have greatly enhanced the livability and desirability of the center of the city as a place to live. NYSDOT must pay close attention to potential health, noise, or environmental impacts of the proposals. Many University Hill institutions are signatories to the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment through which they have made institutional



commitments to eliminate net greenhouse gas emissions from specified campus operations. We are hopeful that this project can help our institutions meet those commitments.

7. The University Hill area has been a major driver of economic development for the region and needs a solution that will further that objective.

With \$700 million in new investment completed in the last year, under construction now, or which will be initiated in the next year, University Hill is an economic driver for the region.

Three of the top ten employers in the Syracuse MSA are located in University Hill (SUNY Upstate Medical University, Syracuse University and Crouse Hospital). As home to several major research centers, University Hill generates ideas that seed new businesses, as well as provides the human talent needed to drive the regional economy. The concentration of colleges and universities creates the potential for the University Hill area to become a premier destination for Start-Up New York companies. Land which is currently underutilized adjacent to I-81 and I-690 has the potential for productive re-use as the growth of the institutions and the impact of Start-Up New York is felt. NYSDOT should encourage any opportunity to reclaim more land on or adjacent to University Hill as a result of the highway replacement as that land can be used for much more valuable purposes.

8. University Hill plays a major role in the region's tourism economy and transportation solutions must address the needs of visitors. University Hill is also a major tourism and visitor center with the location of the Sheraton University, the Crown Plaza, and the Woodbine group's hotels which together offer over 800 first class rooms and suites in close proximity to the Onondaga County Convention Center at Oncenter. Unfortunately, the current condition of the viaduct and the space below it does not lend itself to an easy walk from the convention center to the hotel room concentration. The University Hill institutions also drive a large number of tourists to the area including families of students, patients from outside the region seeking medical care, and conferences and meetings that may be done in conjunction with the institutions. The Carrier Dome, home to Syracuse University football and basketball, and a major concert and entertainment venue also drives visitation to the region. As the I-81 options are considered, convenient access to Carrier Dome events need to be addressed. This is another reason why multiple points of access to the interstate system could be beneficial to University Hill.

University Hill is also the home of multiple cultural institutions such as Syracuse Stage. The Stage attracts 70,000 to 80,000 patrons every year, and these visitors support other commercial establishments in the business district such as restaurants and shops. Their audience needs easy access, and good quality streets, sidewalks and lighting.

9. Safety, both on the highway and in spaces adjacent to it, must be an important consideration. We understand that safety of the highway is of prime importance to NYSDOT and USDOT, and



that the reduction of the auto accident rate will be a key metric for this project. Accordingly, larger safety conditions near or adjacent to the highway should be considered. The current configuration is poorly lit, and there have been pedestrian/vehicle accidents that have resulted in injuries to our employees who have been trying to cross Almond Street adjacent to the highway. Almond Street at Harrison/Adams gives few visual cues to drivers to reduce speeds as they exit the interstate. With the construction of the Connective Corridor, there will be even more pedestrian and bicycle traffic using the streets under the viaduct to travel between Downtown and University Hill. Personal safety under the viaduct needs to be enhanced.

10. The concentration of medical services in the city of Syracuse requires excellent emergency access. We urge NYSDOT to carefully consider the routes that may be taken to Syracuse's hospitals as an important component of this analysis. Syracuse's three major general hospitals: Crouse Hospital, University Hospital at SUNY Upstate Medical University, and St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center are located in close proximity to each other and the I-81 viaduct. Because of this concentration, the study must address the issue of ambulance access to the hospitals. Each proposed solution should be evaluated on their ability to maintain or enhance emergency vehicle access to the acute care facilities.
11. Every effort should be made to avoid further demolition of the buildings adjacent to the I-81 viaduct. We understand that the viaduct no longer meets current FHWA standards for highways. We understand that part of the problem is the lack of width required for shoulders on the viaduct, as well as the limited sight distances created by the curvature of the road as it wraps between downtown and University Hill. It is possible that in order to maintain an elevated highway, or to build the required number of lanes for an at grade boulevard, or to locate a depressed highway next to Almond Street may require more right of way for the highway. However, it is our opinion that the highway needs to be built to serve the city, and more of the city's urban fabric should not be demolished in order to create a space for a new highway. There are multiple buildings that are adjacent to the current roadway such as the housing in Pioneer Homes, or the buildings on the east side of Almond Street, such as the Crown Plaza and the new Cancer Center at Upstate that are sensitive receptors with respect to noise and vibration. Even if the project does not require the demolition of these structures, their environment cannot be degraded by a growing demand for right of way. We encourage NYSDOT to find a solution that can fit within the existing right of way to avoid further damage to the city.
12. Public Space Adjacent to the highway must be significantly upgraded as part of this project. The current viaduct offers a poor environment beneath and adjacent to the highway. While there are some park spaces, they are poorly maintained and attract little visitation. Parking areas take up much land beneath the highway, and while affordable parking is an important land use, it



also contributes nothing to the quality of the environment around the viaduct. The result is a very low quality of place, and low land values adjacent to the highway. The NYSDOT analysis should include a component, no matter what option may be chosen for the highway, to upgrade the condition of its property, making it safe, clean and inviting to the public. These spaces must be maintained. There has long been inadequate trash control along the highways in the center of the city, and this harms the public's view and experience of center city Syracuse. We urge that the NYSDOT work closely with the City of Syracuse to put development standards and guidelines into place which will significantly upgrade the city as it is experienced next to the highway. We would recommend that NYSDOT consider engaging the School of Landscape Architecture at SUNY ESF and the School of Architecture at Syracuse University in developing recommendations for the space.

13. Access to University Hill must be preserved during construction. It is understood that a complex project such as the reconstruction of I-81 through the city is going to take time. However because of the critical functions that take place within University Hill, and the large economic base present on University Hill it is imperative that the construction period is held to a minimum. NYSDOT should insure that alternative means of access and egress to University Hill and the transportation options are put in place before the demolition of the existing viaduct takes place. NYSDOT needs to create a staging plan that reduces to a minimum the amount of time that access to University Hill and its users are disrupted.

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name: Jordan Matlis
Address: 116 State Fair Blvd City: Syracuse State: NY Zip: 13204
Phone: (917) 628-3478 Email: Jordan.Matlis@gmail.com

Comments: G90 Bridges are outdated as well in
many areas and are above ground, going west
just past Midler. What part of G90
is in slope. Has there been studies
to see how much time it would
take to get to down town with
boulevard. Seems to me west street
is the best option.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

Contact the Project Team

dot.sm.webcentral

Sat 6/21/2014 2:13 PM

Retain

To:dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>;

Last name - manzi

First name - cynthia

Affiliation - none

Address 1 - 8030 casilina dr

Address 2 -

City - clay

State - ny

Zip - 13041

Phone - 3156994992

Email Address - cjmanz@verizon.net

Question or Comment - if the major highway takes people around Syracuse instead of thru Syracuse, they will have no reason to stop in Syracuse. People will not detour on their trips just to visit Syracuse, but they may take an off ramp from a highway to visit or eat along the way, just as I do when I travel. Don't fix something that isn't broken. Just repair the bridge system & update it. Stop making a problem where there isn't one. Exits are for exiting. That is the whole point. Make better signs.

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: Lawrence Marcus
Address: 5021 Oak Crest Ct. City: Syracuse State: NY Zip: 13219
Phone: (315) 373 0104 Email: lawrence330@aol.com

Comments: Depressed viaduct, with overpasses for pedestrians and auto traffic. I have seen it work in Portland Oregon on the I-405. Only issue might be snow removal but I'm sure that if an intelligent engineer would be able to devise a practical method.

Reg. Dir.	Asst. Reg. D.	
LT.	Construction	
Design	Fleet Admin.	
Admin. Svcs.	PPM	
RECEIVED REG. DIRECTOR R-3		
JAN 10 2014		
Real Estate	Safety	
Traffic	Operations	
All GDs	All REs	
	Michelle	

Please continue comments on back if needed.

**Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014**

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

Here is an addition and elaboration on comments I submitted at the end of the formal comment period, about 1/15/14.

At the initial scoping meeting I submitted my comment verbally, saying that I would like to see an alternative that would use a minimal amount of space for vehicle transportation and leave a maximum amount of space for a 'Central Park'.

My idea came from thinking about New York City's Central Park, which is not viewed as a waste of space that could be developed but a great city amenity.

I have developed a design that would do this. The design would also create a smooth and fast connection for vehicles traversing the viaduct section of I81.

Coming from the south my design proposes to maintain an elevated highway, coming down between Jackson St. and Adams St. This preserves the connectedness of Jackson, Taylor, Burt and the railroad line next to Burt St.

From Adams Street to Fayette Street, to facilitate free passage of traffic, which is important to people coming into the city I have no traffic lights in my design. This can be done by making use of the innovation of modern dual lane roundabouts. NYSDOT Round-about design guidelines gives daily service volumes of these facilities as 40,000-50,000 vpd. NB traffic volumes traversing I81 in this area are approximately 80,000 vpd. With a backdoor exit upstream from this into SU, and the rerouting of through traffic onto I48, I think traffic through the viaduct area can be accommodated with no loss of levels of service and an increase in safety.

As I said there would be no traffic lights from Adams St to Fayette St. Three intersections would make use of dual lane roundabouts: Almond or 81 or whatever it becomes and Adams, Almond and Harrison, and Almond and Genesee.

The Almond and Adams St roundabout would have the modification of a one way street on two of the legs, Adams St in and Adams St out. This proved to be an easy modification to make, and I think would make exit to University hospital, EB completely free flowing, and entry to I-81 SB, often a choke point for commuters, completely free flowing.

At Almond and Harrison the dual lane urban round about need not be modified. There is no need to keep Harrison as a one-way. It's already not EB, and converting WB to two-way, with a turning lane in the middle with improve the traffic grid in Syracuse by making more options available to motorists, while the middle turn lane would keep traffic free flowing.

Even though Harrison Street SB would be down to two lanes, the traffic jam always created by the exodus of fans from SU events could be completely mitigated and traffic flow off the Hill even improved. The modern roundabout design uses 'yield on entry' rules. The Harrison WB leg will provide the vast majority of traffic at these times. The traffic coming off this leg will provide a continuous and uninterrupted stream of traffic that will be able to continue to downtown or to I81 without interruption, which is what is wanted at these times. The delaying of traffic will come not from the intersection but from the upstream controls.

The Almond-Genesee intersection requires an extensively modified roundabout. Really, a merging of two overlapping roundabouts, at least that's how I designed it, but when all is said and done the design looks great. The absence of traffic lights, again, would work to keep the traffic free flowing. The present AADT's of these legs is less than 10,000. There's no way the traffic volumes are going to triple on these streets because of the removal of the viaduct.

At Fayette Street a traffic light, which there is there now, would provide traffic control; no modifications for NB traffic would be required beyond this. The existing traffic grid would take over.

Now for traffic coming in from the north, the modifications for traffic in this direction would be very minimal.

The north end of the I81 viaduct starts at Willow St in down town Syracuse. I propose that I81 simply stay on the ground, end at this point and merge into the existing traffic grid. A traffic light can provide control at Willow. The alignment at this intersection would allow a new four lane city street to continue, southerly, to connect to Oswego Blvd in the exact same alignment. Only slight modifications would be required to match the alignments perfectly. A traffic signal would provide control at this intersection, which would be with James St. Continuing SB on Oswego St, one would encounter Erie Blvd. No further modifications would be required beyond this.

The AADT of the traffic exiting at the existing Harrison St. Exit, which is the maximum traffic that might be seen here is at the upper limit of acceptance for a four lane urban intersection but is no more than other major intersections in downtown Syracuse.

The addition of another Rte 690 exit at Lodi (I think it would be better put at Crouse) would enhance traffic flows going to the Hill or to the hospitals, providing the needed link from the highway to the hospitals. This is already part of the surface alternative.

Now back to the Central Park theme, I have put my design down on paper and calculated that it allows almost 10 acres of land to be developed into park land in downtown. This land is all already owned by the state. In fact no right-of-way purchases need be made for this design. The landscaping and design of this park land could do three things.

One, make our city beautiful. The esthetic affect should not be overlooked. Urban beauty is the attraction everyone has been looking for that will attract a new, young, creative population to the city. There could be no greater development enhancement than this.

Two, provide alternative modes of transportation. The room for development for pedestrian traffic and bicycle traffic would be second to none. This is the connection SU is looking for, and we should give it to them.

Three, there is also the opportunity for Onondaga County. A wetland aspect could be designed into the park that would blend in and enhance the park appearance, be a boon to the county's 'Save the Rain' program, and a provider of naturally, cleaned, filtered water for Onondaga Lake.

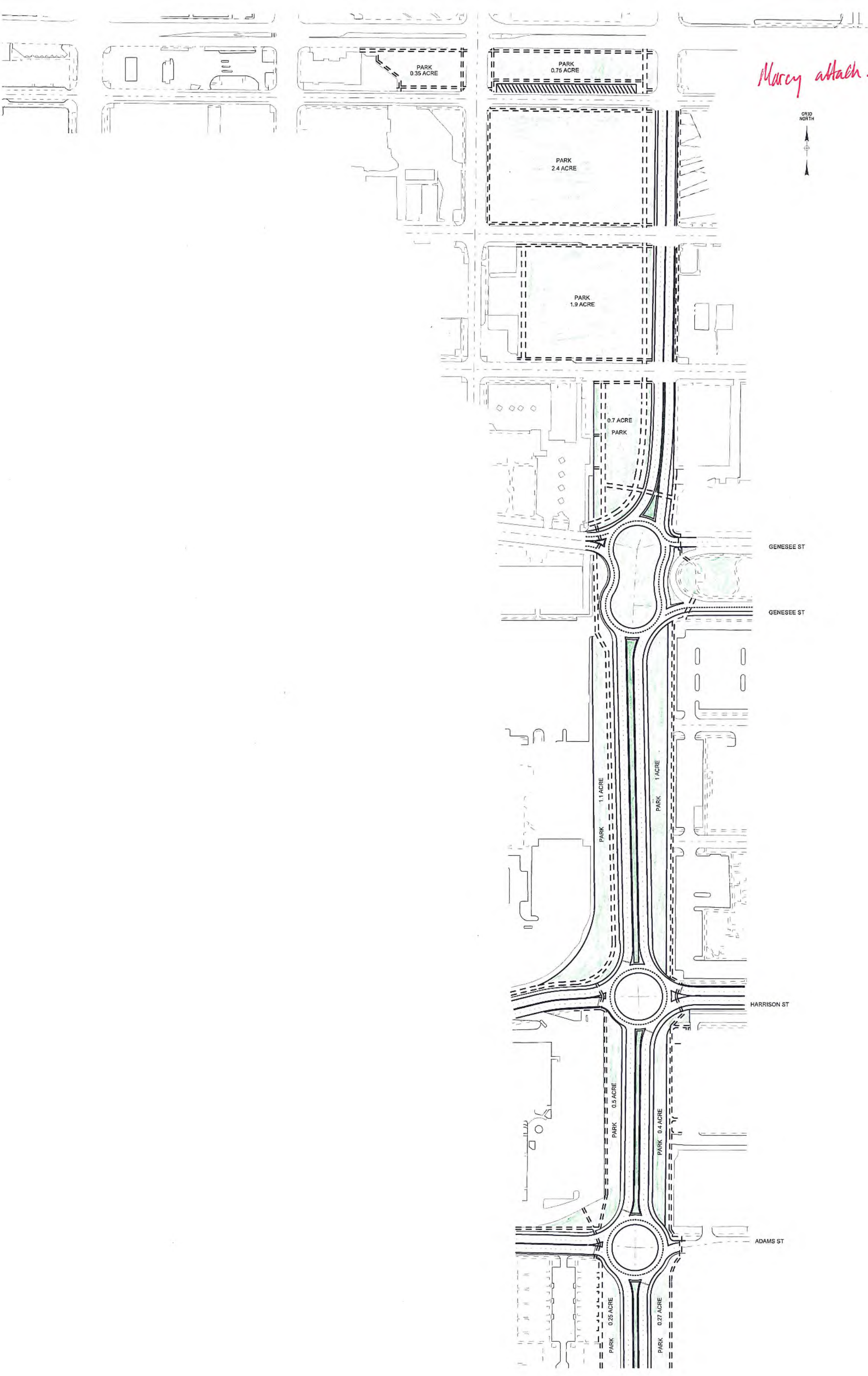
A great attraction of this design, besides everything else, would be its simplicity and economy. I have not tried to estimate its cost, but I'm sure it's a lower cost option than any of the traditional boulevard designs being thought of.

A simple, economical design should be desired for another reason. As expert as our planning forecasters are, it may be impossible to anticipate our transportation needs 20, 30, 40 years from now. Building a new viaduct, a tunnel, a depressed highway will give us solutions that are questionable now and may look like horrendous boondoggles in 50 years, but we will be stuck with them. A surface connection is one that can much more easily accommodate itself to unforeseen challenges, or even just everyday changes that will happen over the years with the needs of our community.

If you think this can be a real alternative, please feel free to use it.

Darrell Marcy

Marcy attach.





I81

WILLOW

JAMES ST

ERIE BLVD

Contact the Project Team

no-reply@dot.state.ny.us

Sun 9/7/2014 3:32 AM

Retain

To:dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>;

Last name - Marcy

First name - Darrell

Affiliation -

Address 1 -

Address 2 -

City -

State -

Zip -

Phone -

Email Address - d.marcy@verizon.net

Question or Comment - Could you please make the comments submitted online available for everyone to read online. I don't think there should be any privacy concerns. It's a public document and the comments will be part of the document. You have them in electronic form because that's how they were submitted.

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name: Lorraine Marcus
Address: 211 Hastings Pl City: Syr. State: NY Zip: 13206
Phone: () Email: LRAINE13@gmail.com

Comments: combination of
I believe a street level road & depressed
highway is the best combo taking the least
new property acquisition & would be aesthetically
pleasing. It would also conveniently follow the current
81 & Almond St route.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) 181-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

Contact the Project Team

no-reply@dot.state.ny.us

Thu 6/26/2014 8:39 AM

Retain

To:dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>;

Last name - Massey
First name - David
Affiliation - Truck Driver
Address 1 - 1872 State Route 69
Address 2 -
City - Camden
State - NY
Zip - 13316
Phone - 315-225-3575
Email Address - boomer192@hotmail.com
Question or Comment - A view from a Truck Driver's seat

I'm an "Over-the-Road" truck driver from Camden, NY. I been driving since 1975 and have acquired well over 4 million miles in my career. I sit here today pondering the Syracuse I-81 proposal to put tunnels through the center of the city. All I can see is a HUGE waste of tax dollars!

I can't think of one truck coming from the north or south that needs to travel through downtown to continue on to other states or Canada. I-81 is a very important part of the international trade between Canada, Mexico and the USA and should be a road that is easily accessible, but yet free of rush hour congestion. Granted, the city needs access to the downtown area and this they have right now with I-690.

When I travel south from Camden, I usually go through the city rather than get on I-481 because of the tight "jug-handle" turn when entering I-481 from I-81 in North Syracuse. Eliminate this "jug-handle" and you'll see a lot more traffic using I-481 to go around the city. Coming from the south, the transition from I-81 to I-481 is a very easy exit for trucks with very little slowdown through the transition. The extra mile or two far exceeds the chance of problems with city traffic.

I have a 3 part proposal:

" Coming south from the North country, put in a "Fly-over" at the Intersection of I-81/I-481 next to Drivers Village. This would consist of a left hand exit off the current roadway going over the top of I-481, and enter I-481 on the left side of the current roadway creating a smooth transition for trucks from one interstate to the other. This section of

I-481 around the east side of Syracuse would be renamed I-81.

" The current I-81 from I-481 to the center of the city should be re-designated as Business 81 with this section of roadway ending at I-690 east and a proposed boulevard.

" Coming from the south would be the other half of Business I-81 which would end somewhere around the hospital area which will be turned into a boulevard for access to businesses in that area. All of the overhead in this area will be taken out, and the streets given back to the city. You'll still have full access to the downtown area from all four corners, and all unnecessary through traffic will stay on the outskirts of the city.

Syracuse does not need any more congestion in the downtown area and the state does not need an extremely high tax debt such as the one proposed with tunnels. In my opinion, this would be far cheaper than the "Billions" quoted

in the headlines today. Please feel free to contact me for further input on this proposal.

Sincerely,
David Massey
315-225-3575
Camden, NY

Proyecto de Viaducto I-81

Comentarios

Nombre: Danielle Masursky

Dirección: _____ Ciudad o pueblo: _____ Estado: _____ Código postal: _____

Número de teléfono: () _____ Correo electrónico: dmasursky@noturnal.com

Comentarios:

I'm sorry to hear such bias against the bid option (in comment after the presentation). I lived in Philadelphia for many years. The bid there has many benefits. Bids in other cities also have benefit and do not impede traffic flow.

I live in Clay and find the SB Rt 81 traffic to be very annoying. I do not see how either alternative addresses that effectively, though improved access to 690 ~~th~~ will be a great advantage.

I support the BVD option wholeheartedly. I think it enhances the city and builds community, create opportunities for beautification and improves the urban landscape.

Por favor, siga los comentarios en el reverso de esta hoja si es necesario.

Envíe sus comentarios:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Envíe sus comentarios por
vía electrónica:
www.i81opportunities.org

Línea informativa:
línea gratis: (855) 181-TALK
(481-8255)



La Administración
Federal de Carreteras



El Departamento de Transporte
del Estado de New York

Matthews, George_09-24-2013

From: George Matthews [mapa.georgem@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 24, 2013 6:41 PM
To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities
Subject: relocate exits from current I-81 and I-690
Funneling so much traffic onto Almond St from exits at Harrison and Adams is a cause of much congestion at "rush" hour. An exit northbound at Colvin Eastbound and westbound would better serve neighborhoods south of Colvin. An exit eastbound on I-690 to University Ave (or alternate) would better serve University hill. Also Harrison, Adams and E Genesee streets should bridge over the current I-81 corridor if a ground level highway option is chosen.

--

George Matthews

Contact the Project Team

dot.sm.webcentral

Tue 8/26/2014 10:37 AM

Retain

To:dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>;

Last name - Matthews

First name - George

Affiliation -

Address 1 -

Address 2 -

City -

State -

Zip -

Phone -

Email Address - mapageorgem@gmail.com

Question or Comment - [Mike Stanton] wanted to see for [him-]self how travel time through Central New York would be affected by the various I-81 rerouting options being considered:

- * Driving through the Syracuse area on I-81 as currently configured.
- * Taking I-481 around the city.
- * The "Bob Doucette" option that would use I-690 and I-481 to reroute traffic around downtown.

[He] started and ended each trip on I-81 beyond the north and south I-481/I-81 interchanges. The south start/end point was Exit 16 (Nedrow); the north start/end point was Exit 30 (Cicero).

On all three routes [he] stuck exactly to the posted speed limit -- no more no less. [He] made the trips in the evening when traffic wouldn't get in the way of maintaining a constant speed. [He] timed each trip using the stop watch on [his] smart phone.

Here are the times [he] recorded:

- * I-81 all the way from Exit 16 (Nedrow) to Exit 30 (Cicero): 17 minutes, 23 seconds.
- * I-81, then I-481 around the city from Exit 30 (Cicero) to Exit 16 (Nedrow): 19 minutes, 20 seconds.
- & I-81, then I-481 and I-690, then I-81 again from Exit 16 (Nedrow) to Exit 30 (Cicero): 25 minutes, 11 seconds.

Time differences:

Rerouting I-81 traffic onto I-481 around the city would add about two minutes to the trip through Central New York.

Rerouting I-81 onto I-481 and I-690 would add more time to the trip -- about eight minutes.

It appears that Mike has carried out the ?thought experiment? that others have envisioned. The results will mean little to those who routinely exceed the speed limits. Perhaps the experiment should be validated with computer modeling that uses real-time traffic conditions at various times of the day.

The results seem to confirm the idea proposed by David Rubin that traffic that intends merely to travel through Syracuse without stopping would be very little impacted by using the I-481 bypass. Diverting such traffic, as the highway signs suggest, would make the commuting traffic an easier go. Those with a downtown destination do not currently use the 1.4 mile viaduct, so they would benefit from a newly designed Almond Boulevard. Those traveling to and from University hill could have improved access from and to I-690 and I- 481. Skeptics will cite the delays that result from red lights and stop signs, even when they are small and may be mitigated by better traffic management.

The ?Doucette route? seems to address the needs of Destiny and businesses in that area for a very small time cost for those traveling from Nedrow and points south. It would also serve the needs of commercial traffic serving the western neighborhoods of Syracuse at a similar cost. It remains unclear how large that volume of traffic is now or is projected to be.

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name: MARCO B MAY

Address: 1608 WESTMONTARIO City: SYR State: NY Zip: 13210

Phone: (315) 446-5046 Email: _____

Comments:

lights - traffic - and even head lighting - who is
responsible? how it's kept - fuel?
parking (near Madison north),
 upkeep of track on road - who is responsible?
State, City or County?

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) 181-TALK (481-8255)

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: Rachel May

Address: 114 Circle Rd

City: Syracuse

State: NY Zip: 13210

Phone: (315) 471-7259

Email: sumay@syr.edu

Comments: on Transportation: I live about 1/2 mile from I-81 and drive, bike, and walk through the corridor on a regular basis. While it does provide speedy access to the airport and downtown destinations, it also acts as a barrier for biking, walking, and driving across town. It does not even provide very good access to Destiny USA, for those heading north on I-81. Backups at the Almond St. ramps interfere with cross-town driving on Harrison + Adams St. The interchange between Almond and E. Genesee is especially dangerous for cyclists and pedestrians, though I only say that having eliminated Harrison + Adams as unthinkable for biking. The opportunity to reopen Madison St. across Almond would be very valuable to those traveling E-W through town.

On Energy + Climate Change: I hope you will take into account the backups on Harrison, Almond, and Adams that already occur due to bottlenecks at the beginning + end of the workday at universities + hospitals. Air quality and

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Comments (continued from front):

emissions resulting from these backups are severe, as anyone who has tried to walk through there can attest.

On Visual Resources and Land Use/Community Character: University Hill ~~university hill~~ is an important part of the city's landscape, and many iconic buildings stand out there. The visual effect of the viaduct at the foot of the hill is highly detrimental, breaking up the view, making it harder to "see" the city layout and appreciate its landscape. I believe that elimination of the viaduct would inspire more inspired architectural interventions on the hill.

On Environmental Justice: I spend volunteer hours in Toomey-Abbott Towers and am highly conscious of the noise and air quality issues affecting this low-income population, many of whom are disabled and/or people of color. As a pedestrian + cyclist, I am also aware that a disproportionate number of pedestrians using the corridor also come from vulnerable populations.



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name: Rachul May

Address: 117 Circle Rd

City: Syracuse State: _____ Zip: 13210

Phone: () _____

Email: _____

Comments: This was helpful for imagining
the real possibilities. I particularly like
the idea of SL-3 - using two streets
(Townsend & Almond), keeping them 2-way
but spreading out the traffic. I think it's
the least disruptive and most likely to
reconnect east & west parts of town.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

McGrath, Michael_09-24-2013

From: Michael McGrath [wmcgrath@syr.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, September 24, 2013 11:31 AM
To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities
Subject: 81 bridge ideas
To whom it may concern,

What if you build a cable suspension bridge. It would be iconic, architecturally beautiful, and serve the greater purpose. It could be higher than the current bridge and you could have room underneath to put in a boulevard or park.

It could be a great icon for the city.

Cheers
Mike McGrath
315-380-1142
wmcgrath@syr.edu

From: no-reply@dot.state.ny.us
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Subject: Contact the Project Team
Date: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 7:48:36 AM

Last name - McGuigan

First name - William

Company name -

Address 1 - 116 richard rd

Address 2 -

City - syracuse

State - NY - New York

Zip - 132151530

Address 2-

Email Address - wmcguig@gmail.com

Message - syracuse resident not downtown

Question or Comment - Please look at othe rcities and how the tearing down of in city interstates has freed center cities for new urban development. The issue is a CITY one not suburban commercial interests with their stacked focus groups and surveys.

Additional Information 1 -

Additional Information 2 -

Additional Information 3 -

Additional Information 4 -

Additional Information 5 -

Proyecto de Viaducto I-81

Comentarios

Nombre: Thomas Mckay

Dirección: 114 Harrington Rd Ciudad o pueblo: Syracuse Estado: NY Código postal: 13224

Número de teléfono: (315) 444-3628 Correo electrónico: tjemckay@syn.edu

Comentarios: I was sorry to see the sunken highway option go. This provided the best solution for pedestrians and bicyclists and for local traffic in Genesee St and Adams. The cost of dealing with the soil and water issues may be worth it.

I am glad to see that Erie Blvd and the Water St pedestrian trail will go over the boulevard. Can Adams St and Genesee St also go over?

I hope that we can tear down the viaduct.

Por favor, siga los comentarios en el reverso de esta hoja si es necesario.

Envíe sus comentarios:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Envíe sus comentarios por
vía electrónica:
www.i81opportunities.org

Línea informativa:
línea gratis: (855) 181-TALK
(481-8255)



La Administración
Federal de Carreteras



El Departamento de Transporte
del Estado de New York

Contact the Project Team

dot.sm.webcentral

Tue 6/24/2014 10:28 AM

Retain

To:dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>;

Last name - McNaughton

First name - Samuel

Affiliation -

Address 1 - 306 Hurlburt Rd

Address 2 -

City - Syracuse

State - NY

Zip - 13224

Phone -

Email Address - sjmcnaug@syr.edu

Question or Comment - For the life of me, I cannot understand what all the fuss about remaking I81 revolves around. Rochester, Cleveland, Chicago, Brooklyn, and many, many other cities that we have visited have sunken Interstate highways with bridges from important cross streets crossing. This is simple, straightforward, and works. Elevated highways, like the present I81 in Syracuse do not, and never have worked. I suggest whoever is making the decisions take a field trip to Rochester and drive to Highland Forest on the sunken interstate in that city. It has to be less expensive and more practical than an elevated highway or a tunnel (crazy, at best).

Jan 20, 2014

NYS Department of Transportation

333 South Warren Street

Syracuse NY 13202

RE; Reconstruction of I 81

Gentlemen:

Reg. Dir.	Asst. Reg. D.	
LT.	Construction	
Design	Fleet Admin.	
Admin. Svcs.	PPM	
RECEIVED REG. DIRECTOR R-3		
JAN 22 2014		
Real Estate	Safety	
Traffic	Operations	
All GDs	All REs	
	Michelle	

I wish to express my thoughts on the I 81 reconstruction thru Syracuse.

The decision should consider the best interests of the City in a 10 year projection, not the current fears being expressed.

I strongly support the construction of a boulevard as opposed to construction of an elevated or depressed road.

I feel the main purpose of reconstructed I 81 should be to get people into an out of downtown Syracuse, not for thru traffic. Thru traffic from Cicero to the Onondaga I 481 interchange can easily use I 481. *It may be slightly longer, but in my opinion is a safer road and adds very little if any additional travel time*

The boulevard concept offers a safer and more convenient access to downtown locations. I have found the current City interchanges to be exciting and potentially dangerous. I expect that any future exchanges from an elevated or depressed highway will have similar problems.

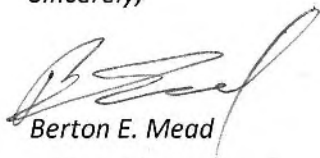
A boulevard will eliminate the current congestion at Adams Street and allow better access to the hospitals and SU.

A boulevard will avoid the continuing maintenance costs of an elevated highway.

A downtown boulevard should not seriously affect commercial facilities in Salina or North Syracuse if they offer good value to their customers if a good interchange to I 690 is provided.

My general observation is that most of the comments I have read is that they are concerned with their parochial interests rather than the long term good of the City.

Sincerely,



Berton E. Mead

7797 Gloria Drive

Baldwinsville NY 13027

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: ERIC A. MELFI

Address: 6225 KENLAREN CIRC City: N. SYR. State: NY Zip: 13212

Phone: (315) 403-2064 Email: emelfi@twcnycrr.com

Comments:

Being a resident of the area along RT 481 from Northern Blvd. to I-81. I am concerned if 481 becomes 81 then the noise increase will drive down my and all these homes values behind the area that is walled now.

The existing wall is also at the end of its usable life and showing signs of rot and decay. It has two holes in it presently.

Will the wall be brought up to new standards if 481 becomes 81?

The old means of a pressure treated wood wall will not abate the increased

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

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Syracuse, NY 13202

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Comments (continued from front):

amount of noise. I would hope to see a similar structure as 490 from the thruway through Brighton in Rochester. This wall is very high with textured block to absorb sound.

The new I-88 project from 81th through Vestal also has a new structure being constructed presently for retainment and sound.

IF it is the end decision for 481 to be 81 please consider the noise abatement requirements needed to protect property values along the existing walled area.

Thank You,
Eric Melfi



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

From: [Eric Melfi](#)
To: i81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Subject: Northern Bypass
Date: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 4:04:02 PM
Importance: High

Hello,

I would like to know if the present environmental review is considering Noise pollution in the new scope.

I am a nearby resident to the existing pressure treated wall along 481 from Northern Boulevard to I-81.

The increased traffic volume would obviously increase the amount of noise volume for the existing walled area.

If this is to be the end decision then I would be in hopes of a new modern noise abating technology structure be built to protect those home owners in place of the present wall. I-490 into Rochester through Brighton has a large, high concrete structure and the new I-88 through Vestal also has a new structure being installed presently.

Please offer comment.

Thank You.

Eric A. Melfi

Sales and Customer Representative

R.P. Fedder Corporation

2501 James St.

Syracuse N.Y. 13206

Office: 315-437-8451

Fax: 315-437-5296

Cell: 315-403-2064

E-Mail: ericm@rpfedder.com

Please visit us at www.rpfedder.com

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Name: *Michael Messina-Yauchzy*

Address: *435 E Genesee Plany* City: *Syracuse* State: *NY* Zip: *13214*

Phone: *(516) 663-5640* Email: *mmy229@gmail.com*

Comments:

*I would like to endorse the presentation of Mr.
Barry Lentz of the Urban Jobs Task Force,*

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) 181-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name:

David S. Mitchell

Address:

102 Central Rd

City:

Syracuse

State:

NY

Zip:

13210

Phone: (315) 473-3576

Email:

davidsmitchell@gmail.com

Comments:

- (1) Preparation of EIS must fully address all impacts: safety, health, neighborhood impact, economic development, particularly downtown & University Hill
- (2) Any alternative must avoid further destruction of the City neighborhoods
- (3) Mass transit must be considered; downtown University Hill cannot continue to grow without effective mass transit
- (4) solutions should limit ^{water} ~~noise~~ further barrier
- (5) If possible, through traffic on I-81 should not go through the City;

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481 8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Comments (continued from front):

(E) A quick review of the initiation packet
does reveal two differences:

a) no mention of mass transit

b) overview has limited mention of social
justice for low income residents



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

From: dot.sm.webcentral
Sent: Monday, September 1, 2014 4:13:15 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities
Subject: Contact the Project Team

Last name - Michaels
First name - William & Diane
Affiliation - resident
Address 1 - West Seneca turnpike
Address 2 -
City - Syracuse
State - NY
Zip - 13215
Phone -
Email Address - djmichae@twcny.rr.com

Question or Comment - Regarding RT-81 through the city of Syracuse, Please leave it at its current location as a viaduct. We would be greatly impacted by the west bound traffic traveling via RT-20 and /or Rt. 175 . As it WILL BE used as an alternate route west. The tunnel or depressed road would only lead to flooding with our history of heavy and persistent rain and snow. Not to mention exorbitant taxes to maintain it. Respectively Submitted.

From: Epolito, Angela On Behalf Of DeWitt Supervisor

Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2014 1:57:28 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)

To: dot.sm.mo.I81 Opportunities

Subject:

On behalf of DeWitt Supervisor Ed Michalenko, please find attached the I-81 Scoping Report Memorandum, as well as, a copy of the DeWitt Town Board resolution regarding I-81.

Thank you,

Angela K. Epolito

Assistant to the Supervisor

Town of DeWitt

5400 Butternut Drive

East Syracuse, NY 13057

[\(315\)446-3910 ext. 191](tel:(315)446-3910)

[\(315\)449-0620](tel:(315)449-0620) fax

aepolito@townofdewitt.com



Town of DeWitt

(315)446-3910 ext. 5

Edward M. Michalenko, Ph. D, Supervisor

FAX (315)449-0620

Town Board:
Kenneth Andrews
Kerry Mannion
Jack Dooling
Joseph Chiarenza Jr.
Jamie Frank
Kerin Rigney

5400 Butternut Drive
East Syracuse, NY
13057

Town Manager:
Michael Moracco

Memorandum

To: Mark Frechette, I-81 Viaduct Project Director
Cc: Mike Moracco, Town Manager
From: Ed Michalenko, PhD., Town Supervisor
Date: September 2, 2014
Re: I-81 Viaduct Project Draft Scoping Report Comments

This memorandum addresses the Town of DeWitt's review of the I-81 Viaduct Project Draft Scoping Report. In June of 2013 the DeWitt Town Board adopted a resolution "...regarding the need to maintain the existing alignment of I-81 through Syracuse." Among the Town's primary concerns are the potential effects that the rerouting of Interstate-81 to the I-481 corridor would have on the character of the Town's neighborhoods and important open space systems. Additionally the Town Board expressed concerns for the effects that additional traffic, noise, and pollution might have on the Town's property tax base. The Town's Comprehensive Plan (2002) identifies the I-481 corridor as a significant barrier within the Town¹. This is especially true at the interchange of East Genesee Street (NYS Rt 5) and I-481, but problems exist at the Jamesville Road interchange as well as where Kinne Road passes over I-481. The interchange covers approximately 74 acres (larger than the prominent ShoppingTown Mall site) and presents difficulties for pedestrian and bicycle mobility due to the lack of adequate facilities, vehicular travel speeds, and the scale of the facility itself. The Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTTC) completed a "Bicycle Commuter Corridor Study" in 2013 that identifies NYS Route 5 as a "possible bike corridor" and recommended the consideration of a protected contraflow bike lane down the center lane from Wellington Road to Maple Drive. The Comprehensive Plan is supportive of the development of a Town-wide interconnected system of pedestrian and bike ways, including the Butternut Creek corridor which runs adjacent to I-481 and which was identified by the Town as a conservation area by the Town of DeWitt Comprehensive Plan. **The Town requests that NYSOT consider the redesign of the I-481 and East Genesee Interchange to adequately and safely accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists (see attached exhibit "a").**, including the Butternut Creek corridor which runs adjacent to I-481 and which was identified by the Town as a conservation area by the Town of DeWitt Comprehensive Plan (2002).

The Town of DeWitt is working along with adjacent communities to close the prominent gap in the Erie Canalway Trail system that exists between DeWitt and Camillus. Currently the trail ends where the Old Erie Canal Historical Park meets Butternut Drive, where trail users need to progress southward along Butternut Drive before crossing a vehicular bridge over Rt-481 on Kinne Drive and then following Towpath Rd. toward Erie Boulevard. The state-owned Kinne Rd. bridge is not wide enough to accommodate adequate bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and as such is a barrier to the successful closure of the Canalway Trail gap. **The Town requests that provisions be made for the development of adequate accommodations over I-481 at Kinne Road to accommodate the Erie Canalway Trail.**

The section of I-481 between the I-690 interchange and moving southwestward to the City of Syracuse abuts several residential neighborhoods within the Town. Sound attenuation is an important concern for the residents of these neighborhoods, especially if traffic is expected to increase as a result of a rerouted I-81. **The Town requests that NYSDOT**

¹ Excerpt from TOD Comp. Plan 2002 "Large areas of land in DeWitt are occupied by portions of the region's arterial highway system...it effectively segments the Town and creates significant visual and physical barriers."

review the impacts of noise on the neighborhoods adjacent to the I-481 corridor in DeWitt and implement sound attenuation practices where appropriate.

The following is a list of itemized comments on the scoping document:

Figure 1-2 – The Town of DeWitt requests that the Potential Expanded Project Limits for Street Level Alternatives map include those areas identified in Figure 4-1 in yellow as these additional areas will clearly be impacted by rerouting of traffic from the current I-81 corridor to the I-481 corridor.

Figure 1-3 This map should include bicycle infrastructure in DeWitt including the results of the SMTC Bicycle Commuting Corridor Study, and the ongoing Erie Canalway Trail study.

Figure 2-1/2-2 A figure should be created to show level of service at the I-481 and NYS Route 5 (Genesee Street) to show the needs for reconfiguration of this interchange

Section 2-4 page 2-10 – In the first paragraph the long-range planning efforts should include the Comprehensive Plan for the Town of DeWitt

Section 3-2 page 3-2 – under Step 2 – Preliminary Screening of the Alternatives the last bullet should read “Will the alternative provide enhanced bicycle and pedestrian surface connections on streets across and along the I-81 viaduct, **or the I-481 corridor in the case of street level alternatives.**

Figure 3-5 – add callouts for improvements to the interchanges along I-481, as well as State-owned facilities that cross 481 to improve accommodations for bicycle and pedestrian mobility (i.e., Jamesville Rd, East Genesee Street, Kinne Rd [Erie Canalway Trail]).

Section 3-3-3 page 3-14 – 3rd bullet at the top should include mention of the residential neighborhoods in the southern portion of the Town of DeWitt that are adjacent to the I-481 corridor.

Section 4-4-1 – the service model should take into account increased transit ridership and alternative transportation over the course of the project to follow national trends toward lower vehicle ownership and lower VMT.

Section 4-4-2 page 4-10 – 5th bullet, the Town of DeWitt Comprehensive Plan should be considered as it presents a vision for the I-481 corridor, both as an important North/South ecological system within the Town, as well as to address the barrier that the corridor presents for the accommodation of bicycle and pedestrian facilities connecting the eastern and western sides of the corridor.

Section 4-4-6 page 4-13 – what are the potential impacts of the street level alternatives where traffic will be rerouted to the I-481 corridor. How will this effect the future of the Town of DeWitt’s Butternut Creek Trail system, and the completion of the Erie Canalway Trail through DeWitt and connecting to the City of Syracuse?

June 10, 2013

Resolution

**MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF DeWITT,
COUNTY OF ONONDAGA, REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING
ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE**

WHEREAS, for the last 50 years, Interstate 81 has served as a vital backbone for the economy of the Central New York, connecting commuters, businesses, tourists, visitors, and through-travelers alike; and

WHEREAS, among its important functions, Interstate 81 provides vital links with access to downtown Syracuse, all of our hospitals, Syracuse University, Destiny USA, present and future businesses and residents along 81 corridor, to business and residents within the Town of DeWitt; and

WHEREAS, Moody's Investors Service has assigned a Aa3 rating to a recent Town of DeWitt Public Improvement (Serial) Bond with the expectation of the stable tax base of approximately \$2.9 billion continuing to experience modest growth given it's close proximity to the City of Syracuse (G.O. rated A1, negative). Acting as a transfer point between the New York State Thruway, Route 481 and Interstate 81, the town has a significant commercial presence (39% of tax base) consisting of hotels, shopping centers, office buildings, manufacturing facilities, and restaurants geared in part toward travelers across these thoroughfares; and

WHEREAS, turning Interstate 81 to Route 481 leaves no alternative north-south Route for national defense, national disaster, and general maintenance and repairs; and

WHEREAS, although there are a variety of ways to deal with I-81's aging infrastructure, the existing "Interstate" function and designation must be preserved, because any solution which would remove I-81's vital function from its present alignment would irreparably harm the regional economy and corresponding employment dependent upon the highway network in addition to negatively impacting DeWitt's neighborhoods and its residents quality of life; and

WHEREAS, redirecting I-81 traffic to Route 481, transfers what the City of Syracuse sees as a problem to DeWitt; and

WHEREAS, DeWitt forms the eastern border of Syracuse and its neighborhoods already suffer the consequences of commuter traffic to and from the City of Syracuse, along local Routes 173, 5, 290, 298, in addition to the Interstate Highways including the Thruway and Routes 690 and 481. Consequently, moving Interstate 81 to Route 481 will only exacerbate local and pass-through traffic leaving a heavy toll on already taxed DeWitt resources. Namely, increasing the wear and tear on DeWitt's local roads and infrastructure that are already insufficient and underfunded; and

WHEREAS, increased traffic causes increased noise, dust, toxic emissions and atmospheric deposition of pollutants on land and water, business, homes, and schools; and

WHEREAS, redirecting Interstate 81 to Route 481 is not smart environmental policy because the distance traveled for through traffic and further stop and go intercity commuting traffic is increased. This is polluting, inefficient, requires the use of greater amounts of petroleum based fuels, hurts the regional economy, and is detrimental to social welfare and the environment; and

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for the next 100 years; and

WHEREAS, it is the consensus of the DeWitt Town Board that any decision reached by the NYS DOT should satisfy function first, and should be closely tailored to satisfy that function; and

WHEREAS, we support smart growth and the creation of a new and welcoming entrance to Syracuse, and the integration of the hospitals and university areas with the rest of downtown, we believe it must not be accomplished by compromising one of the most significant advantages of living, working, doing business and visiting Onondaga County;

WHEREAS, DeWitt supports a balanced, comprehensive approach, a regional transportation plan is necessary to ensure smart choices are made, a plan that can provide environmental, social and economic benefits to all of Central New York, one that promotes alternative and mass transit options including alternate fuels, electric vehicles, and a light rail system; for out suburban communities are in dire need of a traffic diet as well; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the DeWitt Town Board memorializes its determination that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an interstate highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Supervisor of the Town of DeWitt is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, to the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and to the various legislative members representing Onondaga County at the state level.

From: Gordon, Samuel
Sent: Wednesday, September 3, 2014 3:07:39 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities
Subject: I-81 Scoping Report response addendum

To whom it may concern:

The attached I-81 Scoping Report Memorandum and DeWitt Route 81 resolution documents were sent in by e-mail yesterday afternoon at 1:57pm in response to the I-81 Scoping Report, but the third document 1-481 Conceptual Interchange Design was left out of the submission by accident. Please accept this document as an addendum to the Town of DeWitt's submission. Let me know if there are any questions.

Sincerely,

[sam_logo_signature-01-01.png]

Planning and Zoning

Samuel C. Gordon, MLA

Director

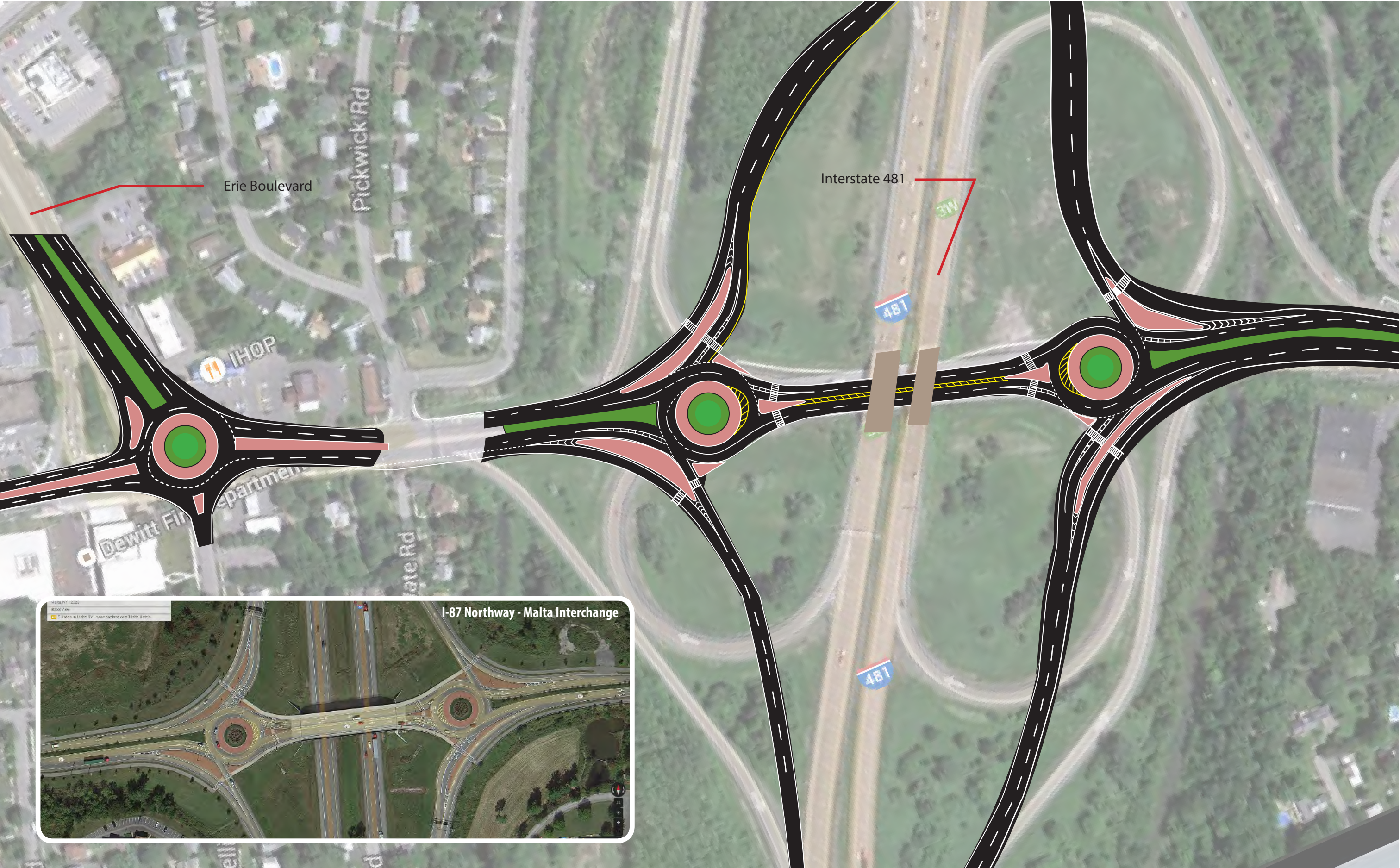
5400 Butternut Drive

East Syracuse, NY 13057

[\(315\)446-3910 x148](tel:(315)446-3910)

sgordon@townofdewitt.com <<mailto:sgordon@townofdewitt.com>>

It is hard to get anywhere if you don't imagine it first.





January 14, 2014

Mr. Jonathan McDade
New York Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Building
7th Floor, Room 719
Clinton Avenue and N. Pearl Street
Albany, New York 12207

Ms. Debra Nelson
NYS DOT
50 Wolf Road
Albany, New York 12232

Re: I-81 Project – Syracuse Area Corridor

Dear Mr. McDade and Ms. Nelson:

We thank the Federal Highway Administration and New York State Department of Transportation for allowing us the opportunity to formally submit these materials for consideration as part of the environmental review process for the Interstate 81 project in Central New York.

The following is a compilation of all Central New York localities' resolutions rejecting the state's proposed plan to replace Interstate 81 with a six-lane boulevard through the city of Syracuse. While these resolutions were passed in numerous municipalities, they share similar concerns about the negative effects a boulevard would have on the entire Central New York region. These resolutions call on state officials to consider choosing other plans that maintain I-81's current function and designation as an interstate highway through Syracuse.

The negative impacts highlighted include declined economic growth, increased traffic congestion, longer and more stressful commutes, and compromised public safety.

Each locality presented concerns unique to their area. The following is a summary of these localities and their respective issues:

City of Auburn: The Auburn City Council's resolution expressed concern over increased truck traffic that would result from re-routing I-81. More commercial trucks passing through would increase the number of motor vehicle accidents while stressing infrastructure.

Cayuga County: The Cayuga County Legislature's resolution expressed concern for the future of the greater Central New York region. Re-routing I-81 would divert commercial traffic to the smaller cities and towns, stressing infrastructure and adversely affecting residents' quality of life.

Town of DeWitt: The DeWitt Town Board's resolution noted the threat to economic growth posed by replacing I-81 with a boulevard. Town leaders are also worried about increased traffic congestion that diverting I-81 would bring to DeWitt's already overwhelmed streets. The overuse of DeWitt's local roads would require more infrastructure funding, straining the town's budget, as well as, increasing noise, dust, toxic emissions, atmospheric deposition of pollutants on land, water, business, homes, and schools and the environment (please see attached resolution).

Town of Fleming: The Fleming Town Board noted the negative effects of increased commercial traffic that would result from re-routing I-81. Fleming leaders highlighted the consequences on residents' quality of life, including noise, pollution, and commuting hassles.

Town of Geddes: The Geddes Town Board emphasized the harm a boulevard would have on the regional economy. Geddes leaders expressed concern that re-routing I-81 would threaten local jobs as it would deter business from the commercial built around the interstate and its off-ramps.

Town of Moravia: The Town Board of Moravia cited traffic concerns in their resolutions, specifically trucks re-routed from I-81 onto their local State Route 38A. A rise in the number of trucks travelling on this local road would endanger Moravia residents who rely on the road for daily commutes to work, school, and other important places.

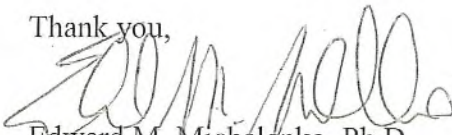
Onondaga County: The Onondaga County Legislature expressed concern over the threat a boulevard would have on area's accessibility. The easy access to places of employment, medical services, schools, and other destinations within the greater Central New York region would cease to exist if I-81 is replaced by a boulevard in Downtown Syracuse.

Town of Skaneateles: The Skaneateles Town Board cited the negative impacts truck traffic would have on the local environment in addition to public safety and residents' quality of life. An influx of truck traffic through the Finger Lakes area has concerned Skaneateles residents and leaders for years, and town officials believe that constructing a boulevard in Downtown Syracuse that diverts I-81 traffic away from the city will push more truck traffic from I-81 to smaller routes along the Finger Lakes.

Town of Sennett: The Sennett Town Board highlighted the threats posed by the potential increased commercial traffic congestion and the potential threats to economic development, quality of life, public safety and the environment.

These resolutions represent the overwhelming opposition throughout the region to the state's proposed boulevard plan. We hope the Department of Transportation will thoroughly evaluate these when determining the future of Interstate 81 in Central New York. These resolutions should be made part of the FHWA/NYSDOT NEPA and SEQRA record.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Michalenko", written over the printed name.

Edward M. Michalenko, Ph.D.

DeWitt Supervisor

June 10, 2013

Resolution

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COUNTY OF ONONDAGA, REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING
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WHEREAS, for the last 50 years, Interstate 81 has served as a vital backbone for the economy of the Central New York, connecting commuters, businesses, tourists, visitors, and through-travelers alike; and

WHEREAS, among its important functions, Interstate 81 provides vital links with access to downtown Syracuse, all of our hospitals, Syracuse University, Destiny USA, present and future businesses and residents along 81 corridor, to business and residents within the Town of DeWitt; and

WHEREAS, Moody's Investors Service has assigned a Aa3 rating to a recent Town of DeWitt Public Improvement (Serial) Bond with the expectation of the stable tax base of approximately \$2.9 billion continuing to experience modest growth given it's close proximity to the City of Syracuse (G.O. rated A1, negative). Acting as a transfer point between the New York State Thruway, Route 481 and Interstate 81, the town has a significant commercial presence (39% of tax base) consisting of hotels, shopping centers, office buildings, manufacturing facilities, and restaurants geared in part toward travelers across these thoroughfares; and

WHEREAS, turning Interstate 81 to Route 481 leaves no alternative north-south Route for national defense, national disaster, and general maintenance and repairs; and

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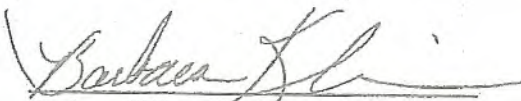
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STATE OF NEW YORK)
COUNTY OF ONONDAGA) ss:
TOWN OF DEWITT)

I, Barbara Klim, Town Clerk of the Town of DeWitt, Onondaga County, New York, do hereby certify that I have compared the preceding resolution of the Town Board of the Town of DeWitt with the original contained in the minutes of June 10, 2013 and filed in my office at the Town of DeWitt, Onondaga County, New York, and the same is a true and correct copy of said original and the whole thereof.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of said Town of DeWitt, Onondaga County, New York, on this 11th day of June, 2013.


Barbara Klim, Town Clerk

(SEAL)

From: [Kerry Mannion](#)
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Cc: [Ed Michalenko](#); [Angela Epolito](#); [Mannion](#)
Subject: Town of Dewitt submission for the scoping process
Date: Tuesday, January 14, 2014 11:37:54 AM
Attachments: [Dewitt DOT FHA Submission 01-14-14.pdf](#)

Please the attached from the Town of Dewitt, NY. Mailed on January 14, 2014.



January 14, 2014

Mr. Jonathan McDade
New York Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Building
7th Floor, Room 719
Clinton Avenue and N. Pearl Street
Albany, New York 12207

Ms. Debra Nelson
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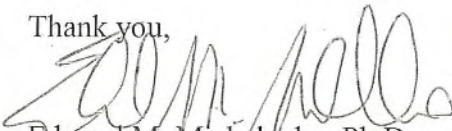
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Edward M. Michalenko, Ph.D.

DeWitt Supervisor

June 10, 2013

Resolution

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WHEREAS, DeWitt supports a balanced, comprehensive approach, a regional transportation plan is necessary to ensure smart choices are made, a plan that can provide environmental, social and economic benefits to all of Central New York, one that promotes alternative and mass transit options including alternate fuels, electric vehicles, and a light rail system; for our suburban communities are in dire need of a traffic diet as well; now, therefore be it

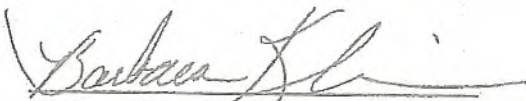
RESOLVED, that the DeWitt Town Board memorializes its determination that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an interstate highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Supervisor of the Town of DeWitt is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, to the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and to the various legislative members representing Onondaga County at the state level.

STATE OF NEW YORK)
COUNTY OF ONONDAGA) ss:
TOWN OF DEWITT)

I, Barbara Klim, Town Clerk of the Town of DeWitt, Onondaga County, New York, do hereby certify that I have compared the preceding resolution of the Town Board of the Town of DeWitt with the original contained in the minutes of June 10, 2013 and filed in my office at the Town of DeWitt, Onondaga County, New York, and the same is a true and correct copy of said original and the whole thereof.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of said Town of DeWitt, Onondaga County, New York, on this 11th day of June, 2013.


Barbara Klim, Town Clerk

(SEAL)



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Stephanie A. Miner, Mayor

RECEIVED

JAN 23 2014
NYSDOT REGION 3
MAIL ROOM

January 17, 2014

ATTN: Commissioner Joan McDonald
NYSDOT Region 3
I-81 Viaduct Project
333 E. Washington St.
Syracuse, NY 13202

Reg. Dir.	Asst. Reg. Dir.
LT.	Construction
Design	Fleet Admin.
Admin. Svcs.	PPM
RECEIVED REG. DIRECTOR R-3	
JAN 23 2014	
Real Estate	Safety
Traffic	Operations
All GDS	All RE
	Michelle

Dear Commissioner McDonald:

Please consider this correspondence my official comment relative to the environmental review process (EIS) Initial Scoping Comment Period the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) is conducting for the *I-81 Opportunities* project. I appreciate your consideration and engagement on this issue to date and I thank you for your willingness to work in partnership with me and the people of the City of Syracuse to pursue the best possible outcomes for our community.

My comments below reflect some of my thoughts and concerns relative to this project, a number of which I have already expressed to you.

First, I would like to reiterate my concern that our community has been provided with very limited information regarding a number of project elements including the decision-making process, project timelines and particularly specific design, community, economic development, environmental, traffic and other ramifications that may be associated with the major alternatives under considerations, as well as variations of these alternatives. Asking citizens to opine on alternatives that have not been fully explained to them may create complications. I would like to encourage NYSDOT to provide a greater level of explanation and description relative to the design, function and community impacts associated with all alternatives and sub-alternatives under review.

Additionally, as you move forward through this process, I would ask that the NYSDOT give serious consideration to the following:



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Stephanie A. Miner, Mayor

- Solutions that look beyond the I-81 corridor itself. The study area should be inclusive, not only of the I-81 viaduct itself, but also of the surrounding street grid and overall transportation network.
- Solutions that include an examination of all modes of travel, and are accommodating to all users. This process should be about people – not just about moving cars. New and enhanced transit options should also be contemplated as part of alternatives analysis.
- Solutions that pursue a diversity of goals. Short commute times should not be a prime indicator of success in alternatives analysis. Getting to and from the urban core in a timely fashion is but one of many measures of successful design. We should be mindful that design should influence demand, not just react to demand projections.
- Connectivity. Enhancing connectivity between the University Hill and Downtown areas, and throughout the urban core, should be a major goal of this project. The current highway configuration and condition acts as a barrier between two of the most structurally dense and economically vital economic areas of our city. The West Street arterial also acts as a physical and psychological barrier. This project represents an opportunity for us to knit our urban fabric back together, and make the I-81 corridor, the West Street arterial and our entire city safer and more convenient to travel.
- Economic potential. Our downtown is in the midst of a civic and economic renaissance. The *I-81 Opportunities* project is not just an opportunity for transportation solutions; it is an opportunity to take our recent economic success to the next level. This project should focus on solutions that create development opportunities, utilize urban planning best practices, and serve and connect the economic engines of our urban core neighborhoods.
- Perhaps most importantly – neighborhood impacts, and community education and engagement. The urban renewal era of the mid-Twentieth Century was one of communities ignored and opportunities missed. Moving forward, this process must be one of broad community inclusion. Analysis of alternatives should be mindful of neighborhood impacts, social justice issues, economic opportunity, environmental justice considerations and other associated concerns.



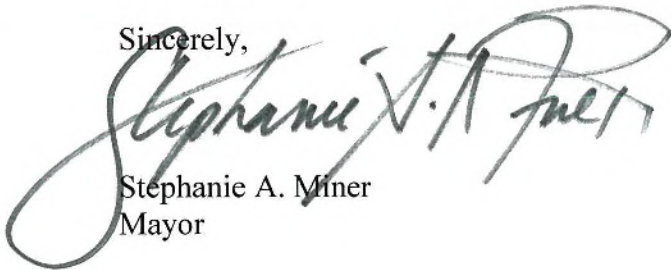
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Stephanie A. Miner, Mayor

I thank you for this opportunity to engage in the Initial Scoping portion of the EIS. I want to reiterate my appreciation for your willingness to partner on this once-in-a-lifetime project.

Please feel free to contact me any time to discuss this issue further. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Stephanie A. Miner
Mayor

From: Maxwell, Andrew

Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2014 3:40:15 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)

To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities; Lombardi, Diane C. (DOT); Frechette, Mark (DOT); Flint, Joseph A (DOT); Duffy, Beau (DOT); Casellini, Mark (DOT)

Subject: City of Syracuse comment on I-81 Viaduct Project Scoping Phase 9-2-14

On behalf of Syracuse Mayor Stephanie A. Miner, attached is the official comment of the City of Syracuse for the I-81 Viaduct Project's Scoping Phase.

Thank you.

Andrew M. Maxwell, MPA

Director

Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Agency

C: [315.399.2235](tel:315.399.2235)

amaxwell@socpa.net<<mailto:amaxwell@socpa.net>>

@_SOCPA

[SOCPA_logoBhi3]



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Stephanie A. Miner, Mayor

September 2, 2014

ATTN: Commissioner Joan McDonald
NYSDOT Region 3
I-81 Viaduct Project
333 E. Washington St.
Syracuse, New York 13202

RE: Environmental Review Process (EIS), Scoping Comment Period (*I-81 Viaduct Project*)

Dear Commissioner McDonald:

I want to express my sincere gratitude for the opportunities my staff and I have had to interact, not only with you, but with your team during the last several months of the *I-81 Viaduct Project*. The partnership between the City of Syracuse and NYSDOT continues to grow. Under the direction of Mr. Mark Frechette, the level of transparency and public engagement has improved significantly since my letter of January 17, 2014. Mark and the project team have made efforts to reach out to the community to seek feedback from citizens, while providing more information about the process, project alternatives and the associated potential social, economic and environmental impacts of each. I thank you and the team for this enhanced public engagement and hope it continues.

The following are my comments relative to the Draft Scoping Report issued by NYSDOT in June of this year:

- Enhancing Livability and Economic Vitality Should be Primary Focus of the Process: I want to reinforce certain aspects of the "Purpose and Need" outlined in the Draft Scoping Report. While I understand NYSDOT's desire to address the transportation engineering-related concerns associated with, "Nonstandard and Nonconforming Design Features," I want to stress our community's interest in pursuing, "transportation solutions that enhance the livability, visual quality, sustainability, and economic vitality of Greater Syracuse." I believe this stated goal should be the primary criterion by which we judge our options for this project.



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Stephanie A. Miner, Mayor

- Review Syracuse Comprehensive Plan's Directives: I urge NYSDOT to carefully review the formally adopted *City of Syracuse Comprehensive Plan: 2040* and its components, and plan this project accordingly. Goals of particular interest include:
 - Ensure that infrastructure for automobiles does not act as a barrier to other modes of travel.
 - Explore the feasibility of alternative sustainable modes of mass transit.
 - Enhance gateways and way-finding for visitors to the city.
 - Promote the development of trails and corridors that reflect local, regional, state, and national history.
- Endorse NYSDOT's Recommendation to Terminate Study of Certain Proposed Alternatives: I endorse NYSDOT's recommendation not to advance Rehabilitation, Stacked Viaduct, Tunnel, Depressed Highway, and Other alternatives to the draft EIS stage of this project. Based on the information presented by NYSDOT during the Scoping Phase of this project, it is clear these alternatives do not align with the stated goals of the City of Syracuse or the Purpose and Need articulated by NYSDOT. This fact has been reinforced by feedback I have received from citizens and community stakeholders. These alternatives do not advance Syracuse as a safer, better connected, and more beautiful, welcoming, economically vibrant, environmentally sensitive, socially just and livable place, and therefore should be discarded.

Additionally, as you move forward to the next phase of this project, I would like to reiterate certain interests of the City of Syracuse for your consideration:

- This project should explore and advance solutions that utilize and improve the transportation network beyond the viaduct corridor itself.
- Enhancing connectivity between the University Hill and Downtown areas, and throughout the urban core, should be a major goal of this project. The current highway configuration and condition acts as a barrier between two of the most structurally dense and economically vital areas of the Central New York Region. The West Street arterial also acts as a physical and psychological barrier. This project represents an opportunity for us to knit our urban fabric back together, and make the I-81 corridor, the West Street



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Stephanie A. Miner, Mayor

arterial and the entire Central New York Region safer, more livable and more convenient for the traveling public.

- This project must be sensitive to community impacts. The urban renewal era of the mid-Twentieth Century was one of communities ignored and opportunities missed. Moving forward, this process must be one of broad community inclusion. Analysis of alternatives should be mindful of neighborhood impacts, social justice issues, economic opportunity, environmental justice considerations and other associated concerns. Property takings and building demolitions that fracture neighborhoods and annihilate historic character and local heritage are unacceptable. This project must be about rebuilding communities and uniting neighborhoods.
- The next phase of the project should include a thorough examination of all modes of travel that are accommodating to all users. This process should be about people – not just about moving cars. New and enhanced transit options should also be contemplated as part of alternatives analysis.
- Short commute times should not be a prime indicator of success in alternatives analysis. Getting to and from the urban core in a timely fashion is but one of many measures of successful design. We should be mindful that design should influence demand, not just react to demand projections.
- Our downtown is in the midst of a major civic and economic renaissance. The *I-81 Viaduct* project is not just an opportunity for transportation solutions; it is an opportunity to build on our recent economic success. This project should focus on solutions that create development opportunities, promote urban planning best practices, and serve and connect the economic engines of our urban core neighborhoods.

I thank you for this opportunity to comment on the Draft Scoping Report portion of the *I-81 Viaduct Project* EIS. I want to reiterate my appreciation for your willingness to work together on this once-in-a-lifetime project, and I look forward to continued partnership with you and your team.

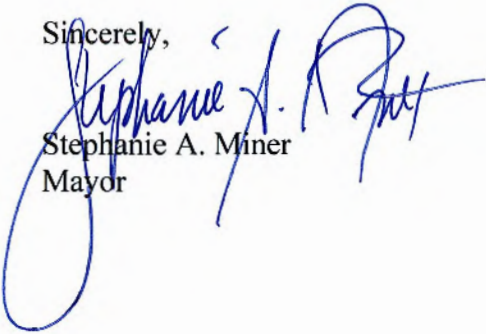


OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Stephanie A. Miner, Mayor

Please feel free to contact me any time to discuss this issue further. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Stephanie A. Miner
Mayor

From: [Maxwell, Andrew](#)
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov

Subject: I-81 Opportunities: Initial Scoping Phase Comment
Date: Friday, January 17, 2014 4:58:08 PM
Attachments: [Mayor Stephanie A. Miner - formal EIS Scoping Phase comment 1-17-14.pdf](#)

On behalf of Syracuse Mayor Stephanie A. Miner, please see below and attached formal comment for the *I-81 Opportunities* EIS Initial Scoping Phase. Hard copy via USPS.

January 17, 2014

ATTN: Commissioner Joan McDonald
NYSDOT Region 3
I-81 Viaduct Project
333 E. Washington St.
Syracuse, NY 13202

Dear Commissioner McDonald:

Please consider this correspondence my official comment relative to the environmental review process (EIS) Initial Scoping Comment Period the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) is conducting for the *I-81 Opportunities* project. I appreciate your consideration and engagement on this issue to date and I thank you for your willingness to work in partnership with me and the people of the City of Syracuse to pursue the best possible outcomes for our community.

My comments below reflect some of my thoughts and concerns relative to this project, a number of which I have already expressed to you.

First, I would like to reiterate my concern that our community has been provided with very limited information regarding a number of project elements including the decision-making process, project timelines and particularly specific design, community, economic development, environmental, traffic and other ramifications that may be associated with the major alternatives under considerations, as well as variations of these alternatives. Asking citizens to opine on alternatives that have not been fully explained to them may create complications. I would like to encourage NYSDOT to provide a greater level of explanation and description relative to the design, function and community impacts associated with all alternatives and sub-alternatives under review.

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I thank you for this opportunity to engage in the Initial Scoping portion of the EIS. I want to reiterate my appreciation for your willingness to partner on this once-in-a-lifetime project.

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Sincerely,

Stephanie A. Miner
Mayor



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Stephanie A. Miner, Mayor

January 17, 2014

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I-81 Viaduct Project
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Syracuse, NY 13202

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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Stephanie A. Miner, Mayor

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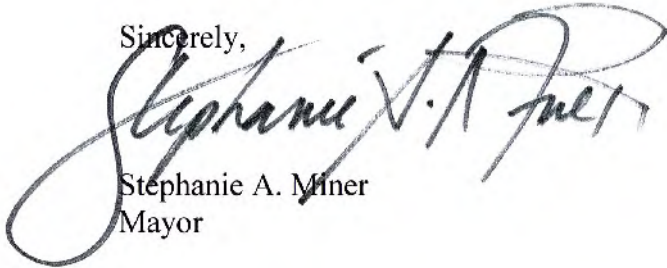
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Stephanie A. Miner, Mayor

I thank you for this opportunity to engage in the Initial Scoping portion of the EIS. I want to reiterate my appreciation for your willingness to partner on this once-in-a-lifetime project.

Please feel free to contact me any time to discuss this issue further. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Stephanie A. Miner
Mayor

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Name: B Molldran

Address: 320 Highland Ave City: SPR State: Zip: 13203

Phone: () Email:

Comments: I still prefer the T-4 option, only objection is cost *

Some of that would be made up from lower snow removal, lower maintenance.

* Politicians can always find the money.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) 181-TALK (481-8255)



US Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name: B Moll drem

Address: 320 Highland Ave City: Syr State: Zip: 13203

Phone: () Email: moll drem @ dreamscape . com

Comments:

① Is this going to be paid for locally, or with gasoline taxes?

\$ 3,000,000,000

is \$6,000 apiece for the half-million residents of Onondaga County. That's a lot of gasoline tax!

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

RECEIVED SEP 02 2014

Bernhard P. Molldrem, Jr.
320 Highland Avenue
Syracuse NY 13203

(h) 428-8256, (w) 422-4323

NYSDOT Region 3
I-81 Viaduct Project
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse NY 13202

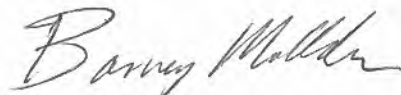
8-29-2014

Comments re Viaduct
Eastern Alignment
Tunnel Alternative T-4 (modified)

Sirs

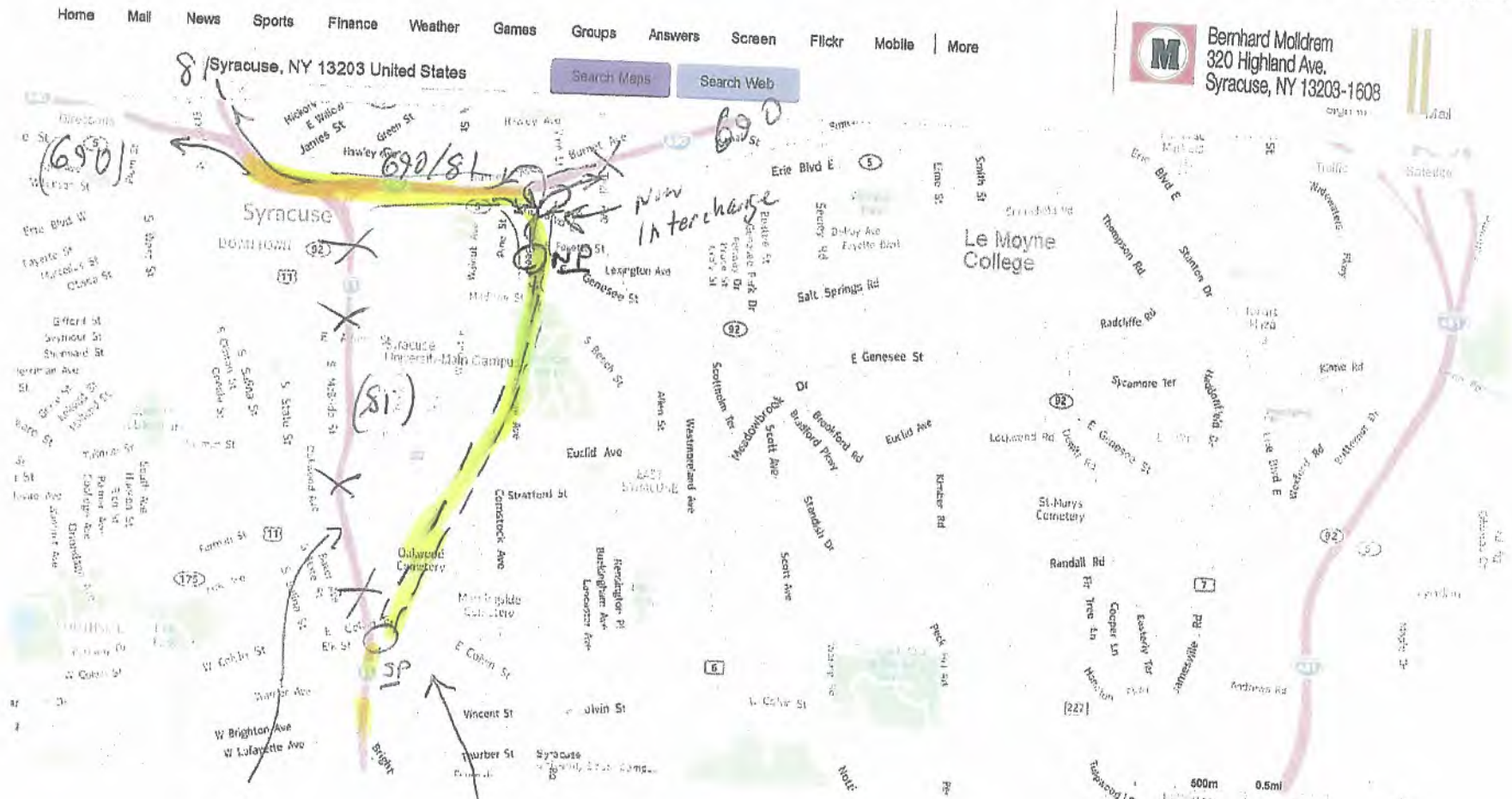
My suggested proposal is for a shortened Eastern Alignment tunnel, as shown on the enclosed sketch, with the south portal near Colvin and Elk, near the southern end of the present-day viaduct, and the north portal at Beach Street on the north slope of the Beech Street hill, north of Thornden Park. North of the north portal, I-81 would join I-690, east of the current Teall Avenue interchange, and the two roads would be concurrent up to the current divide past State Street. The I-81 road south of the south portal could be elevated above the current Susquehenna Line track, and then descend into the tunnel after crossing the track, so rail operations would be undisturbed during construction and afterwards. The path of the current viaduct could be a surface street or streets, e.g. boulevard.

This would result in a south approach to the city that would be like the Squirrel Hill tunnel on I-376 in Pittsburgh, and would be of a similar length (a bit less than a mile) through bedrock. This alternative avoids the long tunnel through the north side of the current T-4 proposal, and also avoids the round-about, zig-zag traffic pattern of the I-81/I-481/I-690/I-81 proposal. It also provides access at downtown and north side points and at Carousel/Destiny. The costs of the shortened T-4 should be less than the other tunnel alternatives.



Bernhard P. Molldrem, Jr.

email: (w) molldrem@dreamscape.com/ (h) bmolldrem@aol.com



OUR PROPOSAL IS TO TUNNEL (THROUGH BEDROCK)

FROM COLVIN STREET NORTH TO APPROXIMATELY BEECH
AND EAST GENESEE, WHERE I 81 WOULD RUN
CONCURRENTLY FOR ABOUT $\frac{1}{2}$ MILE WITH I 690

I have marked the two tunnel portals
SOUTH PORTAL SP and NORTH PORTAL NP

THIS SECTION
WOULD NO
LONGER BE
I 81, AND CAN
BE A STREET OR
BLVD,

I81 Boulevard Option: Using Roundabouts

Carlo Moneti

November 12, 2013

1 Overview

A variation on the boulevard option. Since I690 exists only as a local route to carry traffic into or out of Syracuse, it follows that Syracuse is virtually the only destination for I690 traffic. Therefore, it makes sense that it, too, should be converted to a boulevard through the downtown section of the city. In this way both I81 and I690 traffic can flow together more easily and into the city street grid at multiple locations for more direct access to destinations and greater dispersal of traffic and reduce the points of congestions we currently have.

With both I81 and I690 brought down to ground level through downtown, they can be easily connected by way of roundabouts. Roundabouts have proven to be very efficient and well liked around the world and should keep traffic along the I81 and I690 boulevard sections moving very efficiently.

The introduction of roundabouts will dramatically reduce the complexity and footprint of the existing interchanges. The newly freed space can then be made available as highly desirable prime property for residential and commercial development. Roundabouts also make attractive landmarks, often capped with statues, fountains, or other artwork. The I81 boulevard section, which would probably traverse several roundabouts, could be renamed Monument Blvd.

An additional consideration is to design the boulevards so that their starting point within the city and their size encourages traffic to disperse onto the city street grid as much and as early as possible in order to minimize congestion. The new boulevards should not attract all traffic by default. Done right, we could eliminate the congestion at current exits and on-ramps as well as at streets that have been converted to arterial roads—via oversizing or making them one-way. The arterials could then be downsized and/or returned to normal two-way streets, which would return adjacent property back to highly desirable downtown real estate.

2 The Details

The following is only a suggested schema for roadway changes by a non-expert; it is presented to help render the idea more clearly and completely. Hopefully, the examples below will help bring to light and address the basic issues, the hegging questions, in people's minds.

2.1 Boulevard Size

The new boulevards should not be more than 4 lanes so as not to attract all traffic by default. One or more north/south streets parallel to I81 could optionally be upgraded. With some increase in traffic, such streets could draw substantial new mixed residential/commercial development.

2.2 Boulevard Lengths

- **I81** - From the south, near Seneca Tnpk. The important point here is to pick a location where traffic can, at least partially, disperse into the street grid—not all traffic is destined for downtown, nor should it be encouraged onto one boulevard. From the north, somewhere near the edge of the city, probably near Destiny USA.
- **I690** - From the east, somewhere between University Ave. and Teal Ave. A roundabout at Crouse Ave. should facilitate university hill traffic. From the west, at least from West St., connected by a roundabout. But as early as Hiawatha Blvd. should be considered, also connected by a roundabout. In which case, there could be a roundabout at Geddes St. Other streets could bridge the boulevard, connect to it via roundabout, or be cut.

2.3 Roundabouts

There are 3 key roundabouts that convey the essence of the plan to redevelop I81 and I690 into boulevards through the inner city. They are highlighted. The rest seem probable and help render the plan more completely but require study.

E. Seneca Tnpk at I81

Optional, if space allows. Merge the north and south bound roadbeds before the roundabout. The value here is that a Seneca Tnpk leads to west bound destinations and several north bound streets, which can help disperse traffic early.

I81 at I481

Simplify, simplify. Create a roundabout to include I81, I481, and Brighton Ave. (especially if no Seneca Tnpk roundabout). There is plenty of space there.

S. Salina St. at I81 near W. Newell St.

Convert the existing on/off ramp into a roundabout. This will open space for possible development.

E. Colvin St. at I81

Convert the I81 overpass into a roundabout with Colvin St. The value here is that Colvin St. is a major east/west street that will help disperse traffic.

Adams St., Harrison St., and Genesee St. at I81

A roundabout for each of these streets seems appropriate. Other streets in this area could bridge the I81 boulevard.

I81 at I690

Almond St. and I81 boulevard would merge. I81 boulevard would meet at a roundabout with I690 boulevard, Catherine St. and probably McBride St. I81 and I690 would then combine heading northwest all the way to Salina St. Optionally, Eric Blvd. could be included in the roundabout. Townsend St., State St., James St., and Willow St. could bridge the boulevard. The bridges would be small in scale and could be made attractive.

N. Salina St. at I81 and I690

The combined I81/I690 boulevard would meet at a roundabout with Salina St., and possibly Webster's Landing. I81 would subsequently separate from I690 and head north along the existing I81 path, and I690 would continue westward along its existing path. There is lots of space here to work with. Perhaps N. Clinton St. could be reconnected via a bridge; Butternut St. could be re-flowed to Genant Dr., opening up a whole new block for development.

West St. at I690

West St. would merge in a roundabout with I690. In addition, West St. could be downsized to a normal main street, say, Salina St. size, since it would no longer function as an arterial for limited access I690 and I81 highways now converted to multi-access boulevards. A normal sized West St. would also facilitate reconnecting much of the broken street grid on either side of West St. Again, property along West St. will then be transformed into desirable property ripe for development. Optionally, the West St. roundabout could be pulled slightly south in order to include W. Genesee St. if that is found to be sufficiently advantageous.

Geddes St. at I690

In the long-run, a roundabout at Geddes St. and I690 may be desirable. It would make possible both west and east bound connection and still employ a smaller than current footprint. Leavenworth Ave. and Van Rensselaer St. could bridge I690. Optionally, Liberty St. as well.

Hiawatha Blvd. at I690

In the long-run, a roundabout at Hiawatha Blvd. and I690 may also be desirable. It would aid in traffic dispersal. It would also allow the road between Hiawatha Blvd. and Liberty St. to be radically simplified into a narrow footprint, opening up new space for development or an enhanced green space or park.

I81 From N. Salina St to Hiawatha Blvd.

The four bridges crossing I81, Spencer St., Court St., Bear St., and Hiawatha Blvd., could be converted to roundabouts. West of Hiawatha Blvd., the connections with Onondaga Lake Pkwy., Park St., and Old Liverpool Rd., could be dramatically simplified using one or two roundabouts to connect with each other and with the I81 boulevard.

I690 from Teall Ave. to I81

A roundabout probably at Crouse Ave. would provide a additional major access point to the university hill area from the highway.

3 Other Considerations

I81 designation through the city

Some business groups are keen on keeping the "I81" designation along its current path. This could be accomplished by renaming I481 as the "I81 Bypass" and the city portion as "I81 Local" or some analogous common convention.

Downtown, the Adams St. arterial could be reduced to its original normal width and made two-way, which will create more space and, more generally, make the property along this road highly desirable for development. This also applies to downtown Harrison St. In addition, Warren St. could be returned to a two-way street. This should all be possible because of better dispersed traffic as a result of converting to limited access highways into multi-access boulevards within the downtown area.

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From: [Carlo Moneti](#)
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Subject: I81 Boulevard Option: Using Roundabouts
Date: Friday, November 15, 2013 12:04:40 PM
Attachments: [I81_roundabouts.pdf](#)

Hello,

I would like to submit electronically comments on the i81 project that I submitted on paper at the Nov 13, 2013 public meeting. Please find attached: "I81 Boulevard Option: Using Roundabouts" I81_roundabouts.pdf

I81 Boulevard Option: Using Roundabouts

1 Overview

A variation on the boulevard option. Since I690 exists only as a local route to carry traffic into or out of Syracuse, it follows that Syracuse is virtually the only destination for I690 traffic. Therefore, it makes sense that it, too, should be converted to a boulevard through the downtown section of the city. In this way both I81 and I690 traffic can flow together more easily and into the city street grid at multiple locations for more direct access to destinations and greater dispersal of traffic and reduce the points of congestions we currently have.

With both I81 and I690 brought down to ground level through downtown, they can be easily connected by way of roundabouts. Roundabouts have proven to be very efficient and well liked around the world and should keep traffic along the I81 and I690 boulevard sections moving very efficiently.

The introduction of roundabouts will dramatically reduce the complexity and footprint of the existing interchanges. The newly freed space can then be made available as highly desirable prime property for residential and commercial development. Roundabouts also make attractive landmarks, often capped with statues, fountains, or other artwork. The I81 boulevard section, which would probably traverse several roundabouts, could be renamed Monument Blvd.

An additional consideration is to design the boulevards so that their starting point within the city and their size encourages traffic to disperse onto the city street grid as much and as early as possible in order to minimize congestion. The new boulevards should not attract all traffic by default. Done right, we could eliminate the congestion at current exits and on-ramps as well as at streets that have been converted to arterial roads---via oversizing or making them one-way. The arterials could then be downsized and/or returned to normal two-way streets, which would return adjacent property back to highly desirable downtown real estate.

2 The Details

The following is only a suggested schema for roadway changes by a non-expert; it is presented to help render the idea more clearly and completely. Hopefully, the examples below will help bring to light and address the basic issues, the begging questions, in people's minds.

2.1 Boulevard Size

The new boulevards should not be more than 4 lanes so as not to attract all traffic by default. One or more north/south streets parallel to I81 could optionally be upgraded. With some increase in traffic, such streets could draw substantial new mixed residential/commercial development.

2.2 Boulevard Lengths

- I81-- From the south, near Seneca Tnpk. The important point here is to pick a location where traffic can, at least partially, disperse into the street grid---not all traffic is destined for downtown, nor should it be encouraged onto one boulevard. From the north, somewhere near the edge of the city, probably near Destiny USA.
- I690 -- From the east, somewhere between University Ave. and Teal Ave. A roundabout at Crouse Ave. should facilitate university hill traffic. From the west, at least from West St., connected by a roundabout. But as early as Hiawatha Blvd. should be considered, also connected by a roundabout. In which case, there could be a roundabout at Geddes St. Other streets could bridge the boulevard, connect to it via roundabout, or be cut.

2.3 Roundabouts

There are 3 key roundabouts that convey the essence of the plan to redevelop I81 and I690 into boulevards through the inner city. They are highlighted. The rest seem probable and help render the plan more completely but require study.

E. Seneca Tnpk at I81

Optional, if space allows. Merge the north and south bound roadbeds before the roundabout. The value here is that a Seneca Tnpk leads to west bound destinations and several north bound streets, which can help disperse traffic early.

I81 at I481

Simplify, simplify. Create a roundabout to include I81, I481, and Brighton Ave. (especially if no Seneca Tnpk roundabout). There is plenty of space there.

S. Salina St. at I81 near W. Newell St.

Convert the existing on/off ramp into a roundabout. This will open space for possible development.

E. Colvin St. at I81

Convert the I81 overpass into a roundabout with Colvin St. The value here is that Colvin St. is a major east/west street that will help disperse traffic.

Adams St., Harrison St., and Genesee St. at I81

A roundabout for each of these streets seems appropriate. Other streets in this area could bridge the I81 boulevard.

[-----
I81 at I690

Almond St. and I81 boulevard would merge. I81 boulevard would meet at a roundabout with I690 boulevard, Catherine St. and probably McBride St. I81 and I690 would then combine heading northwest all the way to Salina St. Optionally, Erie Blvd. could be included in the roundabout. Townsend St., State St., James St., and Willow St. could bridge the boulevard. The bridges would be small in scale and could be made attractive.

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[-----
N. Salina St. at I81 and I690

The combined I81/I690 boulevard would meet at a roundabout with Salina St., and possibly Webster's Landing. I81 would subsequently separate from I690 and head north along the existing I81 path, and I690 would continue westward along its existing path. There is lots of space here to work with. Perhaps N. Clinton St. could be reconnected via a bridge; Butternut St. could be re-flowed to Genant Dr., opening up a whole new block for development.

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[-----
West St. at I690

West St. would merge in a roundabout with I690. In addition, West St. could be downsized to a normal main street, say, Salina St. size, since it would no longer function as an arterial for limited access I690 and I81 highways now converted to multi-access boulevards. A normal sized West St. would also facilitate reconnecting much of the broken street grid on either side of West St. Again, property along West St. will then be transformed into desirable property ripe for development. Optionally, the West St. roundabout could be pulled slightly south in order to include W. Genesee St. if that is found to be sufficiently advantageous.

-----]

Geddes St. at I690

In the long-run, a roundabout at Geddes St. and I690 may be desirable. It would make possible both west and east bound connection and still employ a smaller than current footprint. Leavenworth Ave. and Van Rensselaer St. could bridge I690. Optionally, Liberty St. as well.

Hiawatha Blvd. at I690

In the long-run, a roundabout at Hiawatha Blvd. and I690 may also be desirable. It would aid in traffic dispersal. It would also allow the road between Hiawatha Blvd. and Liberty St. to be radically simplified into a narrow footprint, opening up new space for development or an enhanced green space or park.

I81 From N. Salina St to Hiawatha Blvd.

The four bridges crossing I81, Spencer St., Court St., Bear St., and Hiawatha Blvd., could be converted to roundabouts. West of Hiawatha Blvd., the connections with Onondaga Lake Pkwy., Park St., and Old Liverpool Rd., could be dramatically simplified using one or two roundabouts to connect with each other and with the I81 boulevard.

I690 from Teall Ave. to I81

A roundabout probably at Crouse Ave. would provide a additional major access point to the university hill area from the highway.

3 Other Considerations

I81 designation through the city

Some business groups are keen on keeping the "I81" designation along its current path. This could be accomplished by renaming I481 as the "I81 Bypass" and the city portion as "I81 Local" or some analogous common convention.

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I81 Boulevard Option: Using Roundabouts

Carlo Moneti

November 12, 2013

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A variation on the boulevard option. Since I690 exists only as a local route to carry traffic into or out of Syracuse, it follows that Syracuse is virtually the only destination for I690 traffic. Therefore, it makes sense that it, too, should be converted to a boulevard through the downtown section of the city. In this way both I81 and I690 traffic can flow together more easily and into the city street grid at multiple locations for more direct access to destinations and greater dispersal of traffic and reduce the points of congestions we currently have.

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From: Carlo Moneti
Sent: Friday, August 29, 2014 11:40:24 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities
Subject: Two boulevards and a Bridge: I-81 redevelopment proposal

Dear I-81 Viaduct Project Team:

Please find attached a PDF document of my comments/proposal for the I81 Redevelopment Project. It is a major revision of my November 2013 I81_roundabouts.pdf. Since the PDF is ~9MB, I also made it available via Web at: <http://arsteca.net/i81/>

The document is meant for you, but is also written for the general public as an audience. Thank you in advance for taking the time to review it.

Cheers
Carlo Moneti
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[\(315\) 475-0398](tel:(315)475-0398)

Two Boulevards and a Bridge

I81 Boulevard Option: Using Roundabouts (Ver. 2.0)

Carlo Moneti

August 29, 2014



Abstract

This is a revision of a previous proposal for an I81 boulevard option with roundabouts submitted in November 2013. In this much expanded proposal, I81 is replaced by two boulevards (Almond Blvd and Genant Blvd) connected via I690 to form one fairly quick north-south route across the city. Through careful selection of intersections along the boulevards, most traffic destined for downtown, the hospitals, and university hill, is dispersed well before downtown, thus greatly reducing downtown rush-hour traffic congestion and eliminating the need for arterial roads to serve highways. The downtown “spaghetti junction” is completely eliminated, leaving a single I690 roadbed through town, and revealing a dozen city blocks of desirable land for development. In lieu of a traditional viaduct, a curving suspension bridge is proposed to carry I690 along most of the span between the two boulevards, creating a new architectural icon for Syracuse, as well as a symbol of the I81 redevelopment project.

The southern boulevard starts just north of the I81-I481 junction. The northern boulevard starts at the I81 Liverpool Exit, and makes possible a simpler, calmer, and more attractive entry to Liverpool by introducing two roundabouts with nearby roads that completely replace another local “spaghetti junction”. Both boulevards include select junctions to disperse traffic and better integrate with the street grid.

Other areas of analysis include: the area of Websters Landing and Franklin Square entrance; West St road simplification and contraction; downtown arterial roads normalization; a new I690 junction at Crouse Ave; and new paths and entrances to university hill and hospitals.

This plan is significantly informed by Syracuse’s street grid of the 1950s (before I81 or I690 existed), and its 75,000 greater population at that time. It is projected that the cost of this plan will be far less than all other current proposals due to the elimination of so many viaducts and bridges which will no-longer need to be built or rebuilt. Similarly, the long-run maintenance costs will be far less.

1 Overview

The city of Syracuse had 220,000 residents in the 1950s. By 1980, just 10 years or so after I81 was completed, the population of Syracuse had fallen by 40,000, and continued down to 145,000 today. Some may argue that it was the de-industrialization of the northeast that caused the population exodus. This seems a poor explanation in the case of Syracuse because the data shows the population of Onondaga county essentially unchanged, with the falling city population offset by the rising suburban population. The building of I81 had a dramatic effect on the housing, businesses, culture, and traffic patterns of the downtown area and beyond. Whole neighborhoods were removed, historic architecture lost, the social fabric ripped up. A mixed-use developed area was eventually transformed into a glorified office park. Although new office jobs may have been created (not necessarily new to the metropolitan area), the housing and jobs of many who lived there were taken away. And so many moved away. The highway encouraged suburban development. Downtown Syracuse lost its social/cultural vitality; as a glorified office park, it emptied out after the 5 o'clock hour.

Cities are typically founded due to some natural resource: a convenient port, a river, a junction of roads, or other resources. However, 100-200 years later their original reason for being is often no-longer applicable. In such cases, cities still have an impetus to exist simply because “they are there”; there are people, family and friends, jobs, organization, and history. But that is not enough. The difference between such cities that continue to flourish versus those that fall into decline is, I believe, the desire to live in that city for the quality of life it offers, the economic and cultural vitality engendered by its thoughtful design and development, the quality of its public services, its schools, its utility services, and so its local government.

Ultimately, people move to places they find most attractive and desirable. A city with great economic and cultural vitality will draw a greater and diverse population. Businesses open where people are and where a pool of suitable employees can be found. Attract people and jobs will follow; some people will bring their own job and create additional ones; and developers will come naturally for the opportunities, not for the tax breaks.

The I81 Redevelopment Project creates the opportunity for Syracuse to vastly improve the downtown traffic experience, rid itself of ugly and unnecessary roads and bridges, transform multiple downtown city blocks into prime land for development, initiate a development boom, and create a far more attractive city that, together, will vastly increase the economic and cultural vitality of the city. The final plans for the I81 redevelopment should encompass the full potential the project has to offer. I ask the I81 Redevelopment Project team to fully investigate the core aspects of the plan presented here.

2 Core Concepts and Principles

Following are the core concepts and principles of this proposal which I hope will help guide the the I81 redevelopment plan:

1. The idea of converting only a mile or so of I81 to a boulevard should be discarded. It is not sufficient to change or improve the traffic patterns or the general socio-economic fabric of the city. The issue at hand is well beyond the aesthetic preferences for keeping or removing a 1 mile length of viaduct. Consider instead a boulevard that traverses most or all of the city.
2. I81 was built as part of the National Interstate Highway system designed to connect cities together. It was not a project to improve traffic in Syracuse, and has in fact been a detriment to the downtown street grid and traffic patterns. The I81 redevelopment plan should make sure that downtown traffic is

fundamentally improved (more dispersed), that several downtown streets are returned to normal scale and 2-way, and that areas with broken street grid are reduced.

3. Since the majority of I81 traffic has been found to be local or for destinations within the city, it follows that it should transition to a boulevard within the city so as to connect better with and utilize the street grid to provide greater access to various destinations within the city. In addition, I690, which extends only from the near western suburbs to the near eastern suburbs, is primarily a feeder for Syracuse. So, it follows that I690 also connect more into the street grid within the central city since that is the destination of the majority of its traffic.
4. If I81 is brought to grade and converted to a boulevard, it becomes possible to radically simplify a junction with I690 and with other select city streets. This would vastly reduce the number of road beds and bridges needed, and vastly increase newly available land for development. The downtown “spaghetti junction” could be completely eliminated.
5. Turn I81 into a boulevard, but do not create a fast and large 6-lane road with side access roads. Such a road will draw virtually all current traffic by default and fail to effect significant changes in downtown traffic patterns. Moreover, regardless that sufficient space exists, such an over-sized road is not attractive or walkable or desirable to businesses that would develop along it over time. In fact, a narrower road will significantly increase the available property along the street and the potential for development. Therefore, please consider a fairly normal 4-lane city street with perhaps a center turning lane, but no side access roads. Assuming traffic dispersal before downtown (see next item), the I481 bypass for through traffic, and the modest amount of commuters from southern suburbs, a 6-lane boulevard doesn’t seem necessary.
6. The transition from I81 South to a boulevard should be designed so as to present motorists with multiple paths to destinations further into the city. Traffic should not be sent directly to one large boulevard by default. Doing so will fail to disperse traffic or change the current congested traffic patterns downtown. To encourage traffic dispersion, consider making the transition earlier than current proposals, and to present motorists with east-west roads that connect to multiple northerly routes into town.
7. A judicious redevelopment of I81 and I690 can fundamentally improve traffic patterns and eliminate downtown congestion points so that downtown streets that were converted to arterials in an attempt to remedy that congestion will no-longer be needed and could be returned to their original normal size and 2-way function, which would open up land and make it more desirable for development.
8. The narrowing of highway footprints through the city, and the possible upgrade of some existing streets will provide an opportunity to implement new public transit projects, such as an east-west and north-south street car system and greenways (bike and pedestrian paths). Please include these features in your analyses.
9. The proposal to employ roundabouts at several locations is based on the presumption that they are an efficient way to keep traffic moving. They are widely used in Europe and are gaining popularity in the USA. Please consider their use wherever deemed advantageous. Where other traffic control is deemed more suitable, so be it; it should not be construed as invalidating the overall plan.
10. Superior urban design will increase the economic and cultural vitality and the population of Syracuse. This trumps any of the economic concerns—real or perceived—so far voiced by business special interest groups, who will benefit vastly more from the resulting economic growth generated by a thoughtful wholistic I81 redevelopment plan than from any of their proposals offered so far.

3 The Plan and Rationale

To begin with, it is assumed that the new I81 will be redirected to the I481 bypass so as to divert through traffic around the city, which will significantly reduce traffic through the city.

The core aspect of the plan is to replace I81 by two boulevards, “Almond Blvd” and “Genant Blvd”, connected via I690 to form one fairly quick north-south route through the city. With careful selection of junctions along the boulevards, most traffic destined for downtown, the hospitals, and university hill, will be dispersed well before downtown, which will greatly reduce downtown rush-hour traffic congestion and eliminate the need for arterial roads to serve highway junctions. The downtown I81-I690 interchange (a.k.a, “spaghetti junction”) is completely eliminated, leaving a single I690 roadbed through town and revealing a dozen city blocks of prime land for development. In lieu of a traditional viaduct, a curving suspension bridge is proposed to carry I690 along most of the span between the two boulevards, creating a new architectural icon for Syracuse, as well as a symbol of the I81 redevelopment project.

The southern boulevard starts just north of the I81-I481 junction. The northern boulevard starts near the current I81 Liverpool Exit¹. The Exit road becomes the new path to Liverpool and Syracuse, which combined with two roundabouts with nearby roads makes possible a simpler, calmer, and more attractive entrance to Liverpool; and it completely eliminates the other local “spaghetti junction”. Both boulevards include select intersections to better integrate with the street grid and disperse traffic.

This proposal offers more detail of the plan than an amateur should hazard. However, it is offered solely to help illustrate and better convey all of the major and minor parts of the plan and how they function together and should be understood in a wholistic way.

The plan is informed in part by the state of development and street grid of Syracuse in the 1950s (before I81 and I690 were built), a time when there were 75,000 more residents, 50% more than today². The city was dense, the culture was vibrant, and the local economy was strong. Another fact is that the building of I81 was part of a federal project to connect cities across the country; it had nothing whatsoever to do with addressing traffic in Syracuse. Syracuse did not need I81 in the 1950s, and there is no indication that it needs it today with 75,000 fewer residents.

The plan is intended to fundamentally improve traffic in and around downtown. Recent traffic analyses indicate that the majority of I81 and I690 traffic reaching downtown is destined for downtown and the central city. Therefore, it follows that major roads into town should be well connected with the street grid to disperse traffic and allow it to take more direct routes to its destinations. The plan includes multiple new paths for traffic to access downtown, the hospitals, and university hill, to better disperse traffic before it reaches downtown, dramatically improving traffic flow downtown, and relieving the need for large roads or complex junctions with I690. Similarly, arterial roads can be returned to normal-size 2-way streets. As traffic engineers have learned, building a bigger road only begets more traffic. If any downtown street needs more than 4 driving lanes, the chosen plan must be flawed and should be revised.

It’s important to understand the opportunity at hand to dramatically enhance the economic and cultural future of Syracuse through this project. We now have the opportunity to recreate a street grid and traffic pattern that is far more efficient than we have today and that can serve Syracuse for the next 50+ years even if it—hopefully—grows by another 75,000+ residents.

¹The decommissioned I81 roadbed from Liverpool Exit to I481 N may benefit from boulevard treatment, at least through the Town of Salina, where it may be desirable for future development.

²See map of Syracuse from 1951: <http://aerial-ny.library.cornell.edu/photos/onondaga/1951/ARX-3H-22>

3.1 Almond Blvd (I81 South)

Convert I81 S from I481 to I690 into a 4-lane boulevard with perhaps a center turning lane (no side access roads) so as to provide more opportunities for traffic to disperse through the street grid well before downtown. Let's call it Almond Blvd. Create junctions with major east-west streets that connect to the major north-south streets to present motorists with multiple paths to destinations further into the city. Do not present a highway-size boulevard to motorists; we don't want to encourage all traffic to stay on the new boulevard all the way to downtown by default. That would result in no significant improvement of the current traffic patterns downtown.

It is assumed that most traffic, especially rush hour traffic, will be destined for downtown or the university hill and hospitals. By providing several junctions with the street grid before Adams St, to give additional access to downtown and the university hill from multiple southerly and westerly directions, most traffic we see today will be dispersed before reaching Adams St, and much of the remaining traffic will disperse at Adams and Harrison St, with little remaining at Almond Blvd and I690 junction. Therefore, the Almond-I690 junction can be simple and compact, as is normal between a street with a highway. Following are suggested junctions for Almond Blvd, plus one for I81 (starting from the south):

1. **A northbound exit and southbound on-ramp on I81 at Seneca Tnpk**; that is all that is needed to bring traffic to the city and for traffic to exit the city; Seneca Tnpk is a well-connected east-west road; this will avoid sending southerly Syracuse destined traffic further north on Almond Blvd than necessary;
2. **A roundabout at Glen Ave**, which connects to Brighton Ave and Filmore Ave, close to Balantyne Rd, a major east-west street; Brighton Ave provides a southern access route to university hill via Ainsley Dr->Jamesville Rd->Comstock Ave, or via Thurber St->Comstock Ave; also consider that the I81-I481 junction has no I81 southbound on-ramp, and only an indirect northbound off-ramp via I481 W;
3. **An intersection at the current Exit 17**, an established junction worth maintaining due to existing businesses there; optionally, add a connection to Thurber St via a bridge over the train track;
4. **A roundabout at Brighton Ave and including State St**, which would allow southern access to the university area via Thurber St->Comstock Ave; optionally, create roundabout connecting Newell and Thurber St;
5. **A roundabout at Colvin St**, a convenient east-west crossroad, which would give southern access to university via Comstock Ave;
6. **A roundabout at Castle St**, a convenient east-west crossroad, which would give western access to university and hospitals;
7. **A roundabout at Taylor St** (if the university is interested), along with a reopened University Pl, to provide perhaps the best option for a formal western gateway to the university; ideally, it would be a straight road to the entrance, and would be directly visible from Almond Blvd.

Continuing north, consider roundabouts where appropriate at Adams St, Harrison St, Genesee St, Fayette St, and Erie Blvd. Secondary streets such as Madison, Cedar, Washington, and Water St would presumably face a Stop at Almond Blvd. [See figures 1, 2, 3 on next pages]

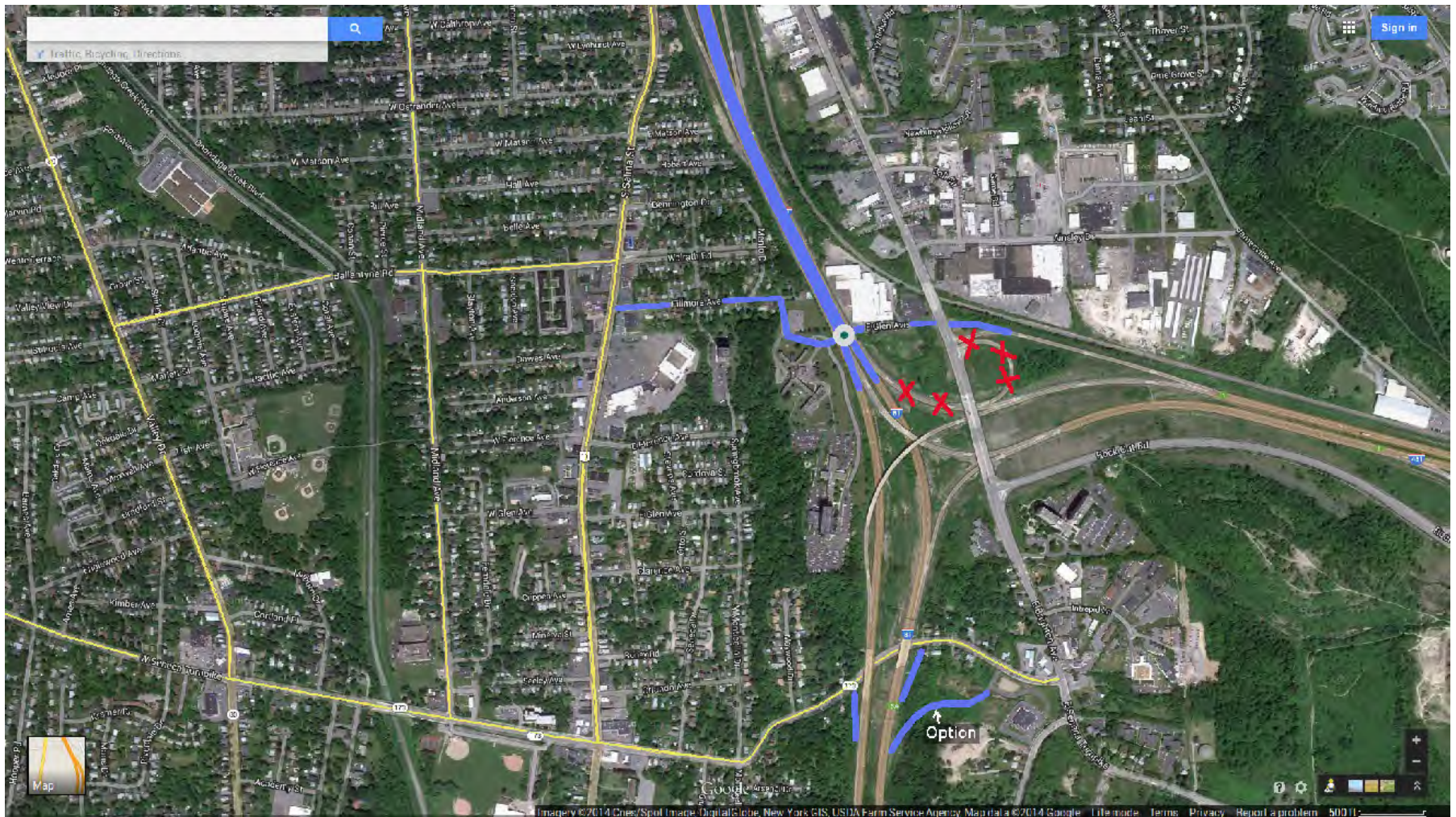


Figure 1: Start of Almond Blvd just north of I81-I481 junction, showing junctions at Seneca Tnpk and Glen Ave.

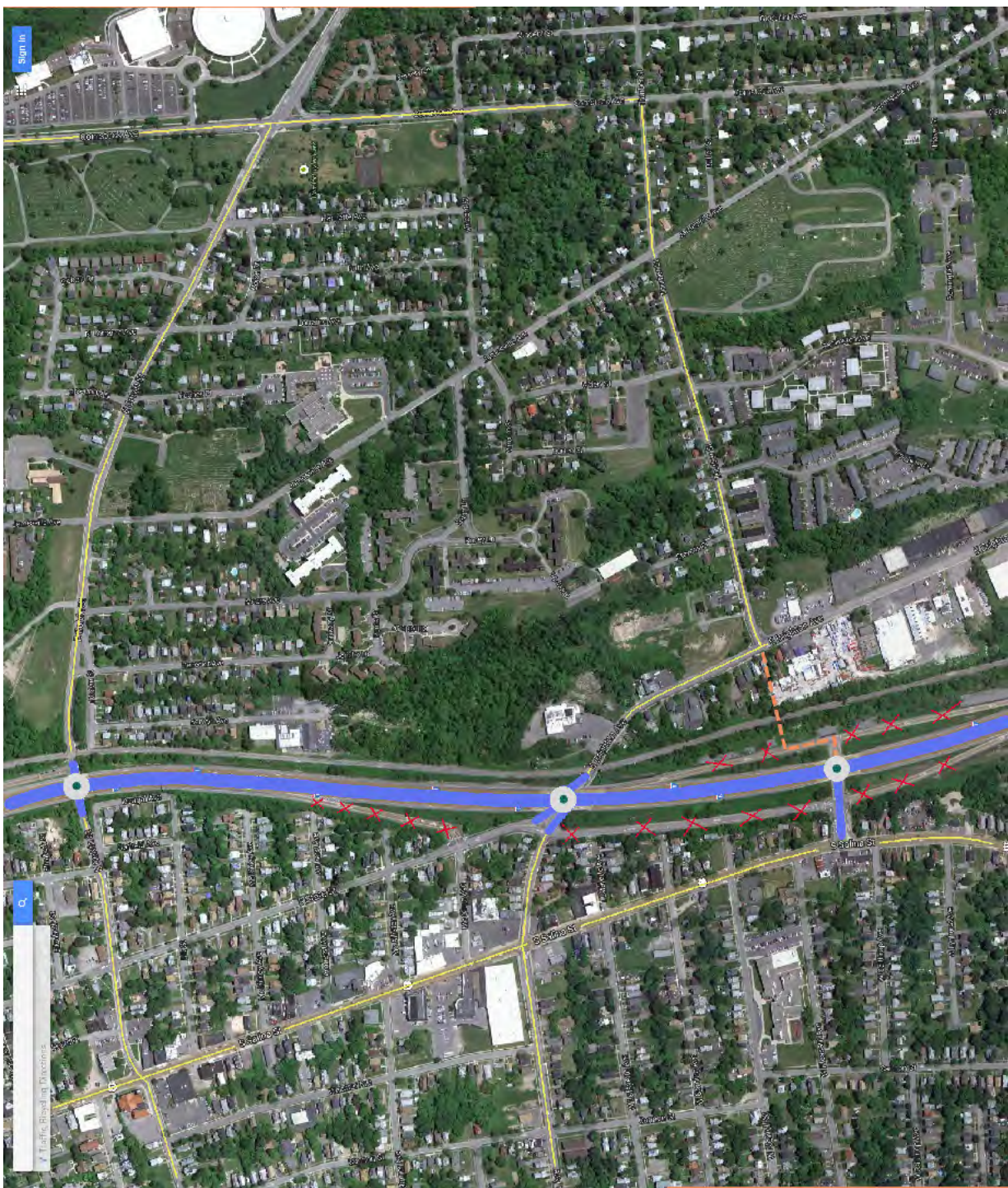


Figure 2: Heading north on Almond Blvd, showing junctions at old Exit 17, Brighton Ave, and Colvin St.

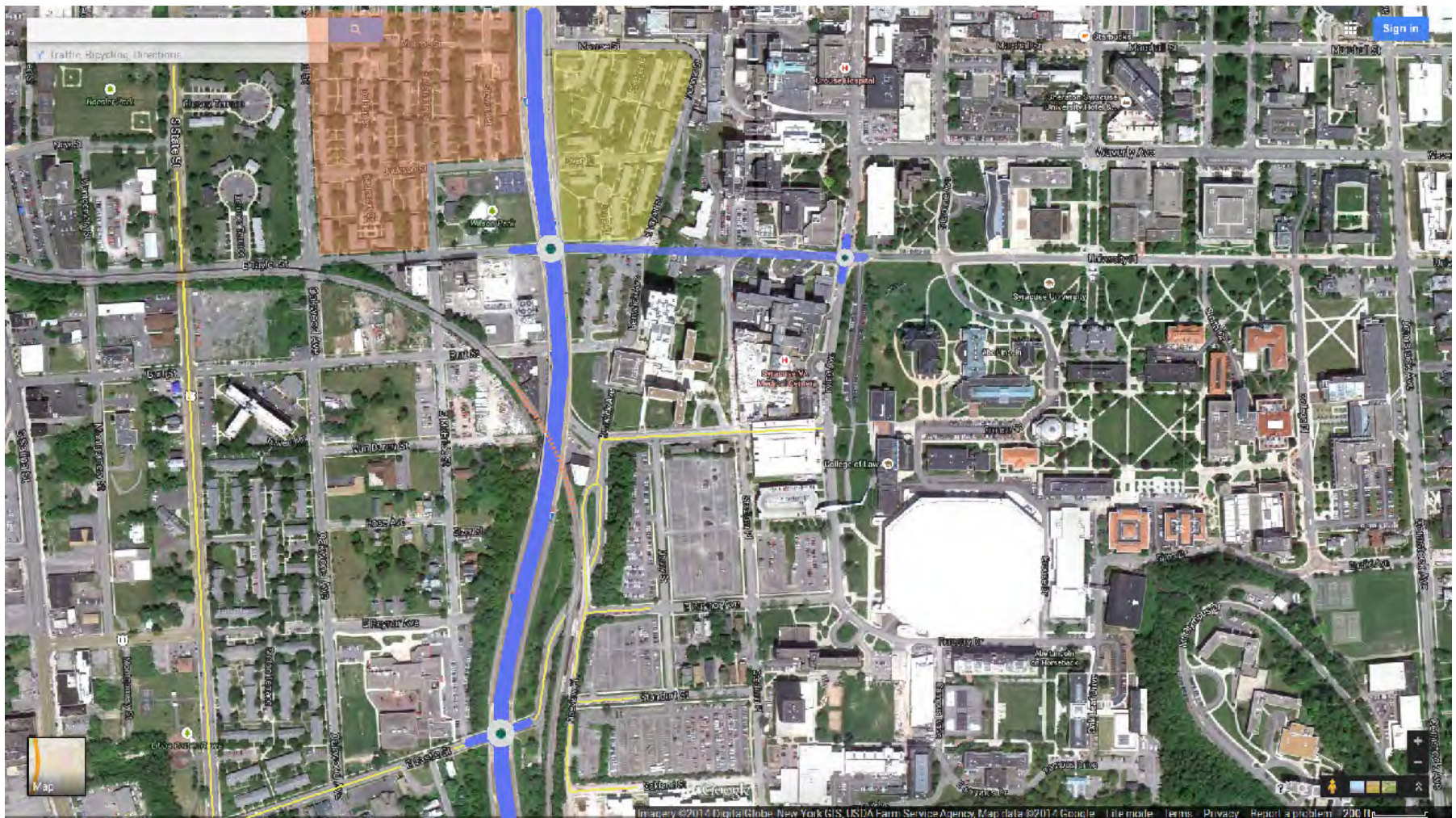


Figure 3: Almond Blvd showing public housing blocks, and junctions at Castle St and Taylor St with gateway to S.U.

New Public Housing at Taylor St

The current public housing along Taylor St is aged and unattractive. Also, as a complex of two-story buildings, it is highly inappropriate for downtown development. I suggest rebuilding the complex as mainstream 5-7 story apartment and condominium buildings; 30-50% would remain subsidized housing, and the rest would be sold or rented to the general public.

How would the Syracuse Housing Authority (SHA) finance this? First, the age of the existing housing should justify some state or federal funding for renewal. Second, the SHA should implement the state/federal subsidized housing to mortgage program³. This program allows qualified working poor to apply their subsidy (around \$600 average), plus their own contribution to rent (often \$400), toward home ownership. That is enough money to cover mortgage payments and other ownership expenses. Third, at least 1/2 of the project would be sold to apartment rental companies or to individual buyers. Fourth, property along Almond Blvd would attract a premium price for mixed-use residential and commercial development. Lastly, by building a complex of 5-7 story apartment buildings, the land required, even with increased greenspace, will be greatly reduced. So much so that the block east of Almond Blvd (figure 3, yellow area) could be sold to the university or hospitals, who appear to have a great need for additional land.

Such a project would provide numerous benefits to Syracuse: it would vastly improve the quality of life of current residents of the complex; it would preserve the current neighborhood social fabric; it would provide many with a path to home ownership (and equity in a property that will likely be fast-rising in value for some time); it would help the existing neighborhood integrate better with the broader community; it would jumpstart the development along Almond Blvd; and it would provide the university and hospitals much needed access to additional property adjacent to their own.

Elevated train tracks over boulevard at Van Buren St

It may be advantageous to raise the train tracks over the boulevard at Van Buren St. It would open the mostly vacant nearby land to development, and it would facilitate additional connections with the street grid (Castle St, Raynor St, Van Buren St, Burt St). The tracks are already elevated; however, the track viaduct may still need work to create a proper underpass for the boulevard. The berm on which I81 currently lays, would presumably require removal. It's removal will also eliminate the visual and physical barrier to east-west access. The long block between Castle St and Van Buren St would be radically transformed into attractive land for development.

A gateway for ESF Campus

There should be a way to make a well-defined and more inviting gateway to the ESF campus. For example, a junction with Almond Blvd at Raynor Ave instead of Castle St could reconnect the eastern and western portions of Raynor Ave, and create a direct route to ESF. A direct route will require crossing the train track. This might be achieved by regrading (lowering) Raynor Ave, and/or raising the train track, to create more space for an underpass. Any changes to the train track should also take into consideration the potential future of the train track as part of a new city transit service, and the desirable environment for building a more substantial train stop here. [See figure 4 on next page]

³See: <http://www.nyshcr.org/Programs/section8hcv/hcvp00.htm>

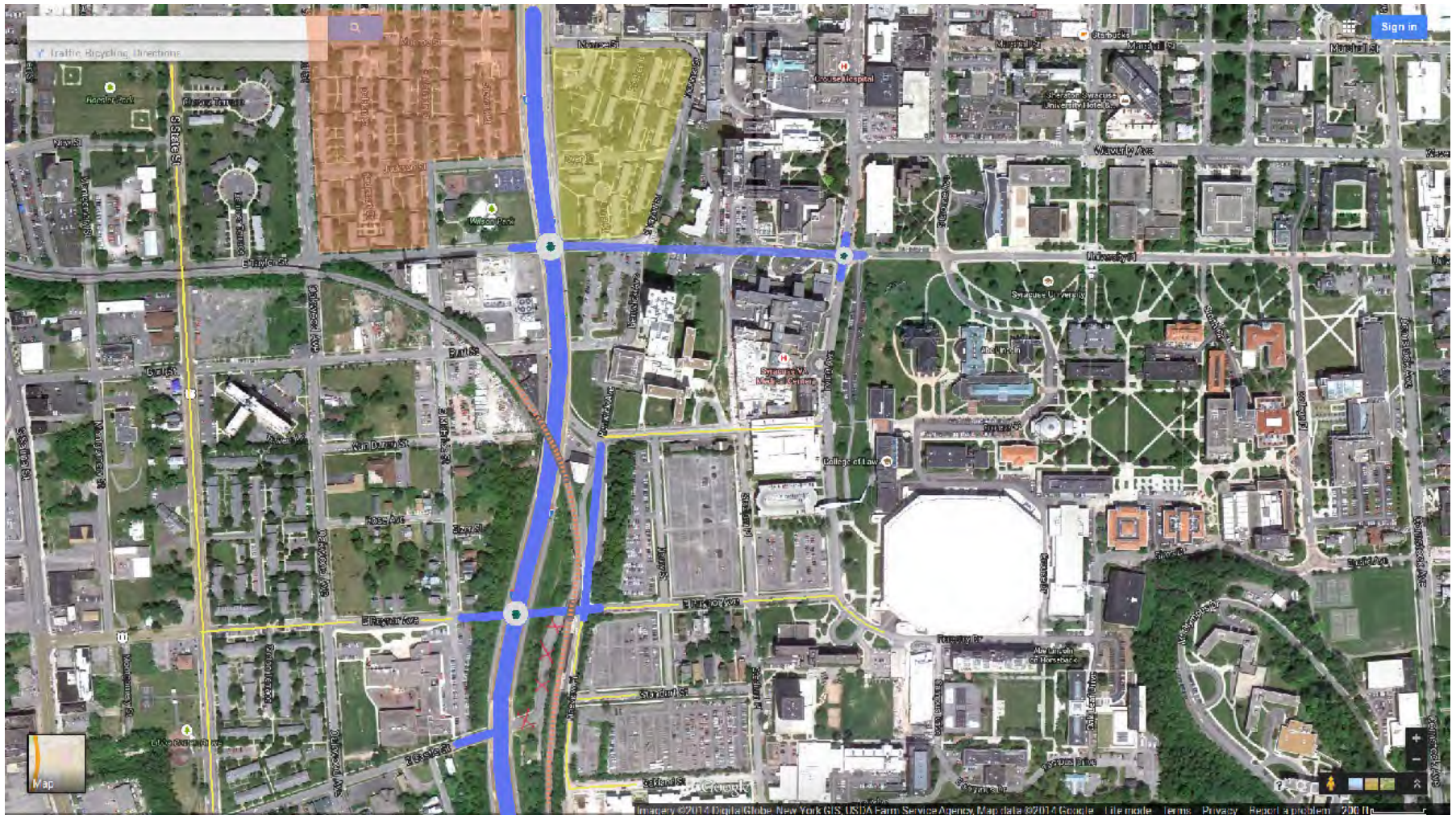


Figure 4: Alternative to figure 3, a direct gateway to ESF via reconnecting Raynor Ave.

3.2 I690 Junction with Almond Blvd (I81 S) and Genant Blvd (I81 N)

The vision is to eliminate the “spaghetti junction” previously required to connect two Interstate highways but is no-longer needed since the future connections will be with two city streets, Almond Blvd and Genant Blvd, which have much simpler design requirements.

Some history

Viewing an aerial map of Syracuse from the 1950s⁴ (before the existence of I81 and I690), one can see the old street grid that was replaced by the I81-I690 interchange. The southern portion of I81 replaced Almond St; the northern portion replaced Genant Dr; and notice how Genant Dr intersected with Salina St and met northern Montgomery St, which no-longer exists. One will also see that N Clinton St and S Clinton St were connected, and Webster’s Landing connected to Salina St. Also noteworthy is the lost dense development across all the land replaced by I81 and the interchange.

I690 was built on an a long-existing railroad bed, which the city grew around, so it didn’t have much impact on the street grid, with the major exception of the I81-I690 interchange. I81, on the other hand, just didn’t fit on the street grid and had to be elevated.

So, before I81, a northbound motorist might have taken Almond Blvd→Erie Blvd→Montgomery St→Genant Dr. But this is misleading because there were/are several northbound streets parallel to Almond St; the south/north or east/west path one might take varied widely and depended on one’s proximity to any of the streets mentioned above. The point here is that traffic in Syracuse before I81 functioned on the basis of well-dispersed traffic making full use of the street grid. And this when there were 75,000 more inhabitants than today.

I will go farther out on a limb than most and suggest that Syracuse today would be better off (economically, culturally, and traffic-wise) if both I81 and I690 were eliminated from the downtown area and replaced with boulevards, and the street grid rebuilt similar to the 1950s. However, since this may seem too scary an idea to some people, I propose a plan that is more similar to what we have today, but makes better use of the street grid, improves downtown traffic, opens vast amount of land for development, and paves the way for a far more attractive central city.

Two Boulevards

Following the cues of the 1950s street grid, I propose replacing I81 through Syracuse by creating two boulevards on the two pre-existing streets I81 replaced: Almond St and Genant Dr. The new boulevards would connect to each other indirectly via the segment of I690 that spans between them. Specifically, join the new Almond Blvd and I690 via an underpass roundabout that connects Almond Blvd, I690 ramps, and Catherine St; flow the new Genant Blvd to S Clinton St and join with I690 via an underpass roundabout that connects Genant Blvd, I690 ramps, and S Clinton St. In addition, redirect Butternut St straight across Genant Blvd (as originally existed). [See figure 6 on page 15]

This solution provides the following advantages:

1. the I81-I690 interchange is completely eliminated, and it transforms a dozen city blocks into new prime development land;

⁴See <http://aerial-ny.library.cornell.edu/photos/onondaga/1951/ARX-3H-22>

2. the elimination of numerous viaducts and bridges will significantly reduce project costs and long-run maintenance;
3. by flowing Genant Blvd to S Clinton St the number of bridges over Salina St are reduced from 3 to 1, and a significant stretch of the street becomes available for development;
4. N Clinton St is reconnected with S Clinton St (via Genant Blvd); Laurel St (Salt St) is reconnected to the Franklin Square junction, as it once was;
5. The Franklin Square entrance and Webster's Landing, devoid of ramps and Butternut St, become open to new development and reconfiguration as a much more attractive and calm pedestrian-friendly environment, while remaining adjacent to all the fast paths through town, something that should please the residents of Franklin Square.
6. only one elevated I690 roadbed (perhaps only 4-lane, plus a bicycle/pedestrian lane) between the Almond Blvd and Genant Blvd roundabouts will be needed (see rationale below);
7. last but not least, the attractiveness of downtown will be greatly enhanced.

A Bridge

As a final consideration, in lieu of rebuilding a traditional viaduct, consider rebuilding the I690 elevated section between Almond Blvd and Genant Blvd junctions as a curving suspension bridge across the central part of this span. It would be taller, slimmer, and provide attractive clear space below for a park or other development. The bridge would become a new attractive and iconic architectural landmark of Syracuse, and a prominent symbol of the I81 redevelopment project. [See figure 6 on page 15]

Given the huge cost savings (I presume 100s of millions of dollars) from eliminating the many viaducts and bridges of the current I690-I81 interchange, the cost of an iconic suspension bridge should fall well within budget.

Option: I690 boulevard?

I690 is an "Interstate" in name only. Situated just 2 miles south of and parallel to I90, and spanning only from the Syracuse near eastern suburb to its western suburb, it is mostly a feeder road for Syracuse. So, it follows that the majority of its traffic (as with I81) into Syracuse is destined for Syracuse. Recent reports indicate daily traffic on I690 reaches 130,000 (more than I81). It would be interesting to know how much of this traffic is destined for Syracuse versus through traffic. If it is mostly Syracuse traffic, I690 might lend itself to direct roundabout junctions at select points, and general boulevard treatment, at least through parts of the city. This would require decommissioning all or part of I690 as an Interstate. But, it would facilitate more and attractive junctions with the street grid, make all of the newly at-grade stretches of road attractive to development, and create a convenient corridor for east-west rapid transit, as well as a more bicycle and pedestrian friendly street-scape. In other words, what applies for I81 should be considered for I690 as well.

3.3 I690 at West St

Connect I690 and West St. via an underpass roundabout with West St and simple I690 ramps. This will greatly simplify and reduce the footprint of the connection. Also, 5 of 7 bridges over the creekwalk will be eliminated, making it more open to the sky. Newly available space will be desirable for development. Also, connect N West St directly to Evans St., and realign Evans St to its 1950s path and junction with the other roads at the entrance of Franklin Square. [See figure 6 on page 15]

3.4 Franklin Square – Webster’s Landing

In the 1950s, Genant Dr (future I81 N) intersected with Salina St; N Clinton St traveled parallel and connected with S Clinton St; at the south entrance of Franklin Square, N Franklin St connected with Evans St, S Franklin St (as today), and Laurel St (Salt St); Websters Landing connected to S Franklin St just south of the larger intersection.

This proposal flows Genant Blvd to S Clinton St where it also connects with I690 via an underpass roundabout. By placing the junction here, the Salina St bridges are reduced from 3 to 1: I690. N Clinton St flows into Genant Blvd before the I690 junction in order to reconnect with S Clinton St, mimicking its original path. Butternut St flows straight across Genant Blvd to N Clinton, as it originally did. Evans St is re-flowed from its current N Franklin St T-connection to its original connection at the Franklin Square entrance intersection (no-longer cutting through the park space near the Franklin Square entrance). Laurel St is extended to the Franklin Square entrance intersection, as it originally did. The Clinton and Laurel St connections to Genant Blvd would be via Stop sign. [See figure 6 on page 15]

The Franklin Square entrance intersection seems a good candidate for a roundabout. Also, the nearby area, de-cluttered by the removal of the current I81 off-ramps and elevated butternut St, will provide substantial new desirable land for development. The combination of a roundabout, new development, and pedestrian friendly streets will create a much calmer and more attractive entrance to Franklin Square.

Websters Landing, in its current position, is in the way of the I690 junction, and would have to be removed. Also, if I690 is to be rebuilt along this stretch, and if it is currently too close to the VIP Structures building to fit a westbound off-ramp, consider placing the new viaduct 50 or so feet further south; there appears to be enough space to do so. In any case, the current VIP Structures property would be accessible via Genant Blvd and Salina St, and indirectly via N Clinton St and Laurel St.

As to determining the specific paths of N Clinton St and Laurel St (Salt St) extensions, the major points considered were to:

1. re-connect N Clinton St to S Clinton St;
2. re-establish road paths that form reasonably sized city blocks and make newly available land desirable for development;
3. make Clinton St and Laurel St as straight as feasible to provide better views (especially Laurel St -> Franklin Square);
4. create an attractive entrance to Franklin Square and its immediate surroundings.

3.5 N Warren St, N Montgomery St, and Hickory St

Removing the I81-I690 interchange reveals a rather large block bound by Salina St, Pearl St, and Willow St. Montgomery St used to extend all the way to Salina St, meeting with old Genant Dr, breaking this block into two. If desired, this block could be divided again by, for example, extending Hickory St to Herald Pl, and N Warren St to intersect with Hickory St. Or, N Montgomery St could be re-established to Salina St. [See dashed lines in figure 6 on page 15].



Figure 5: Example of a curving suspension bridge. It would carry part of the span of I690 between Almond Blvd and Genant Blvd. (This image is of a pedestrian bridge; it was chosen for its visual effect. There are other bridges of similar structural design for motor vehicles, such as a double-sided one in Sao Paulo, Brazil.)

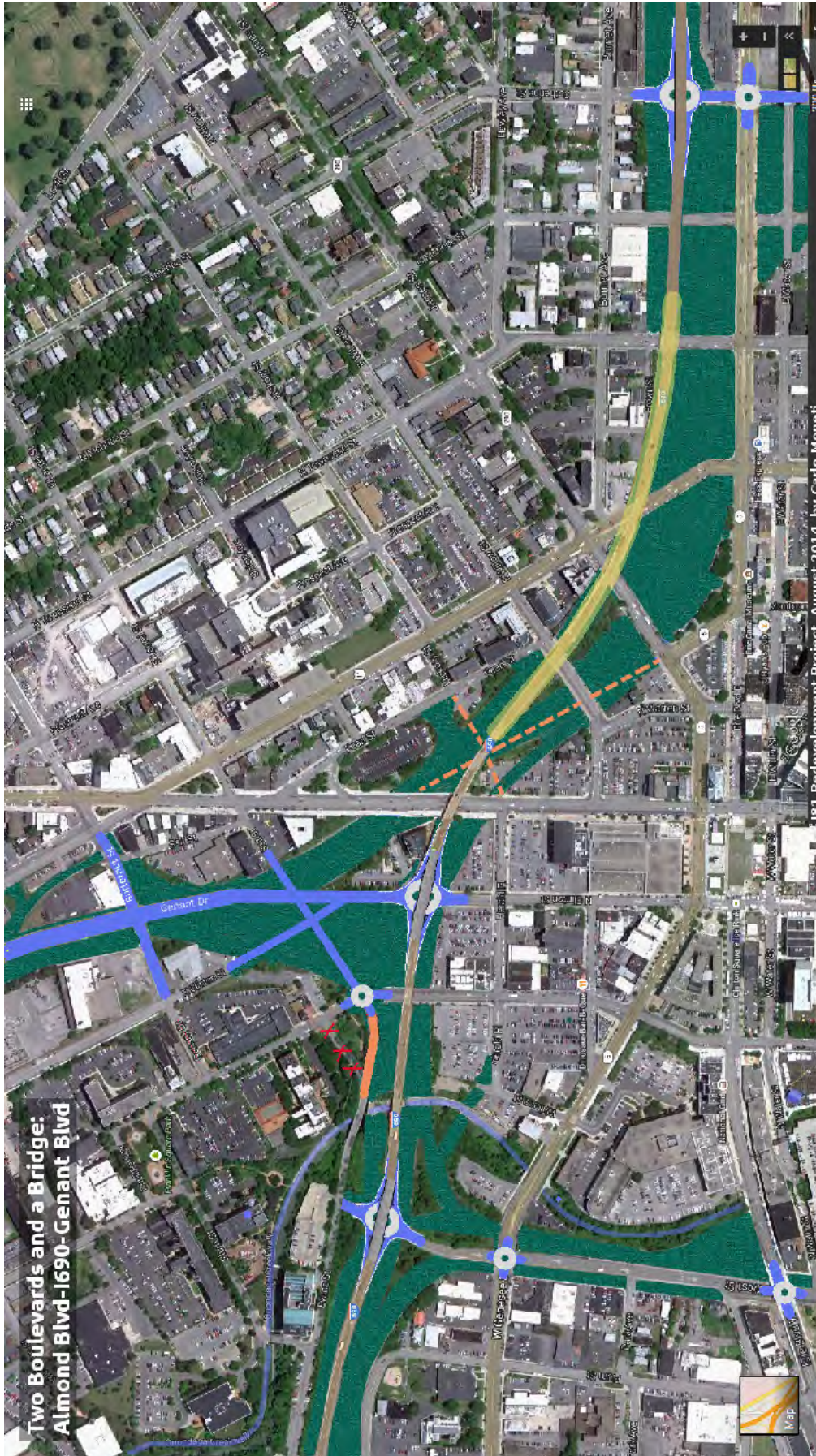


Figure 6: **Two boulevards and a bridge:** Almond Blvd and Genant Blvd connected via I690, carried in part by a curving suspension bridge (yellow), a new iconic architecture for Syracuse, and a prominent symbol of the I81 Redevelopment Project.

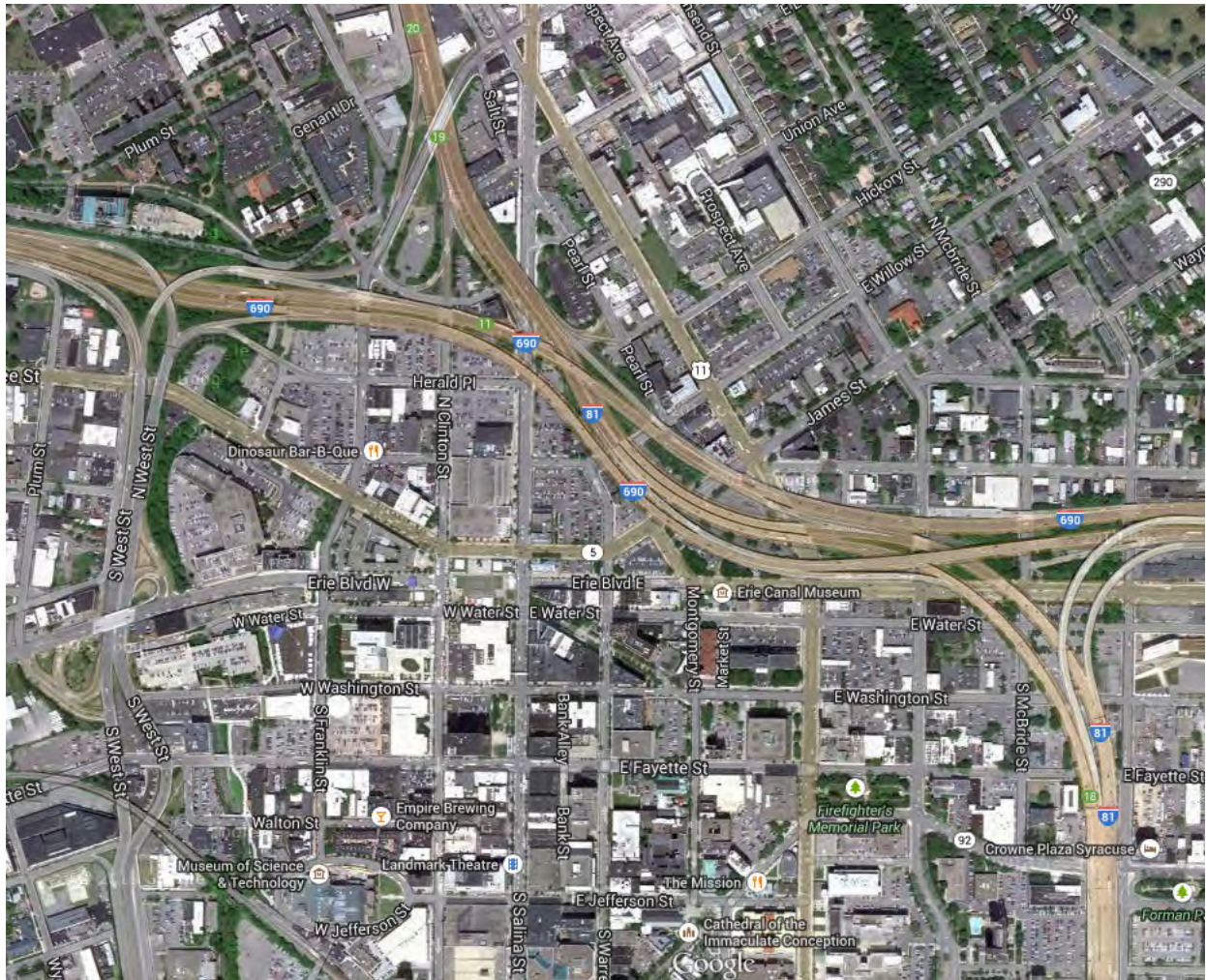


Figure 7: Downtown Syracuse today.

3.6 West St, Clinton St, Adams St, Harrison St, and Warren St

With a well implemented I81/I690 redevelopment that maximizes traffic dispersion, West St, Clinton St, Adams St, Harrison St, and Warren St will no-longer need to function as arterials for the Interstate on-ramps and off-ramps, and can be returned to normal-size 2-way city streets. West St can be narrowed to a 4-lane road, with perhaps a center turning lane if needed, and the broken cross streets could be reconnected via Stop. Similarly, Adams St (downtown) can be narrowed to 4 lanes. The smaller footprint of these two streets, along with new roadside frontage, will result in calmer and more pedestrian friendly streets desirable for new real estate development. Also, consider a roundabout at the—already oversize—intersection of Salina St, Onondaga St, and Harrison St. Additional roundabouts downtown may also make sense. [See figure 8 on page 17]

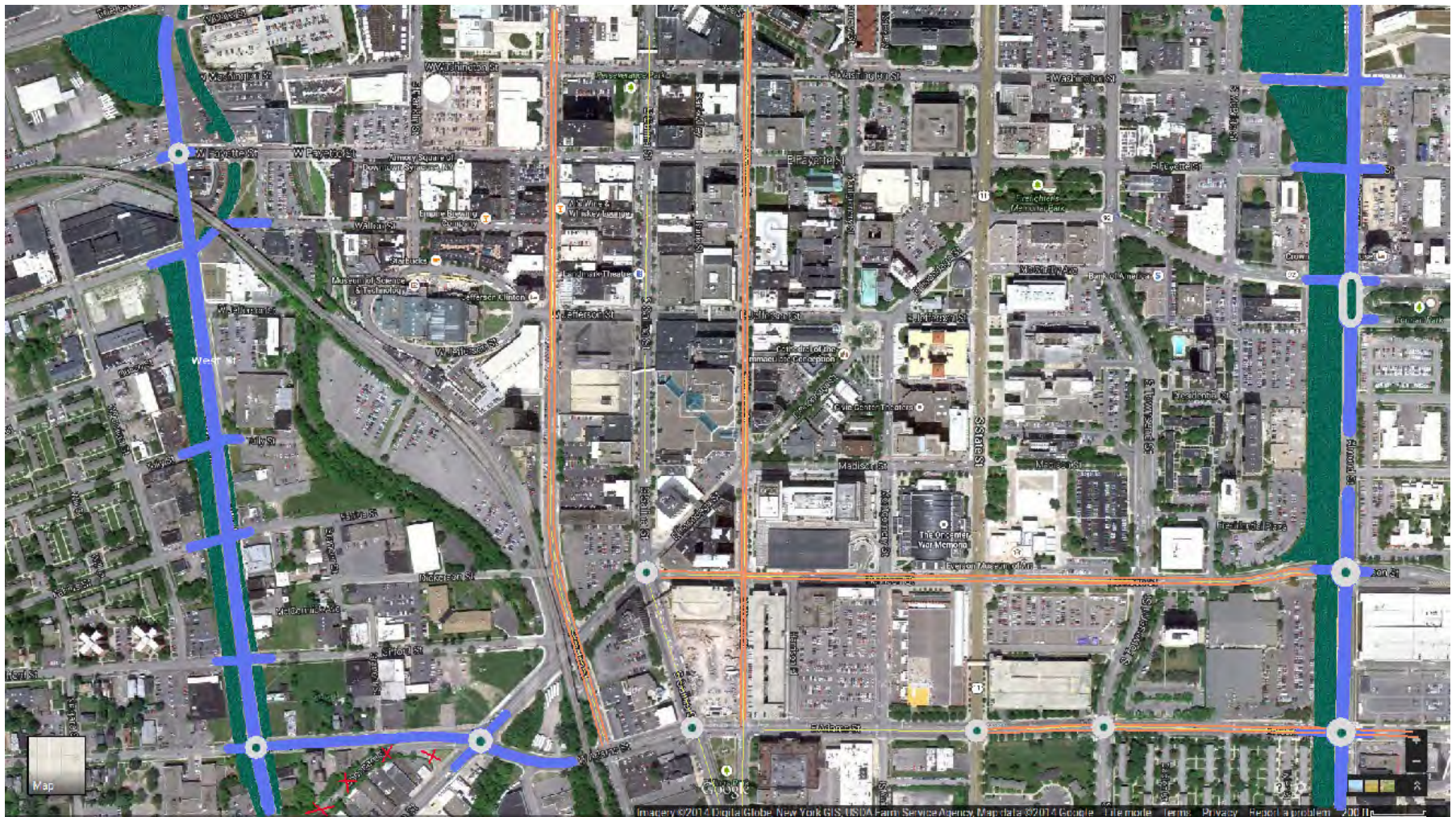


Figure 8: West St, downtown, and Almond Blvd showing roundabouts and some 1-way streets converted to 2-way (orange lines) ; additional roundabouts may be appropriate in this area.

3.7 New junction at I690 E and Crouse Ave for University hill access

In order to provide an additional and more accessible northern route to the university and hospitals, I propose creating an I690 junction at perhaps Crouse Ave, and return S Crouse Ave to a 2-way street. Conveniently, N Crouse Ave connects with Lodi St., a major corridor to the north side business district. A new northerly route to the university hill will relieve a significant amount of I690 university hill destined traffic that currently flows to Adams St. This is one more element to disperse traffic.

3.8 I81 North (I690 to Destiny Mall)

Genant Dr follows I81 all the way to Destiny Mall. I propose merging Genant Blvd and I81 N into a new Genant Blvd, a 4-lane boulevard with perhaps a center turning lane. This will facilitate better connections with the street grid. The slimmer roadbed should provide sufficient space for development along the road, including possibly a greenway (street car, bike, and pedestrian path) all the way to Destiny Mall.

In addition, two major roads, Lodi St and Salina St, run roughly parallel to Genant Dr to downtown. Provide easy access to these streets near the Destiny Mall entrance to give traffic more opportunity to disperse.

Currently, there are five roads that cross I81 between I690 and Destiny Mall. They are all bridges. There are also four on-ramps and off-ramps. I suggest at least 4 junction be made to the new boulevard. Which streets to connect requires deeper analysis, but as a starting point of discussion, I propose the following junctions [See figure 9 on page 19]:

1. **Butternut St Bridge** – realign Butternut St straight across Genant Blvd to N Clinton (as originally existed); keep bridge or connect via roundabout;
2. **Spencer St Bridge** – keep bridge or connect via Stop on Spencer St;
3. **Kirkpatrick St** – straighten W Kirkpatrick St to realign with N Kirkpatrick St and connect via roundabout (presumes more traffic);
4. **Court St Bridge** – convert to a Stop on Court St; realign Court St to its old path straight to N Clinton St; remove W Court St to Kirkpatrick St (see previous item); consider re-extending Court St to Solar St; alternatively, keep bridge and W Court St.
5. **Bear St Bridge** – convert to a roundabout (presumes more traffic);
6. **Hiawatha Blvd Bridge** – keep as is; alternatively, lower to a roundabout with Genant Blvd and Destiny Mall entrance, which would eliminate a bridge and increase developable land along the road;
7. **Destiny Mall entrance at Genant Blvd** – convert to a roundabout connecting Genant Blvd W, Destiny Mall, Genant Blvd E, and an extension to N Salina St, which intersects with Hiawatha Blvd; Hiawatha Blvd traffic is preserved.

Since the long-run goal is to have full mixed-use development along this 1.2 mile stretch of road, consider extending some or all of the northside secondary streets to T-connections with Genant Blvd via a Stop. This will ease pedestrian and bicycle access to the future businesses along this road and create better integration with the neighborhood. Similarly, consider that the boulevard has a hill on the north side overlooking the Inner Harbor and may lend itself to residential development in the future, and so a pedestrian and bicycle friendly bridge at Court St, as well as a Court St extended to Solar St (as originally existed), may ultimately be desired for easy neighborhood access to the coming development at the Inner Harbor.

The advantages of this solution is that it creates a speedy and continuously moving boulevard, with space for roadside development, and strong integration with the northside neighborhood.

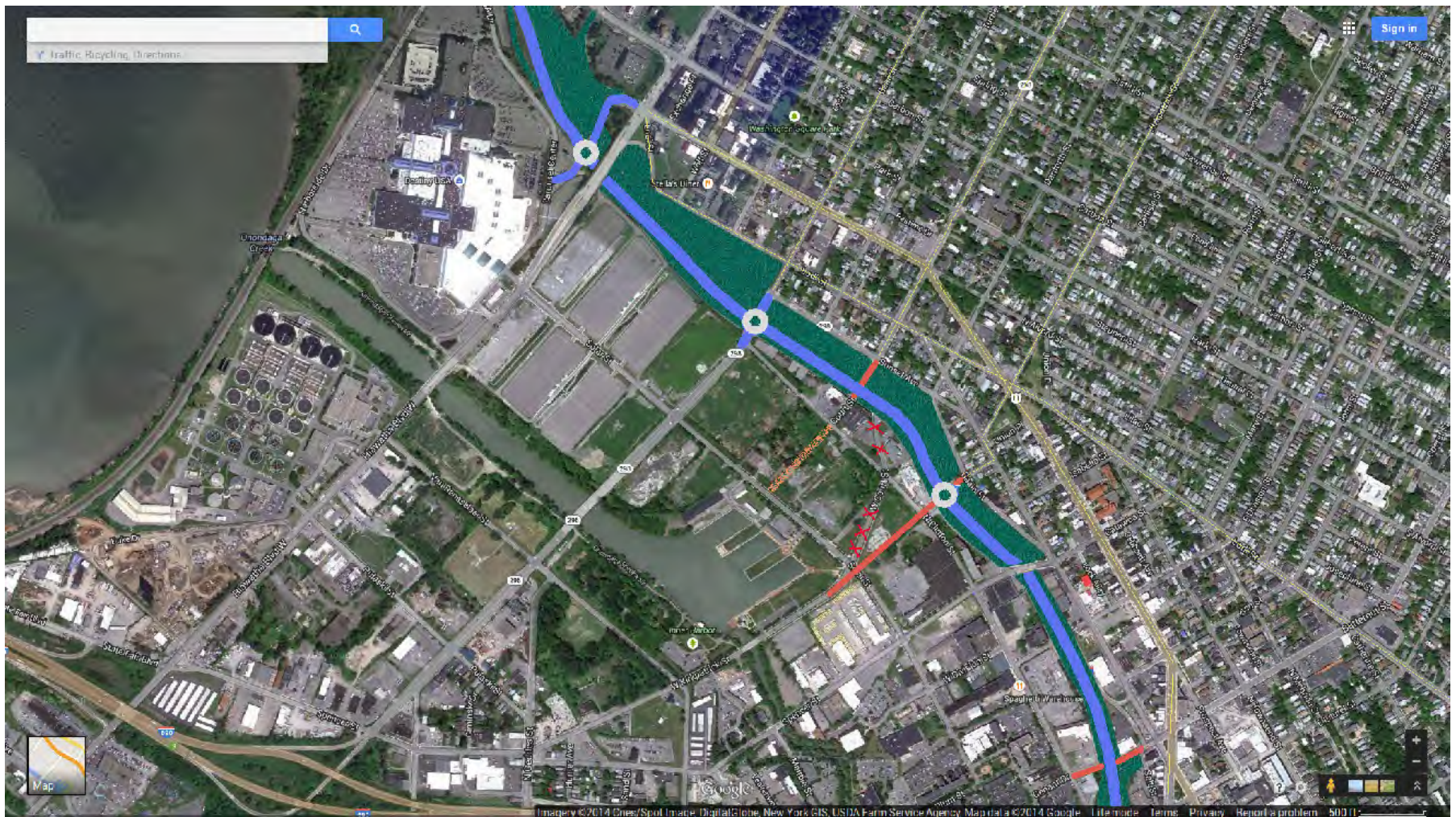


Figure 9: Genant Blvd from Butternut St to Destiny Mall.

3.9 I81 North (Destiny Mall to Liverpool)

This area has another “spaghetti junction” that could be eliminated if it is no longer subject to Interstate junction requirements. I propose the I81 roadbed be redirected along the path of the I81 Liverpool exit (remove the current I81 roadbed to Destiny Mall); join Old Liverpool Rd and Buckley Rd via roundabout (1); join this (e.g., Old Liverpool Rd) extension with Onondaga Lake Pkwy and the I81 exit roadbed via roundabout (2); have two roads exit the roundabout eastward: Park St and Genant Blvd; Genant Blvd meets Destiny Mall via roundabout (3) that also connects indirectly with N. Salina St at Hiawatha Blvd. Genant Blvd then continues along a merged I81/Genant Dr path to I690. The earthmoving to reconfigure these roads should be done with an eye to create suitable grade for future development.

The advantages of this solution are: 1) the unattractive “spaghetti junction” is eliminated, greatly reducing the number of bridges and roadway miles to maintain; 2) the new simpler, calmer, and more attractive roadway creates a much more inviting entrance to Liverpool; 3) it offers a more bicycle and pedestrian-friendly road; and 4) it creates desirable land for future development.

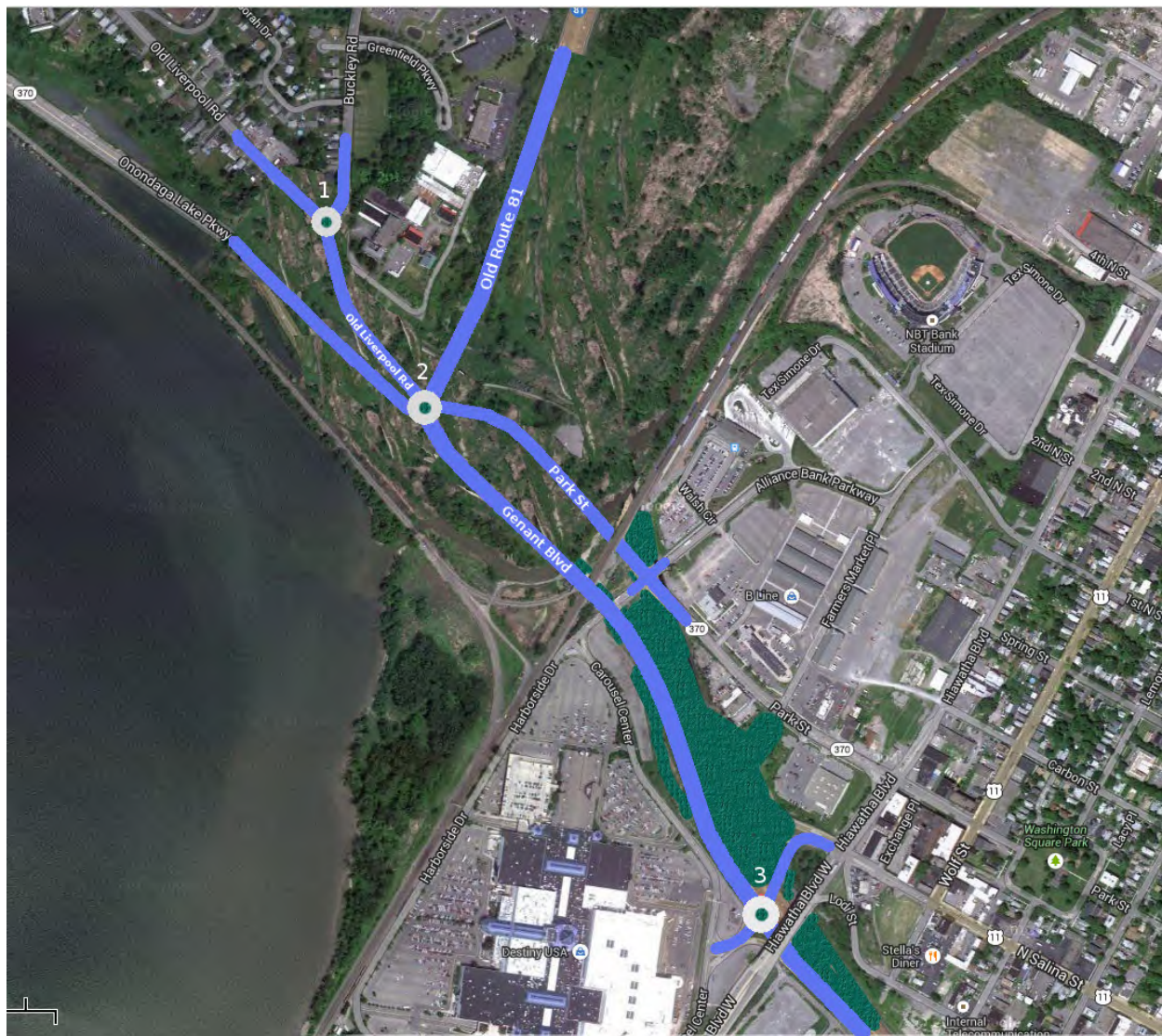


Figure 10: Genant Blvd to old I81 Liverpool Exit. The “spaghetti junction” is eliminated.

4 Voiced Concerns for the Boulevard Option

Travel times

There is concern that travel times will greatly increase with a boulevard. This is understandable because the original boulevard options did not explain how techniques of street grid connection and traffic dispersal would change traffic patterns and eliminate the downtown traffic bottlenecks created by the highway as most traffic is channeled to one or two exits. For this reason, when estimating time differences between highway and boulevard options, it's not how fast you reach downtown; it's how fast you reach your parking. With better traffic patterns, the time to park could be less than today. Even a cross-town trip from south I81-I481 junction to Destiny Mall (5 miles) will only take 2-3 more minutes (it will also be more pleasant). Properly implemented, the boulevard option will improve traffic overall.

Ambulance access to hospitals

Most ambulances probably do not reach the hospitals via I81; they come from various directions via city streets. They have sirens. They can cruise down all roads speedily. Moreover, While Upstate hospital is next to an I81 exit, St. Joseph's and Community General hospitals are not, and yet they manage just fine. The same surely holds true for many hospitals in cities across the country. This concern seems unfounded. In any case, the boulevards will be fairly fast, and their better connection to the street grid may well reduce ambulance travel times.

I81 Interstate designation through the city

Some mall and hotel interests at the north end of Syracuse want to keep I81 Interstate designation through the city where it passes their businesses. Apparently they believe travelers will miss them otherwise. This seems an unfounded concern. Any mall seekers from outside the region will know where they are going if malls are their goal. This is equally true with hotel seekers; if they want to stop in Syracuse, they'll take the old I81 road into the city and see everything they can see now. Moreover, travelers today have GPS navigators and smart phones to alert them to all these things. Optionally, the combined new boulevards and I690 connector could be given a secondary name such as "I81 local" or "old I81" or some similar convention, which suggests the main road from the highway. In any case, travelers from the north and from I90 will continue to have highway access to those northside businesses. Travelers from the south will experience very little extra travel time, probably only 2-3 minutes, since the boulevards will be fairly fast and traffic stops will be few, and possibly none.

5 Other Considerations

- **Pedestrian and bicycle ways through Syracuse** – The City should consider selecting at least one east-west and one north-south road to be designated and suitably zoned and developed to be a bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit oriented passage. It would be zone for mixed-use development (residential, shops, restaurants, small office, etc.).
- **Public transit** – Consider providing space along the Almond Blvd-I690-Genant Blvd path for a (rapid) transit service. Consider the same for an east-west passage.

- **“Monument Blvd”** – Since the two new boulevards will have several roundabouts, and larger roundabouts are typically adorned with a statue, a fountain, or other artwork, it may be fitting to give this corridor a secondary name such as “*Monument Blvd*” or “*Monument Dr*”.
- **Name for I81 roadbed from Liverpool Exit to I481** – it will continue to exist as a limited access highway to the city. However, it will need a new name. Consider naming it “*Destiny Highway*”—if someone is willing to pay handsomely for the naming rights.
- **Fiber-optic network** – The City should consider laying fiber-optic conduit and cables along all the roads to be built or rebuilt; a community owned and controlled fiber-optic broadband network is needed infrastructure for the future prosperity of Syracuse. Laying cable is least expensive when done during road construction.
- **Renew and re-envision public housing** – The city should consider reconstructing other existing low-grade public housing throughout the city as mixed-use, subsidized and non-subsidized, rentals and condominiums, in the way described for the Taylor St area housing. [See Section 3.1 on page 9].
- **A grant of budget surplus should go with a low-cost plan** – Of the 3 general redevelopment options DOT is considering—boulevard (\$1B), viaduct rebuild (\$2B), or tunnel (\$3B)—the boulevard is by far the least costly. I suggest that if DOT is ultimately willing to budget \$2B-\$3B for the project, and Syracuse chooses the least expensive option, the state should consider giving the balance of the middle-road budget, e.g., \$1B, to Syracuse to spend on various other infrastructure currently needed. That will also add interesting context as local residents consider which general I81 redevelopment plan they think is best for Syracuse’s future.

6 Conclusion

This proposal for a boulevard option provides a quite fast north-south corridor through the city, greater access to the street grid to disperse most traffic before it reaches downtown, and introduces roundabouts in select places to keep traffic flowing. Numerous roads and bridges are eliminated, which will greatly reduce the projected rebuilding costs, as well as long-run maintenance costs. This proposal does not require any properties to be condemned; instead, several property owners may gain odd parcels of land adjacent to their property. Downtown will be hugely more attractive with the complete elimination of the I690-I81 “spaghetti junction” and the east-west barrier created by I81; Salina St will have only one bridge crossing it; and the creekwalk will have 5 of 7 bridges removed. Dozens of city blocks will be made newly available for prime development, and many more adjacent blocks will become more valuable. Syracuse University and the hospitals would gain access to much needed land for expansion, and a new era in public housing development could be started.

Contact

Carlo Moneti
 707 Sumner Ave.
 Syracuse, NY 13210
 (315) 475-0398
 cmoneti@twcnny.rr.com

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: Kate Monto
Address: 825 Hillside Street City: Syracuse State: NY Zip: 13208
Phone: (315) 455-6331 Email: catherine.monto@gmail.com

Comments: Keep I-81 the way that it is! Merely because
something is proposed as CHANGE does not mean that it is
a needed change. I-81 serves its purpose! Leave it the layout
it is - it works for the Central New York area. Just because
something is aesthetically pleasing does not make it better
than the alternative. Save I-81!

Please continue comments on back if needed.

**Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014**

Mail comments to:
I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:
www.i81opportunities.org
Information Hotline:
toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: Nancy Mudrick

Address: 215 Ridgcrest Rd

City: DeWitt

State: NY Zip: 13214

Phone: 315 446-4707 Email: nmudrick@gmail.com

Comments:

I am supportive of a plan that does not keep the elevated highway in place as a visual division of downtown and ~~which~~ creates a dark, scary, + unsafe path for those who would walk from one side to the other. I would like to see a broad boulevard (but it could have a tunnel beneath). A depressed below grade stretch is a 3rd choice, but preferred to the elevated. The benefits ^{of the Blvd.} will be a revitalized + economically expanding neighborhood along Almond + the related streets. I saw that happen in the Hayes Valley area of S.F., CA, after they pulled the highway down. Although I live in the suburbs, I think the welfare of the city should take priority over the convenience of those of us who live outside and travel in. Vancouver is a city without freeways + with a lot of traffic, but it is active + vibrant and people love living there and visiting. That counter balances the small inconvenience of traffic. Moreover, it has stimulated better public transit + more bicycle use. The interchange of 690E to 81S is very dangerous + I would urge

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Comments (continued from front):

you to work with equal public information and input on how to rework that interchange. Whether you are on 81 S ~~contin~~ on your way to the Adams St. exit or entering 81 S from the west, the ramp has too short a merge area, no visibility until you're at the merge, & no shoulder. ~~etc~~ To the north of the interchange 81 weaves left/right in a confusing way, as well.

I've seen the graphics for the stretch over almond, but nothing for the area north of Erie Blvd.



U.S. Department of Transportation
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New York State Department of Transportation

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Retain

To:dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>;

Last name - Murphy jr

First name - Thomas

Affiliation - interested citizen

Address 1 - 343 howlett hill rd

Address 2 -

City - camillus

State - Ny

Zip - 13031

Phone - 3156635278

Email Address - tom4jr@aol.com

Question or Comment - I think the idea of the hybrid tunnel is a great one . Creating more space above ground would be good I think . I think a garden with a conservatory would be an attractive use of space



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 2
290 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

DEC 11 2013

REC-
DEC 18 2013
Operating Division

Debra Nelson
New York State Department of Transportation
50 Wolf Road
Albany, New York 12232

Dear Ms. Nelson:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the Federal Highway Administration/New York State Department of Transportation's Scoping Initiation Packet for the I-81 Viaduct Project. The project would entail the rehabilitation, reconstruction or replacement of Interstate 81 from about Van Buren or Castle Streets to about Hiawatha Boulevard in the City of Syracuse, New York.

The environmental impact statement (EIS) for this project should include the following:

1. A full discussion of the purpose and need of the proposed project.
2. An evaluation of the alternatives to the proposed project, including reasonable alternatives not within the jurisdiction of the lead agency.
3. A comprehensive evaluation of cumulative, indirect, and secondary impacts. The cumulative impacts analysis should consider the environmental impacts of the project as a whole, and, if any, as one of number of the other proposed and/or approved actions in the area that would have the potential to impact the same resources.
4. Descriptions of the aquatic and terrestrial environments to be impacted by each alternative during construction and operation. These descriptions should include appropriate air quality data, water quality data (ground water and runoff), traffic analysis during construction, the identification of flood plains and cultural resources, and the identification of other significant environmental resources adjacent to the project.
5. In 1993, Council of Environmental Quality guidance, Pollution Prevention and the National Environmental Policy Act, encouraged federal agencies to include the concepts of pollution prevention in EISs during the scoping alternatives analysis, mitigation measure development, and decision-making processes. We suggest that all pollution prevention practices for highway construction and operations be discussed within the EIS.

6. Environmental Justice concerns should be analyzed and discussed in the EIS regarding the neighborhoods adjacent to the highway.

7. Several schools and hospitals are located within a mile of the I-81 Viaduct project. The EIS should consider exposure and impacts to children and sensitive sources from mobile source air pollutants from construction and operations of each alternative.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact Lingard Knutson of my staff at (212) 637-3747.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Grace Musumeci", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Grace Musumeci, Chief
Environmental Review Section
Clean Air and Sustainability Division

From: no-reply@dot.state.ny.us
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Subject: Contact the Project Team
Date: Tuesday, April 15, 2014 1:05:40 PM

Last name - Nerode
First name - Nathanael
Affiliation - none
Address 1 -
Address 2 -
City - Ithaca
State - NY
Zip - 14850
Phone -

Email Address - neroden@fastmail.fm

Question or Comment - I've said this before -- several years ago -- but the only reasonable option is the at-grade/surface option. No other alternatives are reasonable or feasible.

It seems like you are bending over backwards to propose other, pointlessly expensive options. Given the rather low road traffic level, there is no reason in the world to do anything other than the surface option, and it would make the entire area much more attractive to drive to.

I 81

Linda Newhart <llcnewhart@aol.com>

Mon 10/13/2014 3:50 PM

Retain

To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>;

It would be a huge mistake to change 81. I worked downtown and the convenience was time saving and the traffic flowed very well. I also had to go to the VA hospital everyday for three months because of my father being there.

You want the tractor trailers to use 481. There is plenty of traffic on that highway also. WHY would you want to put another Erie Blvd. in the heart of the city. That's just crazy. More traffic lights, stop and go traffic. Why is it that people always want to change things. Can you just leave well enough alone. FIX IT. Do Not change it.

Thank you.

This email is free from viruses and malware because [avast! Antivirus](#) protection is active.



Town of Salina
OFFICE OF THE TOWN SUPERVISOR

Salina Town Hall
201 School Road – Room 112
Liverpool, NY 13088
(315) 457-6661
Fax: (315) 457-4476
www.salina.ny.us
supervisor@salina.ny.us
Twitter: @TownofSalina
FB: townofsalina

Colleen Gunnip
Deputy Town Supervisor

Mark A. Nicotra
Town Supervisor
Nancy A. O'Neil
Secretary to the Supervisor

Salina Supervisor's Comments Regarding the Future of Interstate 81:

November 13, 2013

Good afternoon. My name is Mark Nicotra. I am the Supervisor of the Town of Salina and represent nearly 34,000 residents and hundreds of business owners that call Salina their home.

The Town of Salina is located at the "Crossroads of NY", where Interstates 81 and 90 come together. The proximity to the Interstate system is Salina's greatest asset in attracting and retaining businesses and also making Salina a convenient place to live.

In the 1950s the area of 7th North Street and Buckley Road in Liverpool was dominated by farmland and open spaces. Fast-forward to 2013 and that same area is now dominated by hotels, restaurants and a host of other businesses. The reason...Interstate 81.

Thousands of jobs, which in turn buy gas, eat meals, get prescriptions and have a drink after work. The effects of less access to Salina will domino across all walks of life and all industries.

When Interstate 81 was being built in the 1960's, there is no doubt that it isolated and tore apart a Syracuse neighborhood. Lets not repeat history by tearing down Interstate 81 and cutting off the Northern Suburbs.

Replacing I-81 with a boulevard and re-routing that traffic will rob businesses along the highway of a vital revenue source, putting jobs and the local economy at risk. City streets will be flooded with more cars and congestion, meaning longer commutes and increased response times for first-responders during emergencies. More idling at traffic lights will lead to more vehicle emissions and air pollution. And towns outside Syracuse could be faced with more heavy truck traffic barreling down their roads.

I urge you to abandon the boulevard idea and instead focus on alternatives that will keep I-81 flowing through Syracuse and better serving the community's needs.

The Interstate 81 project is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to impact the future of our region; let's make sure it's the right impact to drive Central New York into the future.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Nicotra".

Mark Nicotra
Supervisor
Town of Salina

PS The Town of Salina has a dozen hotels, which account for nearly 25% of the room occupancy tax collected in Onondaga County. (*Onondaga County Comptrollers Office*) Without the presence of Interstate 81 this could affect the County as a whole.

Moody's has assigned a very favorable rating to the Town of Salina based on its proximity to Interstate 81:

Moody's Investors Service has assigned a Aa3 rating to Town of Salina's (NY) \$1.902 million Public Improvement (Serial) Bonds, June 2013

STABLE TAX BASE WITH SOME CONCENTRATION

Moody's expects the town's \$1.6 billion tax base will continue to experience modest growth given its close proximity to the City of Syracuse (G.O. rated A1, negative). Acting as a transfer point between the New York State Thruway and Interstate 81, the town has a significant commercial presence (39% of tax base) consisting of hotels, gas stations, and restaurants geared in part toward travelers across these thoroughfares.

From: [Mark Nicotra](#)
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Subject: Comments for Scoping meeting...
Date: Thursday, November 14, 2013 12:49:02 PM
Attachments: [I81_ScopingComments_11-13-13.pdf](#)

To Whom It May Concern:

Attached are my comments for the initial scoping session.

Thanks..

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November 13, 2013

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Town of Salina

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Mark Nicotra

Salina Supervisor

201 School Road
Liverpool, NY 13088
(315) 457-6661

[EMAIL](#) [Website](#) [FaceBook](#) [Twitter](#) [LinkedIn](#)



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supervisor@salina.ny.us
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Mark Nicotra
Supervisor
Town of Salina

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January 6, 2014

Mr. Jonathan McDade
New York Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Building
7th Floor, Room 719
Clinton Avenue and N. Pearl Street
Albany, New York 12207

Ms. Debra Nelson
NYS DOT
50 Wolf Road
Albany, New York 12232

Re: I-81 Project – Syracuse Area Corridor

Dear Mr. McDade and Ms. Nelson:

On behalf of the Town of Salina, we thank the Federal Highway Administration and New York State Department of Transportation for allowing us the opportunity to formally submit our input for consideration in deciding the future of Interstate 81 in Central New York. This is a watershed moment for the entire region, and as such, it is crucial that those directly affected have a stake in the decision making process.

In this submission you will find the Town of Salina's resolution rejecting the state's proposed plan to replace Interstate 81 with a six-lane boulevard through the City of Syracuse. It is clear that many area residents and elected official are deeply concerned with the negative consequences re-routing Interstate 81 will bring to the entire Central New York region. These negative effects include declined economic growth, increased traffic congestion, longer and more stressful commutes, and compromised public safety.

We hope the Department of Transportation and other decision-makers will thoroughly consider our viewpoints when deciding the best plan for Interstate 81. Our resolution should be made part of the FHWA/NYS DOT NEPA and SEQRA record. While we are open to many of the ideas presented, we firmly believe the best option will maintain Interstate 81's current function and designation as an interstate highway through Syracuse. If FHWA and NYSDOT determine to continue to pursue the proposed boulevard option, the critical issues raised in this resolution need to be carefully and thoroughly weighed by FHWA and NYSDOT.

Thank you,

Mark A. Nicotra
Supervisor
Town of Salina

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF SALINA, COUNTY OF ONONDAGA, REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE

WHEREAS, for the last 50 years, Interstate 81 has served as a vital backbone for the economy of the Town of Salina, connecting commuters, businesses, tourists, visitors, and through-travelers alike; and

WHEREAS, among its important functions, Interstate 81 provides vital access to downtown Syracuse, all of our hospitals, Syracuse University, Destiny USA, present and future businesses in the Town of Salina and all of the residents clustered along its route; and

WHEREAS, Moody's Investors Service has assigned a Aa3 rating to a recent Town of Salina Public Improvement (Serial) Bond with the expectation of the stable tax base of \$1.6 billion continuing to experience modest growth given it's close proximity to the City of Syracuse (G.O. rated A1, negative). Acting as a transfer point between the New York State Thruway and Interstate 81, the town has a significant commercial presence (39% of tax base) consisting of hotels, gas stations, and restaurants geared in part toward travelers across these thoroughfares; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Salina sits at the "*Crossroads of New York*," where Interstate 81 and the New York State Thruway flows through Salina providing the economic lifeblood of our community. To willfully cut off one of Salina's major arteries would put at risk an already fragile economy; and

WHEREAS, although there are a variety of ways to deal with I-81's aging infrastructure, the existing "Interstate" function and designation must be preserved. We therefore support any solution which, while maintaining the I81 designation as it is routed today, affords the greatest opportunity for economic growth in Central New York which in turn will procreate new business, expansion, and ultimately employment in our Community.

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for the next 100 years; and

WHEREAS, it is the sense of the Salina Town Board that any decision reached by the NYS DOT should satisfy function first, and should be closely tailored to satisfy that function; and

WHEREAS, we support the creation of a new and welcoming entrance to Syracuse, and the integration of the hospitals and university areas with the rest of downtown, we believe it must not be accomplished by compromising one of the most significant advantages of living, working, doing business and visiting Onondaga County; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Salina Town Board memorializes its determination that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an interstate highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Town of Salina is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, to the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and to the various legislative members representing Onondaga County at the state level.

Mark A. Nicotra, Supervisor
Colleen A. Gunnip, Councilor
V. James Magnarelli, Councilor
Gerald Ciciarelli,
Michael J. Del Vecchio Jr., Councilor

Yes
Yes
Yes
Yes
Yes

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and have hereunto affixed the seal of the Town of Salina this 10th day of June, 2013.

[SEAL]


Jeannie Ventre, Town Clerk

From: Mark Nicotra

Sent: Friday, August 29, 2014 9:27:37 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)

To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities

Subject: Submission...

To Whom it My Concern:

Please include the attached comments for the current comment period.

-MN

Mark Nicotra

Salina Supervisor

201 School Road
Liverpool, NY 13088
[\(315\) 457-6661](tel:(315)457-6661)

[EMAIL](#) [Website](#) [FaceBook](#) [Twitter](#) [LinkedIn](#)

Mr. Mark Frechette
New York State Dept. of Transportation
333 E. Washington St.
Syracuse, NY 13202

Dear Mr. Frechette:

As an elected official of an Interstate 81 participating agency, I want to ensure that the Federal Highway Administration and the New York State Department of Transportation are aware of the consensus throughout Central New York regarding the future of I-81. In localities throughout the region, leaders have made clear that it is vital for any solution for I-81 maintain the highway's current alignment and Interstate Highway designation through Central New York.

Included in this letter are resolutions passed by the City of Auburn, the Village of Aurora, the Town of Dewitt, the Town of Fleming, the Town of Geddes, the Town of Moravia, the Town of Salina, the Town of Skaneateles, the Town of Sennett, and Onondaga and Cayuga counties.

All of these communities have made clear their opposition to any boulevard-only option to replace I-81 in Downtown Syracuse that would re-route the highway around the city. Community leaders are deeply concerned that a boulevard and re-route option would have adverse economic impacts, lengthen commutes and slow emergency response times throughout the entire region. Many are also concerned with the potential for increased traffic and infrastructure strain in their localities.

I want to thank the Federal Highway Administration and the state Department of Transportation for allowing all localities throughout Central New York the opportunity to formally include these materials for consideration. I hope you will consider these concerns as you move forward with the scoping process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Nicotra", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mark Nicotra
Supervisor
Town of Salina

COUNCIL RESOLUTION #95 of 2013

**MEMORIALIZING THE NEW YORK STATE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION REGARDING
THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT
OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE**

By Councilor

Camardo

August 15, 2013

WHEREAS, the New York State Department of Transportation is considering the possibility of significant changes to Interstate 81 through the city of Syracuse which could potentially alter the flow of heavy commercial traffic and truck traffic flow through the city of Auburn; and

WHEREAS, the alteration of the commercial traffic and increased truck traffic could pose negative effects to smaller outlying communities, including the city of Auburn; and

WHEREAS, the City of Auburn does understand that Interstate 81 is an important route for the State of New York, however, the Department of Transportation must recognize that any significant change which increases commercial and truck traffic through the city of Auburn could create safety issues and affect the quality of life for its residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Auburn City Council does request that the New York State Department of Transportation seek a solution to the redesign of Interstate 81 that will not pose negative effects to smaller outlying communities, particularly the city of Auburn, and that the Interstate 81 function and designation as an interstate highway must not be removed or impaired; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the City of Auburn is directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and the Cayuga County Legislature.

Seconded by Councilor

Ruzicka

	AYES	NOES
Councilor Graney	✓	
Councilor Camardo	✓	
Councilor Smith	✓	
Councilor Ruzicka	✓	
Mayor Quill	✓	

CARRIED AND ADOPTED

RESOLUTION #13-34 OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF AURORA, COUNTY OF CAYUGA, REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, any decision reached by the New York State Department of Transportation should satisfy function, safety, and efficiency of transportation concerns for citizens as well as for commercial use; and

WHEREAS, the resulting solution should minimize unintended consequences,

IT IS THEREFORE

RESOLVED, the unintended consequences of creating any significant changes to Route 81 including, creating a boulevard, would alter the flow of heavy commercial traffic and potentially increase truck traffic flow through the Village of Aurora, State Rt. 90 thereby decreasing the quality of life and increasing danger to human life and property for Aurora residents, as well as danger of pollution to adjacent Cayuga Lake; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Village of Aurora Board of Trustees requests that the New York State Department of Transportation seek a solution to the Route 81 redesign that does not pose negative effects to smaller outlying communities; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an Interstate Highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Village Clerk of the Village of Aurora is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council and the Cayuga County Legislature.

Dated: June 19, 2013

FIRST: Ominsky

SECOND: Taylor

AYES: Bennett, Murphy, Ominsky, Taylor, and Van Orman

NAYS: None

Carried unanimously

Ann Balloni

Village Clerk

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE CAYUGA COUNTY LEGISLATURE REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE

By: Cayuga County Legislature

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, it is the sense of the Cayuga County Legislature that any decision reached by the New York State Department of Transportation should satisfy function first including safety, efficiency of transportation for personal and commercial use and provide and minimize unintended consequences; NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that it is the opinion of the Cayuga County Legislature that the unintended consequences of creating any significant changes to Route 81 including, creating a boulevard, could potentially alter the flow of heavy commercial traffic and increase unwanted truck traffic flow on County roads thereby causing safety issues and decreasing the quality of life for Cayuga County residents; and be it further

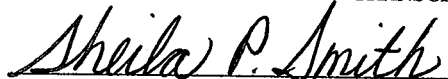
RESOLVED, that the Cayuga County Legislature requests that the New York State Department of Transportation seek a solution to the Route 81 redesign that does not pose negative effects to Cayuga County; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an Interstate Highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Cayuga County Legislature is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation and the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council.

I HEREBY CERTIFY, THAT I HAVE COMPARED THE FOREGOING COPY OF A RESOLUTION DULY PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF CAYUGA COUNTY AT A MEETING HELD ON THE 25th DAY OF JUNE 2013 WITH THE ORIGINAL RESOLUTION, AND THAT THE SAME IS A TRUE AND CORRECT COPY AND TRANSCRIPT THEREOF, AND THE WHOLE THEREOF.

6-26-13 9:A5AM


CLERK, CAYUGA COUNTY LEGISLATURE

June 10, 2013

Resolution

**MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF DeWITT,
COUNTY OF ONONDAGA, REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING
ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE**

WHEREAS, for the last 50 years, Interstate 81 has served as a vital backbone for the economy of the Central New York, connecting commuters, businesses, tourists, visitors, and through-travelers alike; and

WHEREAS, among its important functions, Interstate 81 provides vital links with access to downtown Syracuse, all of our hospitals, Syracuse University, Destiny USA, present and future businesses and residents along 81 corridor, to business and residents within the Town of DeWitt; and

WHEREAS, Moody's Investors Service has assigned a Aa3 rating to a recent Town of DeWitt Public Improvement (Serial) Bond with the expectation of the stable tax base of approximately \$2.9 billion continuing to experience modest growth given it's close proximity to the City of Syracuse (G.O. rated A1, negative). Acting as a transfer point between the New York State Thruway, Route 481 and Interstate 81, the town has a significant commercial presence (39% of tax base) consisting of hotels, shopping centers, office buildings, manufacturing facilities, and restaurants geared in part toward travelers across these thoroughfares; and

WHEREAS, turning Interstate 81 to Route 481 leaves no alternative north-south Route for national defense, national disaster, and general maintenance and repairs; and

WHEREAS, although there are a variety of ways to deal with I-81's aging infrastructure, the existing "Interstate" function and designation must be preserved, because any solution which would remove I-81's vital function from its present alignment would irreparably harm the regional economy and corresponding employment dependent upon the highway network in addition to negatively impacting DeWitt's neighborhoods and its residents quality of life; and

WHEREAS, redirecting I-81 traffic to Route 481, transfers what the City of Syracuse sees as a problem to DeWitt; and

WHEREAS, DeWitt forms the eastern border of Syracuse and its neighborhoods already suffer the consequences of commuter traffic to and from the City of Syracuse, along local Routes 173, 5, 290, 298, in addition to the Interstate Highways including the Thruway and Routes 690 and 481. Consequently, moving Interstate 81 to Route 481 will only exacerbate local and pass-through traffic leaving a heavy toll on already taxed DeWitt resources. Namely, increasing the wear and tear on DeWitt's local roads and infrastructure that are already insufficient and underfunded; and

WHEREAS, increased traffic causes increased noise, dust, toxic emissions and atmospheric deposition of pollutants on land and water, business, homes, and schools; and

WHEREAS, redirecting Interstate 81 to Route 481 is not smart environmental policy because the distance traveled for through traffic and further stop and go intercity commuting traffic is increased. This is polluting, inefficient, requires the use of greater amounts of petroleum based fuels, hurts the regional economy, and is detrimental to social welfare and the environment; and

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for the next 100 years; and

WHEREAS, it is the consensus of the DeWitt Town Board that any decision reached by the NYS DOT should satisfy function first, and should be closely tailored to satisfy that function; and

WHEREAS, we support smart growth and the creation of a new and welcoming entrance to Syracuse, and the integration of the hospitals and university areas with the rest of downtown, we believe it must not be accomplished by compromising one of the most significant advantages of living, working, doing business and visiting Onondaga County;

WHEREAS, DeWitt supports a balanced, comprehensive approach, a regional transportation plan is necessary to ensure smart choices are made, a plan that can provide environmental, social and economic benefits to all of Central New York, one that promotes alternative and mass transit options including alternate fuels, electric vehicles, and a light rail system; for out suburban communities are in dire need of a traffic diet as well; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the DeWitt Town Board memorializes its determination that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an interstate highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Supervisor of the Town of DeWitt is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, to the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and to the various legislative members representing Onondaga County at the state level.

RESOLUTION MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF FLEMING, COUNTY OF CAYUGA, REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, it is the sense of the Fleming Town Board that any decision reached by the New York State Department of Transportation should satisfy function first including safety, efficiency of transportation for personal and commercial use and provide and minimize unintended consequences.

IT IS THEREFORE

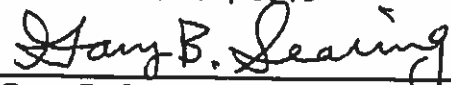
RESOLVED, that it is the opinion of the Fleming Town Board that the unintended consequences of creating any significant changes to Route 81 including, creating a boulevard, could potentially alter the flow of heavy commercial traffic and increase truck traffic flow through the Town of Fleming, State Rt. 38 and thereby causing safety issues and decreasing the quality of life for Fleming residents; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Fleming Town Board requests that the New York State Department of Transportation seek a solution to the Route 81 redesign that does not pose negative effects to smaller outlying communities; and, be it further

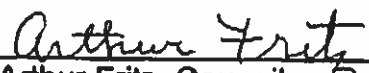
RESOLVED, that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an Interstate Highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk of the Town of Fleming is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council and the Cayuga County Legislature.

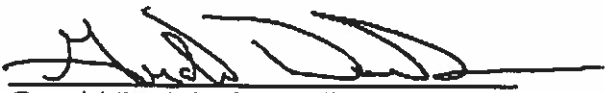
Dated: June 10, 2013


Gary B. Searing, Supervisor

Ronald LaVarnway, Councilman


Arthur Fritz, Councilman


Ellen DelloStritto, Councilwoman


Gerald Dudek, Councilman

TOWN OF GEDDES
Joseph L Ranieri
1000 Woods Road
Solvay, NY 13209

Geddes Town Board Meeting – July 9, 2013

Members Present:

Supervisor Falcone
Councilor Albrigo
Councilor Czaplicki
Councilor Fassinger - Excused
Councilor Krupa - Excused
Councilor Murphy
Councilor Valenti

Resolution # 107

Authorize Supervisor to Send Letter of Support for I – 81 Corridor Project

Motion: Councilor Murphy Second: Councilor Valenti

Authorization for the Supervisor to send a letter of support for the I-81 Corridor project.

**MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF GEDDES,
COUNTY OF ONONDAGA, REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING
ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE**

WHEREAS, for the last 50 years, Interstate 81 has served as a vital backbone for the economy of Central New York, connecting commuters, businesses, tourists, visitors, and through-travelers alike; and

WHEREAS, among its important functions, Interstate 81 provides vital links with access to downtown Syracuse, all of our hospitals, Syracuse University, Destiny USA, present and future businesses and residents along 81 corridor, to business and residents within the Town of Geddes; and

WHEREAS, turning Interstate 81 to Route 481 leaves no alternative north-south Route for national defense, national disaster, and general maintenance and repairs; and

WHEREAS, although there are a variety of ways to deal with I-81's aging infrastructure, the existing "Interstate" function and designation must be preserved, because any solution which would remove I-81's vital function from its present alignment would irreparably harm the regional economy and corresponding employment dependent upon the highway network in addition to negatively impacting Geddes' neighborhoods and its residents quality of life; and

WHEREAS, redirecting I-81 traffic to Route 481, transfers what the City of Syracuse sees as a problem to Geddes; and

WHEREAS, Geddes forms a border of Syracuse and its neighborhoods already suffer the consequences of commuter traffic to and from the City of Syracuse; and

WHEREAS, increased traffic causes increased noise, dust, toxic emissions and atmospheric deposition of pollutants on land and water, business, homes, and schools; and

WHEREAS, redirecting Interstate 81 to Route 481 is not smart environmental policy because the distance traveled for through traffic and further stop and go intercity commuting traffic is increased. This is polluting, inefficient, requires the use of greater amounts of petroleum based

fuels, hurts the regional economy, and is detrimental to social welfare and the environment; and

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for the next 100 years; and

WHEREAS, it is the consensus of the Geddes Town Board that any decision reached by the NYS DOT should satisfy function first, and should be closely tailored to satisfy that function; and

WHEREAS, we support smart growth and the creation of a new and welcoming entrance to Syracuse, and the integration of the hospitals and university areas with the rest of downtown, we believe it must not be accomplished by compromising one of the most significant advantages of living, working, doing business and visiting Onondaga County;

WHEREAS, Geddes supports a balanced, comprehensive approach, a regional transportation plan is necessary to ensure smart choices are made, a plan that can provide environmental, social and economic benefits to all of Central New York, one that promotes alternative and mass transit options including alternate fuels, electric vehicles, and a light rail system; for our suburban communities are in dire need of a traffic diet as well; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Geddes Town Board memorializes its determination that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an interstate highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Supervisor of the Town of Geddes is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, to the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and to the various legislative members representing Onondaga County at the state level.

A Roll Call Vote was taken. Supervisor Falcone, Councilors Valenti and Murphy voted yes. Councilors Albrigo and Czaplicki voted no.

Ayes - 3 Nays - 2 Carried

**STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF ONONDAGA
TOWN OF GEDDES**

I, the undersigned, Clerk of the Town of Geddes, Onondaga County, New York, does hereby certify: that the enclosed is a true copy of the original resolution passed at a meeting of the Geddes Town Board on July 9, 2013.

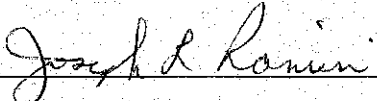
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have set my hand and affixed the seal of said Town this 11th day of July, 2013.

S

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A

L


JOSEPH L RANIERI

TOWN OF MORAVIA

139 Main Street P.O. Box 1146 Moravia, New York 13118
Telephone (315) 497-1972

Gary Hatfield, Supervisor
Moravia, New York 13118

AUSTIN G. WEAVER, Councilman
DAVID H. DINGER, Councilman
CAROL C. WOOD, Town Clerk/Tax Collector

TERRANCE L. BAXTER, Councilman
STEVEN R. HARGETT, Councilman
STEPHEN H. MULVANEY, Highway Superintendent

RECEIVED
JUL 29 2013
TOWN OF OWASCO

RESOLUTION 1-2013

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF MORAVIA, COUNTY OF CAYUGA, REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, it is sense of the Moravia Town Board that any decision reached by the New York State Department of Transportation should satisfy function first including safety, efficiency of transportation for personal and commercial use and provide and minimize unintended consequences,

IT IS THEREFORE

RESOLVED, that it is the opinion of the Moravia Town Board that the unintended consequence of creating any significant changes to Route 81 including, creating a boulevard, could potentially alter the flow of heavy commercial traffic and increase truck traffic flow through the Town of Moravia, State Rt. 38A and thereby causing safety issues and decreasing the quality of life for Moravia residents; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Moravia Town Board requests that the New York State Department of Transportation seek a solution to the Route 81 redesign that does not pose negative effects to smaller outlying communities; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an Interstate Highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk of the Town of Moravia is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council and the Cayuga County Legislature.

Motion by Councilman Hargett, Seconded by Councilman Baxter

Roll call vote: Councilman Weaver—Yes
Councilman Dinger—Yes
Supervisor Hatfield—Yes

Councilman Hargett—Yes
Councilman Baxter—Yes

May 7, 2013

Motion Made By Mrs. Rapp

RESOLUTION NO. _____

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THIS LEGISLATURE REGARDING THE NEED TO
MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE

WHEREAS, for the last 50 years, Interstate Route 81 has served as a vital backbone for the economy of the Central New York region, connecting commuters, businesses, tourists, other visitors, and through-travelers alike; and

WHEREAS, among its important functions, I-81 provides vital access to downtown Syracuse, all of our hospitals, Syracuse University, Destiny USA and all of the residents and businesses clustered along its route; and

WHEREAS, although there are a variety of ways to deal with I-81's aging infrastructure, the existing "Interstate" function and designation must be preserved, because any solution which would remove I-81's vital function from its present alignment would irreparably cripple the regional economy and corresponding employment that has grown up around the highway network; and

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for the next 100 years; and

WHEREAS, quality of life is important to residents of Onondaga County, and few, if any, major cities offer the range of opportunities for our citizens and allow them the convenience to access those assets in 20 minutes or less; and

WHEREAS, the freedom to commute between work, home and leisure activities without fighting the gridlock of traffic is a major advantage to living in Central New York, and it is illogical and contrary to the best interests of our citizens to compromise one of our finest assets; and

WHEREAS, we have spent decades promoting Greater Syracuse as a destination for sports, medicine, the arts, education, recreation, shopping and commerce, and denigrating easy access to those destinations now would be unthinkable and counter-productive; and

WHEREAS, citizens require easy and quick access to emergency medical services; first-responders require expeditious routes for the public's safety and well-being, businesses need efficient routes for commercial transport and convenient access to customers; and

WHEREAS, many of our communities and businesses have grown-up because of I-81's function and alignment, it is imperative that we do not create new problems in an attempt to solve an existing problem, further, it is critical that the selected solution does not burden the taxpayers with unintended and costly consequences; and

WHEREAS, in 1947, when the decision was made to build I-81 through Syracuse it was concluded, "Syracuse is a city on the rise. The gridlock of traffic that now congests its' core is a major factor in restricting future growth", and it is important that we learn from the past and not repeat our mistakes; and

WHEREAS, I-81 and the New York Thruway are the economic lifeblood of our community, and cutting off one of our major arteries now would jeopardize an already fragile business climate; and

WHEREAS, it is the sense of this Legislature that any decision reached by the NYS DOT should satisfy function first, as form can and will naturally follow, and should be closely tailored to satisfy that function; and

WHEREAS, we support the creation of a new and welcoming entrance to Syracuse, and the integration of the hospitals and university areas with the rest of downtown, we believe it must not be accomplished by compromising one the most significant advantages of living, working, doing business and visiting Onondaga County; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Onondaga County Legislature hereby rejects the concept of replacing I-81 with a boulevard that halts traffic flow with a series of traffic lights; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that this Legislature memorializes its determination that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an interstate highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Clerk of this Legislature is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, to the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and to the various legislative members representing Onondaga County at the state level.

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF SALINA, COUNTY OF ONONDAGA, REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE

WHEREAS, for the last 50 years, Interstate 81 has served as a vital backbone for the economy of the Town of Salina, connecting commuters, businesses, tourists, visitors, and through-travelers alike; and

WHEREAS, among its important functions, Interstate 81 provides vital access to downtown Syracuse, all of our hospitals, Syracuse University, Destiny USA, present and future businesses in the Town of Salina and all of the residents clustered along its route; and

WHEREAS, Moody's Investors Service has assigned a Aa3 rating to a recent Town of Salina Public Improvement (Serial) Bond with the expectation of the stable tax base of \$1.6 billion continuing to experience modest growth given it's close proximity to the City of Syracuse (G.O. rated A1, negative). Acting as a transfer point between the New York State Thruway and Interstate 81, the town has a significant commercial presence (39% of tax base) consisting of hotels, gas stations, and restaurants geared in part toward travelers across these thoroughfares; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Salina sits at the "*Crossroads of New York*," where Interstate 81 and the New York State Thruway flows through Salina providing the economic lifeblood of our community. To willfully cut off one of Salina's major arteries would put at risk an already fragile economy; and

WHEREAS, although there are a variety of ways to deal with I-81's aging infrastructure, the existing "Interstate" function and designation must be preserved. We therefore support any solution which, while maintaining the I81 designation as it is routed today, affords the greatest opportunity for economic growth in Central New York which in turn will procreate new business, expansion, and ultimately employment in our Community.

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for the next 100 years; and

WHEREAS, it is the sense of the Salina Town Board that any decision reached by the NYS DOT should satisfy function first, and should be closely tailored to satisfy that function; and

WHEREAS, we support the creation of a new and welcoming entrance to Syracuse, and the integration of the hospitals and university areas with the rest of downtown, we believe it must not be accomplished by compromising one of the most significant advantages of living, working, doing business and visiting Onondaga County; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Salina Town Board memorializes its determination that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an interstate highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

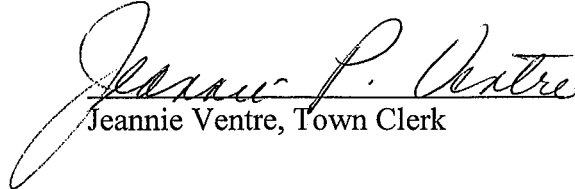
RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Town of Salina is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, to the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and to the various legislative members representing Onondaga County at the state level.

Mark A. Nicotra, Supervisor
Colleen A. Gunnip, Councilor
V. James Magnarelli, Councilor
Gerald Ciciarelli,
Michael J. Del Vecchio Jr., Councilor

Yes
Yes
Yes
Yes
Yes

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and have hereunto affixed the seal of the Town of Salina this 10th day of June, 2013.

[SEAL]


Jeannie Ventre, Town Clerk

**Town Board Meeting
May 16, 2013
7:00 p.m.**

Present: Deputy Supervisor Greenfield, Councilor Murray, Councilor McGlynn, Councilor Keyes.
Absent: Supervisor Roney, Attorney Sardino.

Also Present: Sue Murphy, Jessica Soule (Skaneateles Journal), Joe Genco (Skaneateles Press).
Charlie Major, Andy Ramsgard,

Department Reports

▪**Highway:** Deputy Supervisor Greenfield reported for Jim Card that they were doing routine spring operations.

▪**Parks:** Sue Murphy reported that last Saturday was the first day for PlayDay registration. Registration would also be held at Austin Pavilion this Saturday, May 18th and after that registration will be taken at Town Hall. She has had inquiries about renting the Austin Pavilion for different events. They are busy mowing grass and maintaining the baseball fields.

▪**Outreach, Conservation, Historian, Cemeteries:** Councilor Murray said that she is still looking for a speaker for the Memorial Day service at Mottville and Shepard Settlement Cemeteries.

▪**Codes:** Deputy Supervisor Greenfield reported for Debbie Williams that the Sign Ordinance Committee is still meeting regularly to update the ordinance.

Resolution #13-80

Abstract #13-10: Councilor Murray made a motion to authorize the payment of vouchers # 13-0586 to #13-0665 from the following funds:

General Fund:	\$ 57,256.82	Part Town:	\$ 1,819.57
Highway:	\$ 5,167.19	Highway P/T:	\$ 7,381.37
Water:	\$ 39,351.18	Sewer:	\$ 1,048.17
Sewer #6:	\$ 593.48	T & A:	\$ 1,952.55
Water #5:	\$ 50.63		

Total: \$114,620.96

Seconded by Councilor Keyes.

Councilor Keyes	Yes
Councilor McGlynn	Yes
Councilor Murray	Yes
Deputy Supervisor Greenfield	Yes
Supervisor Roney	Absent

Carried 4-0

Resolution #13-81

7:15 p.m. Public Hearing – Introductory Local Law 2013-A: Deputy Supervisor Greenfield noted receipt of the Affidavit of posting dated May 3, 2013 and publication dated May 8, 2013 and asked if anyone wished to have the notice read. With no one making that request Deputy Supervisor Greenfield said that this public hearing is to consider authorizing the Town of

Skaneateles to adopt a Local Law to amend Section 3 of the Public Officers Law of the State of New York to provide that a Town Constable of the Town of Skaneateles need not be an elector of the Town of Skaneateles so long as such person is a resident of the County of Onondaga and the State of New York, or of any adjacent or abutting County.

On a motion of Councilor McGlynn, seconded by Councilor Murray and with unanimous (4-0) affirmation of the Town Board the public hearing was opened.

Deputy Supervisor Greenfield asked if anyone wished to comment in favor, in opposition or had any comment on the proposed Local Law. No one came forward.

On a motion of Councilor McGlynn, seconded by Councilor Keyes and with unanimous (4-0) affirmation of the Town Board the public hearing was closed.

Councilor McGlynn made a motion to adopt Local Law 2013-A to be known as Local Law 1 of 2013 "A Local Law Relative to the Residency Requirement of Constables for the Town of Skaneateles." Seconded by Councilor Murray.

Councilor Keyes	Yes
Councilor McGlynn	Yes
Councilor Murray	Yes
Deputy Supervisor Greenfield	Yes
Supervisor Roney	Absent

Carried 4-0

Resolution #13-82

Authorization to Hire Lifeguards and PlayDay Counselors: On the motion of Councilor McGlynn, seconded by Councilor Murray and with unanimous (4-0) affirmation of the Town Board the following Lifeguards and Counselors for PlayDay are authorized to be hired for the 2013 season:

Lifeguards - 2013

Keri Steves
Amanda Steves
James Carro
Katie Ganley
Dana Ganley
Allison Moran
John O'Sullivan
Michael Raymond
Matt Gasperek
Elise Tarolli
John Dawley

Counselors for Playday – 2013

Zach Ross
Caryn Crary
Samantha Lindgren
Julia Judge

Shaun McConnaghy
Matt Carvalho
Erin Herr
Claudia Morris
Katy Delaney
Conor Herr
Mark Hogan

Jordan Road Railroad Bridge: Charlie Major said he was here to discuss the recent decision to allow the County DOT to remove the railroad bridge next to the Jordan Road Bridge in Skaneateles Falls. He said he is objecting to the removal because it is town property that was acquired for a specific purpose by the Town. The bridge was previously used for a railroad crossing. The tracks leading up to it start in the Village and go to the Elbridge Town Line. When the tracks were removed the intent was for a future nature trail. He said that the current County bridge is approximately three feet on the railroad property now owned by the Town. The County wanted to remove another bridge several years ago when Bill Pavlus was the Supervisor near Visions Drive, and they were refused permission. He said the Town went through a lot to acquire this property for future use as a walkway along Jordan Road. He said that there are currently three bridges that are the same age as the one being considered to be removed that are now in use on the Charlie Major Nature Trail. Those bridges had new tops put on by the Town's Highway Department and are still in use today. He said there is nothing structurally wrong with this bridge that would prevent the same use. He suggested looking into the beautification of the northern entrance to the Town just as the Town did with the western gateway. Charlie Major suggested that a new waterline was added several years ago along Jordan Road and because we owned the property where the railroad tracks were the waterline could be put in without tearing up Jordan Road. This saved a lot of money. He asked the Board just to say no to the County.

The Town Board agreed to table their decision on this until they had an opportunity to discuss this with Onondaga County and Jim Card.

Western Gateway Final Landscaping and Beautification: Councilor Murray said that she needs to discuss the landscaping with Jim Card after he returns from out of town. She would like to get together with the Garden Club so that when people call with donations she is able to take care of their requests.

Resolution #13-83

Route 81 Resolution: Deputy Supervisor Greenfield read the proposed resolution regarding the need to maintain the existing alignment of Interstate 81 through Syracuse.

Councilor Keyes made a motion that it is the sense of the Skaneateles Town Board that any decision reached by the NYS Department of Transportation should satisfy function first, as form can and will naturally follow, and should be closely tailored to satisfy that function; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, that it is the opinion of the Skaneateles Town Board that unintended consequences will arise from creating any significant changes to the configuration of I-81, particularly creating a boulevard that halts traffic flow with a series of traffic lights, and will likely alter the flow of heavy commercial traffic and increase truck traffic through the Town of

Skaneateles via State Routes 41, 41A and 20 compromising the safety and well-being of its residents and negatively impacting their quality of life; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Town Board rejects the concept of replacing I-81 with a boulevard that halts traffic flow with a series of traffic lights; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that this Town Board requests that the NYS Department of Transportation seek a solution to the I-81 redesign that will not impose negative effects to smaller, outlying communities that have not developed in a manner to handle increased commercial traffic; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Town Board memorializes its determination that the exiting I-81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an interstate highway must not be removed or impaired; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk of the Town of Skaneateles is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, to the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and to legislative officials at the County, State and Federal levels who represent the Town of Skaneateles or hold leadership positions.

Seconded by Councilor Murray.

Councilor Keyes	Yes
Councilor McGlynn	Yes
Councilor Murray	Yes
Deputy Supervisor Greenfield	Yes
Supervisor Roney	Absent

Carried 4-0

Resolution #13-84

Authorization to Sell E-Z Passes – Town Clerk’s Office: Janet Aaron reported that Regina Bulman, Sales Manager for NYS Thruway Authority E-Z Pass was at the NYS Town Clerks Conference providing information that will now allow Town Clerks to sell E-Z Passes in their office. Basically the Town would be approved as a vendor and once approved would be required to purchase a minimum of 1 box of 25 tags at \$525. The cost to the Town per tag would be \$21 and the Town would sell them for \$25. It provides some revenue to the Town but more importantly provides another service to our residents. She said that Attorney Sardino reviewed the vendor application and resolution. She requested that the Town Board consider authorizing the Town Clerk’s Office to sell the EZ Pass tags.

Councilor McGlynn made a motion to authorize the Town Clerk to submit the application to the NYS Thruway Authority to sell EZ Passes and to authorize the expenditure of \$525 to purchase the passes, once approved. Seconded by Councilor Murray.

Councilor Keyes	Yes
Councilor McGlynn	Yes
Councilor Murray	Yes

Deputy Supervisor Greenfield	Yes
Supervisor Roney	Absent

Carried 4-0

Resolution #13-85

Surplus Equipment: Deputy Supervisor Greenfield reported that the surplus equipment that was returned from the Community Center is now being advertised for sale. Interested parties can view the equipment at the Austin Pavilion between 8 a.m. and noon on May 31, 2013 and June 1, 2013. All bids must be received at the Town Hall on or before 10 a.m. on June 4th.

Resolution #13-86

Minutes of 4/18/13: On a motion of Deputy Supervisor Greenfield the minutes of April 18, 2013 were accepted as presented. Seconded by Councilor Murray.

Councilor Keyes	Yes
Councilor McGlynn	Yes
Councilor Murray	Yes
Deputy Supervisor Greenfield	Yes
Supervisor Roney	Absent

Carried 4-0

Resolution #13-87

Ice Rental - Austin Pavilion: Councilor McGlynn reported that he and Supervisor Roney met with Youth Hockey representatives to discuss the next season use of the ice arena at Austin Pavilion. Last year the ice arena startup date was October 1st. The early date is a challenge both for the staff that has to maintain the ice with daily scraping to remove ice formations from humidity and extra moisture due to unpredictable warm October weather, to the increased utility cost maintaining the ice temperature in what is considered basically an outdoor rink. Davis Mechanical who maintain the chillers recommends not starting up until Thanksgiving. Councilor McGlynn said that the Town realizes that this would be impossible because of the demand for ice early in the season. Therefore, he is recommending a startup date of October 16, 2013 and said that this is also acceptable to Youth Hockey.

Councilor McGlynn said that the Town Board also has to consider the hourly ice rates that were also discussed with Youth Hockey. They realize that the increased costs of starting up early require an increase in the hourly rate. Last year the Town charged contracted residents \$80 per hour. He said last year the Town lost \$1,800 on the operation of the Arena. Councilor Keyes said that it would be nice to at least break even.

Deputy Supervisor Greenfield made a motion to authorize that the ice arena startup date at Austin Pavilion will be October 16, 2013. Seconded by Councilor McGlynn.

Councilor Keyes	Yes
Councilor McGlynn	Yes
Councilor Murray	Yes
Deputy Supervisor Greenfield	Yes

Supervisor Roney

Absent

Carried 4-0

Resolution #13-88

Councilor McGlynn made a motion to set the hourly contracted ice time for residents at \$95 per hour beginning October 16, 2013 and \$110 per hour for nonresident contracted ice time. Seconded by Councilor Keyes.

Councilor Keyes

Yes

Councilor McGlynn

Yes

Councilor Murray

Yes

Deputy Supervisor Greenfield

Yes

Supervisor Roney

Absent

Carried 4-0

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Janet L. Aaron
Town Clerk

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF SENNETT, COUNTY OF CAYUGA, REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, it is the sense of the Sennett Town Board that any decision reached by the New York State Department of Transportation should satisfy function first including safety, efficiency of transportation for personal and commercial use and provide and minimize unintended consequences.

IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED, that it is the opinion of the Sennett Town Board that the unintended consequences of creating any significant changes to Route 81 including, creating a boulevard, could potentially alter the flow of heavy commercial traffic and increase truck traffic flow through the Town of Sennett, State Rt. 20 and thereby causing safety issues and decreasing the quality of life for Sennett residents; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Sennett Town Board Requests that the New York State Department of Transportation seek a solution to the Route 81 redesign that does not pose negative effects to smaller outlying communities; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an Interstate Highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk of the Town of Sennett is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council and the Cayuga County Legislature.

Roll call vote: Councilman Eades yes, Councilman O'Connell yes, Councilman Gage yes, Councilman Adrian yes, and Supervisor Herrick yes. Carried.

August 4, 2014

RECEIVED AUG 04 2014

Mr. Mark Frechette, PE
Project Director I-81
Department of Transportation
State of New York, Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, New York 13202

Dear Mark,

We are writing to formally request that the state Department of Transportation consider and fully review the Access Syracuse tunnel-boulevard hybrid plan as a potential solution for the Interstate 81 project. As representatives of towns whose residents and businesses greatly rely on convenient access to I-81, we remain committed to our position that I-81 must continue to function as an Interstate Highway along its current path. As such, we are encouraged by the Access Syracuse plan and are eager to learn more about how it could work for our communities.

I-81 has long served as a Main Street for our towns and many others throughout the region. We have been working for the past year-and-a-half to ensure that this vital economic artery remains a fixture in our communities for generations to come. We understand the concerns of many residents in the area who are troubled by the division that the I-81 viaduct creates between several neighborhoods.

That is why we believe that the tunnel-boulevard hybrid could be the solution that our entire region needs. It addresses the critical needs of the suburbs and the city by preventing unintended consequences that could alter the flow of heavy commercial traffic causing a negative effect to the quality of life, while preserving our economy and removing barriers between neighborhoods.

However, it is impossible to know if the Access Syracuse option is the right solution for our region without further study. On behalf of our constituents, we urge you to fully evaluate this plan further so we can have an open, informed discussion about its merits.

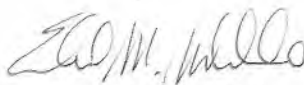
We have appreciated meeting with you throughout this process as participating agencies in the discussion about the future of I-81 in our area. We look forward to continuing to work closely with you, and hope that the DOT will consider this new community-driven option for I-81's future in Central New York.

Sincerely,



Mark Nicotra
Salina Town Supervisor

Sincerely,



Ed Michalenko
DeWitt Town Supervisor

Sincerely,



Ed Wagner
Owasco Town Supervisor

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: PAUL NOJAIM
Address: 307 Gifford St City: SYRACUSE State: NY Zip: 13204
Phone: (315) 374-0115 Email: PN03@aol.com

Comments:

I am concerned that West St will be "loaded" with traffic as part of the detour as work on any I-81 solution is implemented. West St already is a barrier for folks living in the near Westside, also excessive traffic will cause back ups that prevent my customers at Nojaim's Supermarket from getting in and out of my parking lot.

Our store has been in this community for 94 years and we are concerned that an adverse effect caused by this may cause us to suffer a decrease in sales.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation



NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE

December 6, 2013

Joan McDonald
Commissioner
NYS Dept. of Transportation
50 Wolf Road
Albany, NY 12232

Re: Route 81

Dear Commissioner McDonald:

There have been numerous hearings and public forums concerning the future of the Route 81 viaduct through the City of Syracuse. You and other representatives of the DOT have received substantial input from the general public. As you might expect we, as the legislative delegation for Central New York, have received many phone calls and much correspondence from our constituents concerning the future of Route 81.

We believe that it is very important for you to know where we stand on the issue, while your experts analyze the published alternatives. That is the purpose of this letter.

It is our position that, for the economic vitality of our region, whether there is a new overpass, a depressed highway or a tunnel, the ultimate design must continue to include an interstate highway as defined by federal highway standards, serving the same general corridor that Interstate 81 serves at the present time. Of course it is also imperative that the solution include safety improvements to the on and off ramps, and ease of access between the university/hospital side of the City of Syracuse and its downtown district, so that the needs of the community are met.

Central New York continues to experience an economic downturn. Severing the north/south transportation artery will exacerbate the present problem and hurt commerce and tourism in our region for our future generations.

We would be happy to meet with you to discuss this important issue further.

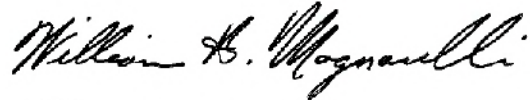
Very truly yours,



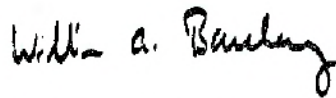
John A. DeFrancisco
State Senator



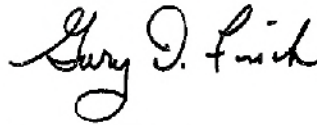
David J. Valesky
State Senator



William B. Magnarelli
Member of the Assembly



William A. Barclay
Member of the Assembly



Gary D. Finch
Member of the Assembly



Robert C. Oaks
Member of the Assembly



Samuel D. Roberts
Member of the Assembly

JAD/aew

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DEC 11 2013

OFFICE OF THE
COMMISSIONER

NEWYORK
STATE
SENATE
ALBANY, NEW YORK 12247



July 3, 2014

Joan McDonald, Commissioner
New York State Department of Transportation
50 Wolf Road
Albany, New York 12232

Re: Interstate 81

Dear Commissioner McDonald:

Thank you for briefing us and others on the DOT's scoping alternatives last Tuesday, June 24, 2014. We are writing to follow up on that briefing and on the attached letter we sent to your attention on December 6, 2013. We remain consistent in our position that Interstate 81 must continue to exist through the City of Syracuse.

We have listened to the objectives and desires of the various stakeholders and believe that the Access Syracuse Plan, the plan given to you at the end of the June 24, 2014 meeting, would meet the objectives of everyone involved. It is a "hybrid" solution that includes a shortened tunnel and incorporates the "boulevard" desired by a number of commentators. Significantly, the Access Syracuse Plan hybrid solution would provide improved connectivity between the University Hill Area and downtown, while maintaining the Interstate status of Route 81 into and through the city. Also, it enables keeping many more cross streets open than any of the previous proposed pure boulevard or tunnel options, it eliminates the enormous cost of high-flying ramps at Interstate 690, and it also requires less land acquisition.

Based on the feedback we have received and the merits of the Access Syracuse Plan, we strongly urge its serious consideration, inclusion in the DOT's Final Scoping Document and full analysis in the Environmental Impact Statement process. This plan uniquely addresses the needs and the stated purpose of the Interstate 81 project. Most importantly, the plan will result in the much sought after community-wide consensus needed to reach a final solution.

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JUL 8 2014

OFFICE OF THE
COMMISSIONER

Commissioner McDonald
July 1, 2014
Page 2

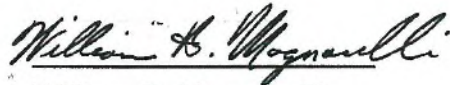
We appreciate the heightened attention your office has paid to this project over the past several months and thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Senators/Assembly Members



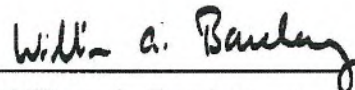
John A. DeFrancisco
50th Senate District



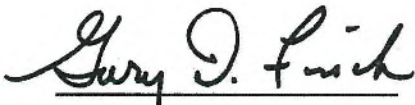
William B. Magnarelli
129th Assembly District



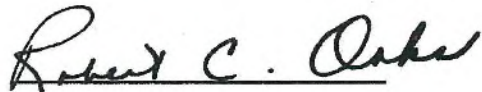
David J. Valesky
53rd Senate District



William A. Barclay
120th Assembly District



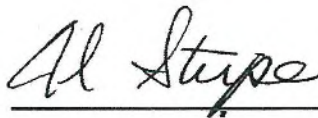
Gary D. Finch
126th Assembly District



Bob Oaks
130th Assembly District



Samuel D. Roberts
128th Assembly District



Al Stirpe
127th Assembly District

NEW YORK STATE LEGISLATURE

December 6, 2013

Joan McDonald
Commissioner
NYS Dept. of Transportation
50 Wolf Road
Albany, NY 12232

Re: Route 81

Dear Commissioner McDonald:

There have been numerous hearings and public forums concerning the future of the Route 81 viaduct through the City of Syracuse. You and other representatives of the DOT have received substantial input from the general public. As you might expect we, as the legislative delegation for Central New York, have received many phone calls and much correspondence from our constituents concerning the future of Route 81.

We believe that it is very important for you to know where we stand on the issue, while your experts analyze the published alternatives. That is the purpose of this letter.

It is our position that, for the economic vitality of our region, whether there is a new overpass, a depressed highway or a tunnel, the ultimate design must continue to include an interstate highway as defined by federal highway standards, serving the same general corridor that Interstate 81 serves at the present time. Of course it is also imperative that the solution include safety improvements to the on and off ramps, and ease of access between the university/hospital side of the City of Syracuse and its downtown district, so that the needs of the community are met.

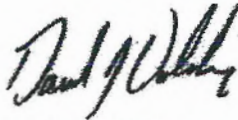
Central New York continues to experience an economic downturn. Severing the north/south transportation artery will exacerbate the present problem and hurt commerce and tourism in our region for our future generations.

We would be happy to meet with you to discuss this important issue further.

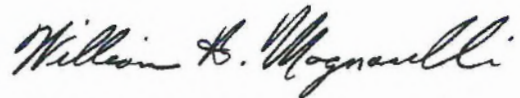
Very truly yours,



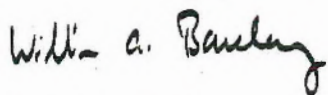
John A. DeFrancisco
State Senator



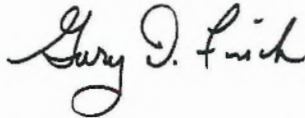
David J. Valesky
State Senator



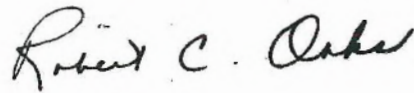
William B. Magnarelli
Member of the Assembly



William A. Barclay
Member of the Assembly



Gary D. Finch
Member of the Assembly



Robert C. Oaks
Member of the Assembly



Samuel D. Roberts
Member of the Assembly

JAD/aew

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name: Robert O'Connor

Address:

City: Fayetteville State: NY Zip:

Phone: ()

Email: robtocon@msn.com

Comments:

Include early ^{advance} publicity about the Final Scoping report & public presentation.

We hope more explanation of street level options can be expanded; also to include connections from present I-81 South to/from Seneca Turnpike & OCC.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

From: dot.sm.webcentral
Sent: Monday, September 1, 2014 7:02:49 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities
Subject: Contact the Project Team

Last name - O'Connor
First name - Robert
Affiliation - Mr.
Address 1 - 201 Pembroke Dr
Address 2 -
City - Fayetteville
State - New York
Zip - 13066
Phone - [3156373920](tel:3156373920)
Email Address - robtoc@msn.com

Question or Comment - I support a smaller, narrower ground-level boulevard for I-81. Let's get rid of the viaduct & tunnel approaches - both are expensive, too time-consuming to complete and very disruptive for community building. We need slower approaches to downtown that will be positive and well planned.

We also need a new exit/entrance to both Syracuse University and Onondaga Community College/Community General/ Onondaga Hill areas for real access to/from I-81 (NONE at present). The Scooping meetings and the visuals have been very helpful. Keep the community informed as we progress. Thank you.

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name:

Frances Ogilvie

Address:

1207 Almond St.

City:

Syracuse

State:

NY

Zip:

13210

Phone: ()

Email:

France.ogilvie@yahoo.com

Pw muffin

Comments:

What do you guys put
people live next to I-81. And I
went to know where people
live, they don't have lot of
money and some people have
SSI and SSD.

at-grade

I like the boulevard concept because I walk a lot

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81 TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: O'HARA

Address: L'POOL

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone: ()

Email:

Comments:

I WENT TO SU X-BITION GAME AND TWO GAMES.
TERRIBLE LONG BACK UP. IMPROVE 8/
EXIT FOR DOME/SU.

TO.

Reg. Dir.	Asst. Reg. D.	
LT.	Construction	
Design	Fleet Admin.	
Admin. Svcs.	PPM	
RECEIVED REG. DIRECTOR R-3		
JAN 10 2014		
Real Estate	Safety	
Traffic	Operations	
All GDs	All REs	
	Michelle	

Please continue comments on back if needed.

**Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014**

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

From: Grgoley@aol.com [mailto:Grgoley@aol.com]

Sent: Wednesday, February 26, 2014 1:50 PM

To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov

Subject: Rt 81 green movement

I'm sorry this is so late but the idea just came to me, build a gable shape roof over the rt 81 with solar panels with would block 90% of the bad weather and use some of the power to maintain the road temp. at 35-40 deg. The result would be 80% less plowing and no freeze related pot holes, sell the ex power and get a lot of fed funds for a green project that give big returns for decades. sound far fetched but no more than a tunnel ! thank you Buzzy
oley grgoley@aol.com

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name:

Thomas J. O'Neill

Address:

5315 Bruner Hill Way City: Syracuse State: NY Zip: 13207

Phone: (315) 487-7576

Email:

TONOILL@TWCNY.NY.COM

Comments:

The viaduct segment shown on p 2 of the handout shows the raised viaduct segment being studied most closely in this segment, but no mention has been made that 690 is part of this segment. The discussion has all been about Rte 81 but 690 splits the city too and that shouldn't be ignored. I note that the length of 81 Above Syracuse could be largely eliminated and at least through traffic could be sent via Rte 481 with no trouble. My eye ball look at the 81 route through the city including all 3 segments on p 2 of the handout is not much different than the length of Rte 481 where it interconnects with 81. For local traffic, you could take down both 81 and 690 sections above ground and widen below ground route lane, multi levels roads that serve existing 690 and 81 Syracuse workers who live in the outskirts. Hopefully, a fair amount of existing 81, 690 and 481 could still be used and construction time, cost and expense could be saved.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

Onondaga
**Citizens
League**

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NOV 21 2013

Operating Division

November 19, 2013

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50 Wolf Road
Albany, NY 12232

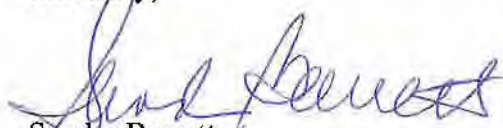
Dear Ms. Nelson:

I urge you to read the enclosed report "Rethinking I-81" produced in 2008 by the Onondaga Citizens League after a year-long study process.

The study process included involvement of the NYSDOT and Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council representatives, as well as input from a number of community representatives including emergency medical service providers, police, environmental scientists, historic preservationists, landscape architects, public housing, private developers, Syracuse University and others.

Again, I urge you to read and share the report, which is also available on our website at: <http://onondagacitizensleague.org/i81study>. Additional, relevant information was presented in the blog that is linked to the site.

Sincerely,



Sandra Barrett
Executive Vice President

Enc. (1)

Rethinking I-81



An aerial sketch of a city grid, showing various buildings, streets, and green spaces in a detailed, hand-drawn style.

Rethinking I-81



<http://onondagacitizensleague.org>

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Rethinking I-81 Study Committee

Rebecca Livengood, Study Chair

Rachel Pollack, Study Writer

Russell Andrews

Joseph Ash, Jr.

Sandra Barrett

Philip Bousquet

Christine Capella-Peters

Emanuel Carter

Dennis Connors

Megan Costa

Carol Dwyer

Bill Egloff

David Holder

Stephen Kearney

Karen Kitney

Richard Landerkin

Anthony Malavenda

Sarah McIlvain

Clyde Ohl

Donna O'Mahony Rohde

Van Robinson

Steven Schroeder

Benjamin Sio

Michael Smithson

Douglas Sutherland

Benjamin Walsh

Preface

For over 30 years, the Onondaga Citizens League has represented an outstanding example of citizen participation in public affairs. Founded in 1978, OCL is an independent and not-for-profit organization that encourages citizen education and involvement in public issues. The OCL's annual study on a topic of community-wide relevance culminates in a report designed to help citizens comprehend the issue and its implications, and give decision-makers recommendations for action.

When the "Rethinking I-81" Study Committee began meeting in early 2008, some committee members had serious doubts about the hypothesis that formed the basis of the study: that through-traffic could be rerouted around the city, and local traffic handled on a surface level boulevard. Even if it were possible from a technical standpoint, would it make an appreciable difference in the area around the Almond Street corridor – after all, isn't Almond Street the real barrier?

After months of study, the "Rethinking I-81" Study Committee came away convinced of the merits of the idea. With the immense potential for positive impact on the community, and the intense interest in the issue, the Onondaga Citizens League hopes that this study report contributes in a significant way to the community dialogue on the future of I-81.

Special thanks are due to Rebecca Livengood, chair of the study committee. We also extend appreciation to the individual and corporate members of OCL who support the work of the League through their membership dues and financial contributions, and to University College of Syracuse University, which provides the administrative and organizational support without which the Citizens League could not function.

The Onondaga Citizens League is open to any individual or organization in Central New York. While some join to become involved in the study process, many become members to support the concept and practice of citizen involvement in public policy issues. More information on OCL is available on our website, www.onondagacitizensleague.org

Sandra Barrett
Executive Vice President
June 2009

Acknowledgements

This study is the result of the dedication, resourcefulness, and insights of the Study Committee members and their ability to wrestle with the complex set of issues that replacing Route 81 brings to the community. I am deeply grateful to them for their commitment to the public interest, their articulate expertise and their passion for redefining Syracuse for the next 50 years.

Special thanks are due to Emanuel Carter for dedicating his class of SUNY ESF Landscape Architecture students to investigation of alternative solutions and to Christine Cappella-Peters for her ability to show us the issues beyond transportation.

Additional thanks go to Doug Sutherland for bringing his passion for Downtown Syracuse and for making a seamless connection with OCL's 2006-07 Study, *Leveraging Better Outcomes for Downtown*.

Bill Egloff provided patient and expert guidance in all aspects of NYS Department of Transportation standards and procedures. Dennis Connors addressed the history of transportation in Syracuse and its effect on the development of the city.

Jim D'Agostino and Nell Donaldson of the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council were extremely helpful in keeping us up to date on the public participation and travel demand model studies they will be managing.

Without Rachel Pollack, our study writer, with her good questions and lively writing and Colleen Karl-Howe, program assistant, with her behind-the-scene arrangements and reminders, this study would never have been completed.

Lastly, as with all OCL studies, Sandra Barrett, OCL's executive vice president, kept everyone on track, announced when we needed to change direction, recruited needed talent and expertise and provided wise counsel every step of the way. The entire community owes her its thanks and acknowledgement.

Rebecca Livengood
Study Chair

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	6
I. Introduction	8
Why I-81 is an Issue Now	8
Factors to Consider	8
Assumptions Challenged	9
Study Methodology	10
II. Past, Present, Future	11
Historical Perspective	11
Planning Considerations	13
Physical Characteristics	17
III. Lessons Learned From Other Cities	22
The Freeway Removal Alternative: A Growing Trend	22
Lessons Learned From Other Cities	23
Case Studies: San Francisco, Milwaukee, Seattle	
IV. Conclusion	26
Resources	28
Previous OCL Studies	29

Executive Summary

OCL Study Mission

Due to age and structural deterioration, the elevated portion of I-81 through Syracuse must be replaced, not simply repaired, in the near future. The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) has begun a detailed review of the physical condition of the interstate and commissioned a public participation project on I-81 concerns. At the same time, a recent University Hill transportation study recommended serious analysis of rerouting I-81 through traffic along I-481 and creating an urban boulevard for local traffic downtown, because of the potential transportation, economic development and environmental benefits to the area.

Other communities facing similar situations have considered alternatives to urban freeways, and many have replaced elevated freeways with at-grade thoroughfares. As it now stands, I-81 is a visual and physical barrier between downtown Syracuse and the growing educational and medical institutions of University Hill – the economic engines of the region. What would be the effects on community renewal and economic development if I-81 were replaced with an attractive, pedestrian-friendly boulevard in the European tradition? The Onondaga Citizens League Rethinking I-81 Study Committee sought to offer a thoughtful review of the relevant issues and the opportunities that a boulevard alternative to the elevated I-81 could provide. The intent of this report is to help prepare the community to provide input in the upcoming public participation process.

Study Methodology

The Committee studied the history and the physical condition of the I-81 corridor, reviewed access issues, and examined cases of freeway removals in American cities. The committee interviewed local and national transportation planning experts and other authorities on traffic, transit, land use planning, and local economic development. The committee reviewed numerous reports and articles on transportation systems and funding, land use, and environmental issues.

I-81 Findings

For both the city and the county, the I-81 project is the most important public planning opportunity since the decision was made to build the elevated I-81 in the late 1950s. While the ultimate decision on the future

of I-81 is several years away, the directions taken now will influence the final outcome. The Study Committee believes that several factors are critical to an understanding of the project.

- The I-81 viaducts were recently put under a special on-going emergency repair contract by NYSDOT, signaling that the aging infrastructure will require an increasing amount of unscheduled repair work.
- The I-81 reconstruction, whatever form it takes, will require a huge amount of public funds and a permanent reconfiguration of some traffic routes.
- In its entire 855 mile length, I-81 bypasses every downtown other than Syracuse, the only place where the speed limit is reduced to 45 mph.
- The I-81 corridor is a significant barrier between downtown and the economic engines on the Hill, devaluing the commercial and residential development potential of property all along the corridor, and limiting the potential for related employment growth in the area.
- A recent transportation study of the University Hill area concluded that tearing down I-81 in the Almond Street Corridor, rerouting all through traffic to I-481, and creating an urban boulevard in place of the viaduct for local traffic might be feasible and would have multiple benefits.
- Removing I-81 from downtown is not likely to hinder emergency vehicle access to the scene of the emergency; EMS vehicles are positioned throughout their service areas and the downtown interstate is not typically used to get to the scene or for access to the University Hill medical facilities.

Lessons Learned from Other Cities and Studies

The Study Committee's research presented evidence that removing freeways from within cities led to improvements in the quality of life and economic prosperity in those cities. In addition, pressures to address public health, gasoline consumption, environmental sustainability and sprawl, as well as changing trends in lifestyle choices, transit use, and transportation options demand that we consider more than mobility of vehicles in community planning.

- A well-crafted urban landscape helps make a city attractive to its young people, and to others looking for a place to work, live and establish roots.

- Cities that removed elevated highways from downtown areas experienced improved connectivity between neighborhoods, stimulated economic growth, and created a more attractive, sustainable, and safe, urban environment.
- Removing a freeway and replacing it with a surface-level boulevard does not necessarily increase congestion levels on city streets; city street grids create additional traffic routes, and head off anticipated gridlock.
- Design of a coordinated urban mobility system, including room for pedestrians, bicycles, and transit, as well as cars, is crucial.
- The transportation system design must be guided by an ambitious community vision, comprehensive master plan, and enforceable design standards.

Conclusions

The OCL study committee's assessment makes a convincing argument that the I-81 challenge is an opportunity to redefine our community for the 21st century. The study committee evaluated the proposition of rerouting through traffic and constructing a boulevard for the use of area traffic by examining known facts about I-81 in the downtown corridor, and exploring similar situations in other cities. The technical studies of NYSDOT and the traffic demand modeling and public participation projects of Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) will provide the traffic counts, engineering data, and public input that will inform the choice of alternatives.

The “Rethinking I-81” study committee believes that rerouting through traffic around the city and converting Almond Street to an attractive, pedestrian-friendly urban boulevard is a desirable concept that would benefit the region and recommends this option be given the most serious consideration in the planning process.

The reasons for this conclusion are rooted not just in the experiences of other cities, but in the urgent needs of our own community for revitalization of our core and growth of the new economy. Without a strong core, every part of the region suffers.

- **Competitiveness.** As Bruce Katz of the Brookings Institution said in Syracuse in 2006, “Demolishing the highway and replacing it with a boulevard would not just open up a connective corridor to downtown. It would also send a strong signal that Syracuse is serious about competing in the 21st century economy, and that its leaders and citizens alike have the will, energy, and vision to reinvent the physical infrastructure of their community in a way that leverages its core assets.”
- **Employment Growth.** Our largest, and growing, employers – the educational and medical institutions – need room to develop and expand on nearby development sites. Proximity and physical and visual connectivity create the synergies that spawn growth of the institutions and spin-off services, residential and office development.
- **Economic Development.** Downtown represents the economic, cultural and social hub of the Central New York region, the “calling card” of the region. A troubled core is a drawback to economic development for the wider region. A better connection to the tens of thousands of employees, students and visitors to the University Hill area will spell better business potential for restaurants, shops, museums and galleries, hotels and entertainment venues in the adjacent downtown area.
- **Environmental Concerns.** A coordinated transportation and land use plan, one that gives equitable consideration to transit, pedestrian and bicycle users as well as cars, and incorporates vegetation as well as asphalt, can lead to a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and a healthier environment.

We urge the community to participate in the I-81 planning process to ensure that we use this opportunity to manage our physical, social, environmental and economic assets in a way that will increase our vitality, accessibility and attractiveness.

I. Introduction

Why I-81 is an Issue Now

For nearly five decades Interstate-81 has run through the heart of Syracuse. But highway viaducts have limited life spans and the bridges of I-81 are deteriorating. Simply repairing the deteriorated steel structure is not a long-term option. Essentially, a new structure must be built. Since highway engineering standards have changed since I-81 was built, an elevated viaduct would probably look very different than the current structure.

The project, whatever form it takes, will require a huge amount of public funds and a permanent reconfiguration of at least some traffic routes. The downtown on- and off-ramps, which do not meet current standards, would not necessarily be replicated.

What if there were alternatives that allow a high-speed through route for those drivers needing to bypass the city and maintain easy access to downtown and University Hill, and also improve quality of life? In the half century since it was built, I-81 has attracted few admirers. It has been called an “eyesore.” Its presence devalues the land around it and discourages connection between downtown and University Hill. The ramps siphon traffic onto and from a few streets, which leads to congestion on those streets.

The process of “Rethinking I-81” has already begun and it demands public participation. The NYSDOT has embarked on the first phase of a review of the physical condition of the Interstate in an “I-81 Corridor Study.” In addition, NYSDOT has contracted with the SMTC, the group that oversees regional transportation planning, to lead a public participation project on I-81 concerns. Each of these studies will take at least two years. SMTC will also conduct a travel demand modeling study, using computer simulation to look at the impact of various highway configurations.

SMTC’s public participation project – “The I-81 Challenge” – will be conducted by a team of consultants and will initially create awareness of the I-81 decision-making process, and spell out the history, functions and condition of I-81. In a second phase of the process, SMTC will engage the community in brainstorming future alternatives for the highway and in narrowing those alternatives into the most feasible and desirable set. The public participation project will use outreach mechanisms such as brochures and newsletters as well as focus groups, open houses, workshops, surveys and a website.

The results of the technical and public studies will be a set of alternatives and strategies to be further developed and studied in depth. Public involvement will be central to this detailed analysis. The ultimate decision on the future of I-81 is years away, but the directions taken now will influence the final outcome.

Factors to Consider

The Onondaga Citizens League believes several factors are important to consider in thinking about I-81.

- **In its entire length, I-81 skirts every downtown except for that of Syracuse.** Scranton, Wilkes Barre, Binghamton, and Watertown are not bisected by I-81. Syracuse is the only city in the entire 855 miles of the I-81 corridor where the highway runs through a downtown area. We need to understand that moving maximum volumes of people in cars at maximum reasonable speeds is fine between cities, but is not actually good within cities, because the systems that make speed possible are bad for local business and economic development.
- **Currently on I-81 north and south, signage already directs through traffic to I-481, although not all vehicles heed the suggestion.** A feasibility study of reconfiguration of the intersections of I-81 and I-481 to allow interstate-speed merging of through traffic could be a first step in planning the future of I-81.
- **There is a growing trend to remove elevated highways from downtown areas.** Freeway removal projects in major cities including San Francisco, Milwaukee, and Portland, Oregon have stimulated economic growth and neighborhood renewal. In San Francisco and Milwaukee, neighborhoods formerly disrupted by viaducts have made a comeback. Low-level uses, like parking lots that frequently line freeways, have been replaced by shops, housing and businesses. In Milwaukee and Portland, the neighborhoods and sites that emerged from freeway removal combined with other careful urban planning steps, have helped to reframe and reenergize the cities themselves. Often the people who fought hard against freeway removal have come to embrace its results.

- **The SMTC University Hill Transportation Study found that removing a portion of I-81, replacing it with a surface-level boulevard, and rerouting through traffic passed a fatal-flaw test – that is, might be feasible.** The consultants recommended an in-depth study of an urban boulevard in lieu of the I-81 viaduct, with through traffic rerouted to I-481. The report predicted that a boulevard option would improve accessibility for commuters, visitors and emergency vehicles, create better connections between downtown and University Hill, increase economic development opportunities, and improve air quality in the area.
- **The I-81 corridor is perceived to be a significant barrier between downtown and the economic engines on the Hill, devaluing the commercial and residential development potential of property all along the corridor.** SUNY Upstate Medical University and Syracuse University are the area's two largest employers. These signature institutions, and others in the area, need room to develop and expand and can generate residential, retail, commercial and additional institutional development. They grow best when they grow organically and are well connected not only by car and public transit, but also by foot and bicycle, and in terms of visual quality.
- **A city maintains its viability by being attractive to its young people, and to others looking for a place to work, live and establish roots.** Residents need to see that the region can offer not only a good range of job opportunities, but also a well-crafted urban landscape that can rival aspects of Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Chicago, match the spirit of mid-size cities such as Columbus, Madison, Providence or Boulder, or compete with such well-known university communities as Berkeley, Ithaca, Burlington, Eugene or University Park. As Bruce Katz of the Brookings Institution said in Syracuse in 2006, "Demolishing the highway and replacing it with a boulevard would not just open up a connective corridor to downtown. It would also send a strong signal that Syracuse is serious about competing in the 21st century economy, and that its leaders and citizens alike have the will, energy, and vision to reinvent the physical infrastructure of their community in a way that leverages its core assets."

Assumptions Challenged

The OCL study committee found that certain common assumptions about freeway removal are not necessarily valid and merit deeper analysis.

- **Removing a freeway and replacing it with a surface-level boulevard will not necessarily increase congestion levels on city streets. When highways are eliminated from the central city, city street grids can be reconnected to create additional traffic routes, and head off anticipated gridlock.** The ability of a street grid to absorb traffic is evidenced in cities such as Milwaukee and San Francisco, where anticipated traffic problems did not materialize when freeways were shut down or removed. Closures of I-81 in Syracuse for construction during the last decade failed to produce major traffic problems, supporting the idea that the urban grid is underutilized. NYSDOT studies will test the assumption that rerouting of through traffic will result in fewer cars and trucks passing directly through the city. Studies will also determine the amount of unused capacity on other streets to absorb local traffic.
- **Removing I-81 from downtown is not likely to hinder emergency vehicle access to hospitals.** EMS vehicles are strategically positioned throughout their service areas; the interstate is not a factor in "access to scene" (unless the scene is on the interstate). Rural Metro and NAVAC, the county's two largest services, by and large do not rely on the I-81 viaduct to get to their hospital destinations, according to their directors. With a boulevard in place of the interstate viaduct for local traffic, "emergency vehicles would be provided more travel route options, which can be critical in cases of congestion or during special events on the University Hill," the University Hill Transportation Study concluded.
- **Creating a surface level boulevard in place of an elevated highway viaduct will not necessarily increase pollution levels.** While rerouting I-81 through traffic to I-481 would add approximately four miles to most long-distance trips, case studies from other cities show that freeway removal projects lead to reduction in the number of auto trips. The reduced road capacity, in conjunction with increased transit use and pedestrian and bicycle trips, could potentially offset the increase in miles on the through route.

No matter what, I-81 is going to change. The question is, will the change detract from, or improve, quality of life for residents of the region? The decision-making process offers the opportunity to explore new visions for the community in terms of transportation efficiency, livability and viability. For both the city and the county this is the most important public planning opportunity since the decision was made to build the elevated I-81 in the late 1950s. As a community, we should ensure that a project with the potential to transform us doesn't just take us where ever the road leads, but instead brings us to where we want to be.

Study Methodology

The focus area of the study is the I-81 corridor in the city of Syracuse between I-481 south of downtown and the I-690 interchanges, with particular attention to the elevated portion from East Adams Street to Erie Boulevard. The committee studied the history and physical condition of I-81 and the condition of the corridor adjacent to I-81, examined case studies of elevated freeway removals in American cities, and reviewed the SMTC University Hill Transportation Study, which addresses the role of I-81 in relation to access issues. Throughout the process, the committee was informed by officials from NYSDOT and SMTC, agencies which will together provide the framework for the I-81 decision-making process. The committee interviewed transportation planning consultants, and other authorities on planning decisions in cities

that have removed or are considering the removal of elevated highways, including Seattle and Milwaukee. Guest speakers included transportation planning consultant Tom Brennan, of Nelson/Nygaard, on the Seattle Urban Mobility Plan, and conference calls with John Norquist and Peter Park, former Milwaukee mayor and planning director, respectively.

SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry graduate landscape architecture students in Professor Emanuel Carter's urban design studio consulted on various design and routing options for I-81. Three public sessions were held to allow participants to comment on the studio design project scenarios. The committee interviewed the directors of Rural/Metro and NAVAC ambulance services and Captain Shannon Trice of the Syracuse Police Department Traffic Division to understand possible impacts of temporary and permanent closure of I-81 on emergency services. The committee met with local developers and realtors to understand their views on the development potential for a reconfigured I-81 corridor, heard from CENTRO on transit issues and planning, and considered urban transit trends and projections. Presentations by committee members were made to various community groups during the latter stages of the study. The wider community was made aware of the study sessions through press releases to local media and a study blog that highlighted and explained many of the issues raised during committee sessions.

II. Past, Present, Future

Historical Perspective

Next time you're crossing the intersection at Washington and Almond Streets, try imagining the bridges of I-81 "gone." Now envision a replacement. Let's say a steady flow of urban traffic on a landscaped boulevard, for instance. Tough to picture it, right?

One hundred years ago, standing in that exact spot, you would have been blasted by the force of a massive steam locomotive rumbling by just a few feet in front of your face. There were no flashing lights to warn of an arriving train, no guarding arms to halt the flow of traffic. Accidents were common. The railroad was a dangerous barrier dividing downtown; but for the citizens of Syracuse, railroads were a necessity. The railroad was the way people traveled, just as the car is today. Syracuse residents couldn't have imagined a city without a railroad line as a central artery, just as today, it is difficult to imagine a city without an elevated I-81 carrying cars through the core.

Just as the physical deterioration of the I-81 bridges now necessitates a rethinking of the viaduct's future, one hundred years ago the growing tide of railroad traffic required the citizens of Syracuse to rethink how and where tracks passed through the city. Would trains be elevated and continue to cut through the city center? Or would the route be moved to the outskirts? Dennis Connors, curator of history at the Onondaga Historical Association Museum and Research Center and a member of the OCL study committee, outlined the history of transportation decisions in Syracuse in a presentation to the study committee.

The Erie Canal Era

A good perspective starts with the Erie Canal; not its construction but its demise. While the canal was an economic boon to Syracuse for much of the 19th century, changing technology lessened its value by the late 1800s. The canal divided downtown into north and south, and land-based travelers in downtown had to cross over it numerous times in order to do business in the city. Most of the streets crossing the canal were connected by drawbridges or other non-fixed structures. Street traffic was regularly interrupted to allow canal traffic to pass. The constantly malfunctioning canal bridges were a barrier to the economic efficiency and growth of the city. When an opportunity to re-think the future of the old Erie Canal became possible with the completion of the new State Barge Canal in 1918,

the city had to decide what to do with that outdated transportation corridor through its downtown. Despite the visual appeal seen today in old photos of the canal and its bridges, at the time, the canal was not considered an aesthetic feature. The bridges impeded movement and the city had no interest in assuming maintenance of the locks. The canal was seen as holding back the commercial growth of the city during the booming 1920s. Filling in the old canal was not a controversial decision.

The Railroad Era

As the canal's importance was growing, the railroad joined it as a new transportation system in the late 1830s. If you had stood on Washington Street in those years, your view would have stretched over a few short village blocks and then out into the countryside. That early railroad line made an "intermodal" connection to the canal packet boats, landing just a block away. At that time when trains barely reached 20 mph speeds, the then small-village of Syracuse granted perpetual easements to the Syracuse and Utica Railroad for a minor set of rails down Washington Street. Eventually, S&U RR became a part of the huge New York Central, and the perpetual easements became an urban planning straightjacket. Canal use would fade from importance by the beginning of the 20th century but by then, passenger rail travel had assumed critical proportions for Syracuse.

Decisions about the Washington Street railroad corridor were far more controversial than decisions about the unwanted canal. By 1900, every single passenger train on the New York Central ran down Washington Street and all the DL&W freight trains ran through the Westside. Both of these routes ran at street level. Trying to cross Washington Street, on foot or in a car, could be life-threatening. Opening a window in a nearby building at the wrong time meant a face full of soot and smoke.

Any solution to the growing problem had to involve the agreement of the privately-owned railroads. Two plans were advanced and went to public referendum in 1927. One choice was an elevated track just north of the Erie Canal, on a secondary right of way owned by New York Central. In an era of train travel, having the primary means of transportation downtown seemed logical and the railroad interests preferred this route. The other choice in the referendum was to reroute the trains to the northern edge of the city.

In the public debate over the options, some people envisioned downtown remaining the central hub of community activity, others saw the mobility of autos allowing for services to be more distant. People also saw the elevated tracks in different aesthetic lights. The promise that downtown railroad elevations could be made attractive and not divisive, plus the sense that the railroad interests wouldn't cooperate if the public voted to relocate passenger lines outside downtown, led to the approval of the elevated track. What the public couldn't foresee was how the railroad would almost immediately begin to lose ground and how radically the transportation landscape would soon be altered. By 1962, when passenger traffic had nose-dived, New York Central moved the passenger lines to the northern route, the original rerouting plan for trains, and the route that is still used today. The old elevated tracks became the route of I-690.

Could the radical change in U.S. transportation have been anticipated? Perhaps not, but the lesson in deciding the future of I-81 is to look closely at present and developing trends in transportation needs. The historical precedents also show us that aesthetics and connectivity are among the factors that should be weighed carefully in transportation planning. The design and location of transportation corridors can have long-lasting impacts on how a city develops.

The Highway

The long-term impacts of the I-81 elevated viaducts on downtown and nearby neighborhoods were also unanticipated.

The entire national interstate highway system was part of the post-World War II plan to provide fast ground transportation as a military advantage. The National Interstate and Defense Highways Act of 1956 authorized the biggest public works project in the nation's history, and completely altered the course of America's urban development, which would thereafter be based on the automobile.

As the role of highways became more central to American life, cities, fearing their economic interests would be harmed, sought ways to incorporate the new roadways. The NYS Thruway had avoided going through urban areas when it was complete in the 1950s. That led some Syracuse business interests to complain that the road moved business away from the city center.

The elevated segment of I-81 was originally intended to follow Townsend Street through downtown. Mayor

Anthony Henninger opposed an elevated highway, seeing it becoming an ugly wall dividing downtown (paralleling the debate over the elevated railroads). Henninger and others wanted to depress the highway but place it under a proposed community plaza, a cultural and governmental complex to be built north and east of today's Everson. The civic plaza would be elevated as a giant bridge over the highway. However, the state opposed this idea, viewing the project as costly and difficult to engineer.

In 1958 the city agreed to a compromise moving the elevated I-81 further east along Almond Street and through Syracuse's 15th Ward. The 15th ward, then a primarily black, mixed-use neighborhood, was viewed as a slum area, with substandard housing and commercial structures. The neighborhood had been negatively affected by government-backed mortgage policies, and targeted for Urban Renewal clearance.

OCL study committee member Emanuel Carter, Professor of Landscape Architecture at SUNY ESF, presented the history of how federally-backed government mortgages were promoted under President Franklin Roosevelt's administration as a way to strengthen the U.S. economy. The system that turned a nation of renters into one of home buyers supported suburban development and left the cities behind, particularly those city neighborhoods that housed blacks and recent immigrants. Because of the way the system was skewed, homebuyers couldn't get federally-backed mortgages in "red-lined" black and ethnic neighborhoods, so when the more affluent residents of those neighborhoods did buy homes, they had to go elsewhere. Neighborhoods were depleted of leadership and capital, and lost ground.

There was little opposition to the destruction of these "rundown" neighborhoods. Almond Street bounded University Hospital, but the relationship between the University Hill area and downtown was not a major consideration in the discussion. The institutions were for the most part located farther up the hill. At the time, the late 1950s, downtown Syracuse still had a bustling economy and a link with the University was not a major concern. Downtown business and retail interests could not foresee the benefits of a connection to the expanding institutional complex on the hill.

The city was promised an "artistic and beautiful" elevated highway, an open system of trestle construction compared to the elevated highway along Boston's waterfront, then under construction (and of course now replaced by a tunnel to reconnect the city and the

waterfront). By 1967, Syracuse newspaper editorials were already calling the elevated highway an eyesore, pleading for "... landscaping and beautification of the unsightly route 81 elevated highway and other elements of the ugly Onondaga Interchange now nearing completion in the heart of Syracuse." From a transportation standpoint, in 1973 the Syracuse Herald-American called I-81 through Syracuse a "multi-million dollar mess" and blamed it on "poor planning."

A century ago the city of Syracuse removed the Erie Canal; within just a few years the city was completely changed. This may be a similar defining moment for the city and the region. Decisions made about I-81 within the next few years will have a lasting impact on the community in terms of economic development, aesthetics, transportation options and overall quality of life.

Planning Considerations

Current Transportation Trends

Between November 2007 and August 2008, Americans drove 53.2 billion miles less than they did over the same period a year earlier – exceeding the 1970s total decline of 49.3 billion miles. And while the record gasoline prices driving the downturn in travel did not last, economists warn that increasing global demand is going to make gasoline less affordable over the long term.

Regionally, homebuyers here haven't faced the mushrooming housing prices of homes that have driven residents of other cities far from the center. But lifestyle choices as well as attractive exurban developments have led many to take on longer commutes.

Now some people are seeking alternate ways of getting around. Centro figures for August 2008 show a nine percent jump in ridership over August 2007 with longer, intercity travel showing the greatest increase. The Auburn to Syracuse line showed the biggest spike, with a 14 percent increase in ridership over August 2007.

While some commuters began rethinking how they commute, and how and where they live as a response to high fuel costs, others were already recomputing those factors before prices rose. Obviously, greater use of public transportation, bicycling, carpooling and more fuel-efficient cars are a large part of the equation. The high cost of car travel has also highlighted a growing "back to the city" movement occurring in some urban areas, as well as serious studies of many alternate transit options.

High gasoline prices and quality of life issues are among the factors driving change. But the new attractiveness of many resurgent American downtowns is drawing both younger Americans as well as retirees to urban areas, helping to redefine transportation there.

Some of the current transportation trends include:

- Redesigned streets move cars more safely and provide better pedestrian and bicycle access.
- Sidewalks, well-defined curbs, medians and crosswalks, bicycle and bus lanes are getting more attention in a trend called "complete streets."
- New mobility hubs offer "under-one-roof" access to buses, trains and streetcars, car-share vehicles (think ZipCars, found at SU and CuseCar) and bike-share bicycles (pick up a bicycle at one station, drop it off another for a fee) as well as cafes, newsstands, wireless internet access, maps and up-to-the minute information on when buses, trains and streetcars will arrive.
- Bicycle boulevards increase the number of street miles dedicated to cycling, reinforcing the bicycle commuter option as well as encouraging fitness and lowering carbon emissions.
- Bus prioritization including bus-only lanes, bus rapid transit, signal prioritization and other technologies are engineered to make transit quicker, more convenient and thus a more viable option for commuters.
- Digital signage and cell phone tools allow bus riders to keep tabs on their bus.
- Pedestrian promenades with wider sidewalks, benches, public art and landscaping encourage walking and bring life to city streets.
- New transportation concepts such as Podcars (computer-guided driverless cars on their own track) are being pursued, and old ideas are getting renewed interest (carpooling, 4-day work weeks coupled with telecommuting.)

Other more radical transportation trends, such as congestion pricing (charges levied on cars entering cities during peak travel times), haven't taken hold in major U.S. cities. But they do help us to understand some of the underlying issues associated with city traffic. One problem is that a good portion of time cars spend on streets isn't devoted to getting to a destination; it's spent finding parking. Traffic engineers have found that a large percentage of cars in traffic are looking for parking. Taken out of the picture, cars searching for

parking would decrease road congestion significantly. While it might be thought that more parking spaces would therefore lead to less congestion, the opposite is true. Build parking garages and more drivers will show up to use them, rather than use transit. Adding parking spaces leads to more cars and increased traffic. By allowing free or inexpensive parking, a city creates a temptation for drivers: drive around looking for a space and contribute to traffic rather than pull into the first garage in sight.

In Traffic: Why We Drive the Way We Do (And What It Says About Us) Tom Vanderbilt writes about how the city of Copenhagen, Denmark, solved its congestion problem. Over the course of a decade, the city slowly cut out parking spaces, a little bit at a time so it wouldn't be noticed. Bicycle lanes or parks were among the parking replacements. Over that same time period, bicycle traffic rose and the number of cars on the roads decreased.

Modern technology holds a variety of keys to making parking easier. Parking guidance systems that employ electronic signs along main roads can send drivers entering cities to garages with available spaces at any given time, cutting the time drivers spend in the parking hunt. These systems are already employed in many European cities.

Planning and Land Use Principles and Trends

When I-81 was built, downtown Syracuse was still bustling, though it was beginning to lose ground to the suburbs. Business leaders hoped the highway would keep Syracuse shoppers patronizing downtown businesses. As we now know, the combined impact of various government policies and cultural shifts had the opposite effect. The construction of highways and increased mobility, along with federal mortgage policies, local zoning and land use policies, and other factors, led people to live farther from the city center, and retail and jobs followed.

Across the country, highways helped drain resources away from cities, and also cut those cities apart. Elevated highways formed visual walls between neighborhoods and created shadowy areas that discouraged foot traffic. The bleakness of the resulting environment degraded the value of nearby structures and discouraged most types of development. Fast-moving through traffic added noise and air pollution.

Predicting how the highways would affect the use of land and resources, and the development of communities, was like looking into a crystal ball. The concept of a "land use plan" was in its formative stages. Still

there were warnings. Famed industrial designer Norman Bel Geddes was responsible for an interstate highway vision which inspired and excited people all over the country. In the General Motors Futurama exhibit at the 1939 World's Fair, Bel Geddes projected a 1960s world of "magic motorways" with cars traveling on 14-lane superhighways at speeds as high as 160 kilometers an hour. But Bel Geddes warned that interstates should never be permitted in cities.

Today, planners advocate using decisions about future land use as the basis for redesigning transportation systems. The Onondaga County 2010 Development Guide and the Onondaga County Settlement Plan help provide land use and transportation planning principles for this region.

The *2010 Development Guide* speaks to the transportation network in terms of promoting compact development, reinvesting in existing communities, and organizing land use patterns to offer an alternative to adding highway capacity as a solution to congestion. Strengthening the city of Syracuse is one of the goals of the Onondaga County 2010 Development Guide. The plan supports sustaining schools, roads and other facilities to support existing communities, rather than using tax dollars to create infrastructure for diffuse new development. Other guidelines help protect the environment and natural resources and create high-quality urban and suburban design.

The *Onondaga County Settlement Plan* carried the Development Guide a step further to set forth a number of specific policy recommendations for transportation systems planning, from the regional level down to the block level. They include:

- **Intermodal Balance.** Seek to attain a healthy balance among transportation modes, including cars, transit, bicycles, and walking.
- **Mobility vs. Accessibility.** Enhancement of all people's access to their daily needs should be primary goal.
- **Regional Facilities vs. Local Needs.** Regional transportation goals should not be allowed to trump the local need for healthy neighborhoods.
- **The Highway-less Town /The Town-less Highway.** High-speed roadways should not be allowed to pass through neighborhoods. Rural highways should be kept free of roadside development.
- **Traffic Calming.** Redesign streets that are plagued by speeding, and design thoroughfares to lower-speed specifications.

SUNY ESF Design Studio Project

As part of its research, the study committee asked graduate students in the Department of Landscape Architecture at SUNY-ESF to contribute design studies addressing four alternatives for the future I-81 corridor: (1) keeping the current right-of-way and rebuilding a viaduct that meets engineering design standards; (2) putting the corridor in a tunnel from just south of Castle Street to the Nettleton Commons site; (3) putting the corridor at grade through the north/south length of the City, and; (4) re-routing the corridor onto Interstate 481 and developing Almond Boulevard as an new at-grade street between Downtown and University Hill.

The students took into account many of the same findings considered by the study committee and came to the conclusion that an urban boulevard design scheme best holds the potential to connect the assets of University Hill to those of downtown Syracuse and promote economic development in a state-of-the-art environmentally friendly way.

While there are many potential boulevard alternatives, all of which are dependent on detailed technical feasibility studies, for the purpose of illustration the students focused on a specific design scheme. Their plan creates an Almond Boulevard on the familiar Almond Street corridor and both provides access to University Hill and Downtown and creates desirable frontage for potential developments such as campus buildings and quadrangles, office buildings and retail, apartments and condominiums rather than garages, surface parking lots and the blank sides of buildings.

In this particular vision, Almond Boulevard is conceived as a street with four lanes of through traffic, two northbound and two southbound. Two slow traffic/parking lanes designed to allow vehicular and bicycle access to destinations along the boulevard are separated from the through lanes by broad medians planted with large-species trees. The wide sidewalks will also be bordered by trees and allow generous spaces for outdoor restaurants and pedestrians. The intention is to develop design guidelines that call for the Almond Boulevard corridor and its crossing streets to include densely-planted borders of trees, roof gardens, vertical gardens – a green infrastructure network that effectively reduces air pollution, processes storm water in a way that prevents combined sewer overflow, mitigates the heat effect of urban pavement, increases urban biodiversity, and reduces energy costs.

University Hill Transportation Study

More roads and more parking, as discussed earlier in this report, creates a vicious cycle leading to more cars on the road, more congestion, more roadway capacity and ultimately... the need for more roads and more parking. Recognizing that a solution to the growing parking and congestion problem in the University Hill area required more than just a study of parking spaces and vehicle use, the SMTC commissioned a comprehensive assessment of issues including land use and interstate access, as well as transit, parking, bicycles and pedestrian needs.

The University Hill Transportation Study, released in 2008, recommends a system that “moves people, goods and services,” not just cars, to address the parking problem. With four million square feet of planned development by institutions on the Hill over the next two decades, a blueprint for growth without increased congestion is critical. Most importantly for the Hill area, the study recommends implementation of a mixed-use development program by medical and educational institutions that includes retail, housing, office, academic and medical space and creates a walkable neighborhood that serves commuters, residents, employers, employees, and students. Complementary elements of the plan include an improved transit network, the adoption of an integrated parking strategy, and a bike boulevard network to encourage pedestrian, not vehicle, traffic.

The report goes to the heart of the relationship between transportation and land use and the need to reduce the trend toward increased automobile use and parking while helping the institutions on University Hill grow.

Interestingly, one of the ways to improve that relationship is to create just the sort of neighborhood that is drawing people back to urban areas in many parts of the country. Build a mixed-use neighborhood that is livable and walkable, that provides good access for bicyclists and thus puts enough people on the streets to support an enhanced transit system, and the number of cars on the road will decline, the University Hill study reports.

By incorporating intended development projects such as medical offices and academic buildings, as well as parking garages, the study consultants created a coordinated plan that mitigates the transportation impacts of institutional growth and creates a “distinct place,” the kind of neighborhoods that are drawing people to relocate to cities, by following these guiding principles:

- **Build Vibrant Streets.** Streets are not just for cars. Street life is essential to a vital community and well-designed streets draw pedestrians to help create that vitality. Street level facades should attract the eye; windows should let walkers see inside and be seen for a sense of interaction and safety.
- **“Fine-grained mixed-use development”** means condominiums and offices atop street level stores, restaurants and entertainment venues. If a building (such as a parking garage) breaks up the inviting line of storefronts that generates pedestrians’ sense of security and interest, it should be wrapped in retail to maintain the sense of safety and interest, and fit in with the general character of the area.
- **Enhance walkability** and people can move from classroom to cafe to bookstore and office without using their vehicles. Those who choose to live in the area won’t need a car. This pedestrian base is the foundation of a successful transit system, which can further enhance the viability of the area.
- **Foster multi-modalism.** Users can choose from various transportation options or switch from one to another. Integrate transit, bicycles, walking routes and roads to reduce car trips.
- **Create a shared vision** that fosters the goals of each Hill institution, and focuses on good urban design.

To quote the report, “A strong sense of place requires careful planning and managed development over a number of years – it takes time and skill. If development happens without following a planned urban design, sense of place is much harder to achieve.”

As part of the University Hill Transportation Study, interstate access to the area was assessed.

Growth in the core of the city is expected to increase congestion at access points to the downtown/Hill area from I-81, which funnels traffic from I-690 and I-481 as well. While there are a number of possible alternatives to address this increase in traffic, reconfiguration of the Almond Street corridor could be a key element to improving access for those traveling to, from, and around the central city.

Narrowing Almond Street between Adams Street and Harrison Street and constructing modern roundabouts at the Adams Street and Harrison Street intersections are among the short-term measures suggested in the University Hill study to improve traffic flow, pedestrian and bicyclist safety, and increase attractiveness

of the area to institutional and private investment. Both strategies are being studied further.

As a longer-term strategy, the SMTC report suggests study of an Almond Street urban boulevard concept – removal of all or a portion of the I-81 viaduct – in combination with other transportation improvements, for its potential to improve accessibility to and from the area and increase its economic viability. An urban boulevard is described as “a special kind of street designed to move large volumes of traffic expeditiously while providing for high-quality urban frontage.” Creation of an Almond Street boulevard presupposes relocation of I-81 through traffic to I-481, requiring reconstruction of the merges with I-81, which has not yet been studied.

The University Hill Study foresees the boulevard and rerouting option as creating greater accessibility for all modes of travel; better connections to downtown and the area just west of I-81, improvement of air quality in the area, and greater opportunity for mixed-use development in the area around the boulevard.

The University Hill Transportation study provided a first look at “rethinking I-81,” preliminarily answering the question of whether relocation of through traffic to I-481 makes it possible for local traffic to travel through the city on a surface-level boulevard. But there is no single boulevard alternative. Would the surface-level boulevard replace all or just part of the existing viaduct? How many traffic lanes would be necessary? What would be the best design to accommodate pedestrians? The consultants assumed several possibilities, from a small-scale boulevard extending between Burt and Harrison Street, and rejoining the interstate highway system at the I-81/I-690 interchange to a large-scale boulevard requiring reconfiguration of the I-81/I-690 interchange. The options require further refinement and study.

The report concluded that the boulevard concept should be examined as part of the I-81 Corridor study as a long-term transportation improvement with community “placemaking” potential.

Transportation Funding

The funding structure for highway projects is a complex process involving coordination between federal, state and local agencies to develop long-range plans, work programs and funding proposals. Typically, the federal share of National Highway System projects is eighty percent, (although it can be more for some projects such as safety improvements) and the state share is twenty percent.

Although the federal funding mechanism for highway transportation projects may change when the current legislation expires in 2009, it is most likely that any successor legislation will continue transportation planning structure, implemented through statewide planning and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) such as the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council. Currently, SAFETEA-LU* mandates that all federal transportation funds in the SMTC study area – which includes all of Onondaga County and small portions of Madison and Oswego Counties – go through SMTC.

SMTC's planning activities are intended to coordinate transportation improvements with state and local economic development and growth and travel demand projections, and are guided by financial assumptions. The process involves creating an updatable, long-range plan for transportation improvements, coupled with a short-term list of specific regional projects for which federal funds are anticipated.

The SMTC develops three key documents that are the components of the transportation planning and programming in the Syracuse Metropolitan Area. The Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is a blueprint that guides transportation development in the metropolitan area over a 25-year period and is updated annually. The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is an outline of SMTC's planning activity agenda for the coming year. The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is a multi-year list of specific projects for which federal funds are anticipated and is the basis for the state budget appropriation for any project. The TIP represents transportation priorities established by SMTC for transit, pedestrian, bicycle and freight-related projects as well as highways.

The funding process requires consensus among SMTC member agencies, which represent a number of city, state, federal and private agencies. **

Physical Characteristics

National Interstate System

I-81 serves both through and local traffic in the core of the city of Syracuse. How well I-81 functions as a local commuter route is questionable, but its role as a link in a system of regional and national roadways is important.

The elevated I-81 that bisects the city is a short segment of the national corridor that extends 855 miles from the Canadian border to just northeast of Knoxville, Tennessee. Together with I-95, I-81 forms the Capitol Corridor, which carries up to 12 percent of the gross national product. According to study committee member Bill Egloff of the New York State Department of Transportation, it sustains 350,000 jobs that depend on transportation and trade with Canada. It is a north-south link in a highway system that provides access across the region from Boston to Buffalo, from Halifax to New York City and beyond. The decisions about the future of I-81 must consider not only local and regional interests but also the federal government, which will look at the future of the interstate from a standpoint of impact on cross-border transportation, trade and security. Whether I-481 has the capacity to provide an alternative route to I-81's downtown segment will only be certain after travel demand and engineering study.

Structural Issues

Whether the I-81 Syracuse city corridor is rebuilt as an elevated roadway or an alternate approach is taken to construction, it will require significant funding and affect traffic patterns for the duration of construction. The area in need of attention is substantial. In the elevated portion of the roadway, there are more than 124 bridge spans totaling 1.4 miles. They cross eighteen city streets carrying a total of approximately 100,000 vehicles a day. The I-81 bridge spans are fifty years old. Over time, the bridge spans have deteriorated and will continue to do so.

*SAFETEA-LU, the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users, the legislation that has governed transportation funding since 2005, expires in 2009. The 2005 act provided \$244 billion in guaranteed funding with the federal gasoline tax as the primary source for appropriations. Under the act, state transportation appropriations are also supported by state gasoline taxes, excise taxes, fees and tolls; states can issue bonds backed by gasoline taxes or other revenues and federal credit enhancements exist for state bonded projects. SAFETEA-LU provides for the allocation of resources through various funding "buckets" with the primary bucket being the National Highway System Program.

** The SMTC member agencies include:
Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board (CNY RPDB)
Central New York Regional Transportation Authority (CNYRTA)
City of Syracuse Mayor
City of Syracuse Common Council
Empire State Development Corporation
Metropolitan Development Association (MDA)
New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC)
New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT)
New York State Thruway Authority (NYSTA)
Onondaga County Executive
Onondaga County Legislature
Onondaga County Planning Board
Syracuse Planning Commission

As the deck of I-81 has aged, steel reinforcing bars have begun to show through. The piers which support the roadway are deteriorating; joints, bearings and concrete replacement are all issues to be addressed. The I-81 viaducts were recently put under a special ongoing emergency repair contract as the aging infrastructure requires an increasing amount of unscheduled repair work. Although NYSDOT has created a timeline to effect a major overhaul of the roadway, for now the repair process is patchwork and costly. Over the recent three-year period, twenty million dollars was spent on two repair projects.

As expensive as any solution likely will be, the cost of not making a timely decision could be even higher. Where decisive steps are not taken, stopgap measures can lead to years of construction repair. Twenty-three years of “emergency” repair have been recorded in the case of the Gowanus Expressway in Brooklyn. That roadway has been under emergency contract for repair every year since 1985, costing the community not just in terms of construction dollars, but constant inconvenience and delays, and less than ideal safety conditions.

Problems/Design Considerations

Whatever choices are made as to the future of I-81, there is general agreement that in its current configuration, I-81 does not meet today’s safety design standards.

- Drivers on I-81 negotiate a series of “reverse curves,” or “S” curves. While not inherently dangerous, these curves become hazardous in darkness, rain, or any time drivers have difficulty compensating for the road conditions.
- Anyone who has ever struck a curb while driving can understand why highways and other high-speed roads don’t generally have curbs. I-81 does have curbs, and the distance between the travel lane and the curb is just two feet.
- Today’s highways are built for optimal sight lines: Drivers can see a slowdown ahead and have adequate time to reduce speed. Drivers on I-81 ride over “hills” (roadway fluctuations called “vertical curves”) that block those sight lines, both on the roadway and on entrance ramps. Drivers have only a short distance to accelerate to highway speed on some ramps. Consider the Pearl Street entrance ramp: As a driver arrives at the hill’s crest, traffic ahead is not visible; a stoppage directly ahead in the driver’s path is more likely to lead to an accident.

- The I-81/690 interchange is poorly designed by today’s standards. In addition to providing access between highways, there was an attempt to provide access to city streets, which led to poor sight distances and merge/diverge sections that are too short.
- When an accident does occur on the highway, emergency vehicles have a hard time getting to it. The lack of road shoulders and the roadway’s limited width can prevent a quick response time.
- In addition, with no road shoulders and limited lane width, it is difficult for rescue personnel to work around the cars involved in the accident. If a lane is kept open to keep traffic flowing, EMS personnel are typically working in very close proximity to moving traffic, without a safety buffer.
- Snow removal and stormwater draining into city streets add to the problems. Drainage pipes leak and fill with dirt and gravel. The water also freezes atop the piers which causes rebar rust and requires extensive maintenance.
- Repairs must be conducted almost exclusively at night.

Additionally, for local traffic, highway on- and off-ramp traffic can cause congestion “hotspots.” Traffic, rather than flowing through multiple city streets to exit the highway, funnels onto one or two routes. Similarly, exiting highway traffic concentrates cars in one location, slowing cars on the street and the ramp. Backup from the off-ramp can halt traffic in one highway lane, create a slowdown in a center lane, and bring on a bottleneck.

The University Hill Transportation Study projects that by the year 2025, future growth of the medical and educational institutions will exacerbate capacity problems around I-81 access ramps unless changes are made to the transportation and land use systems in the downtown and University Hill area.

Emergency Access

If I-81 is not reconstructed as a viaduct through downtown, will the emergency vehicle access be affected? Surprisingly, the answer could be yes – for the better. Interstate-81 through downtown Syracuse is used less by emergency medical services transport than most people may imagine.

For an emergency vehicle driver, the trip breaks down to two crucial components. The first phase, “response to scene” is most crucial. Patients are often stabilized at the site of the incident or inside the emergency

vehicle; only five percent of patients are rushed to the hospital. For the most part, to minimize the initial response time, emergency vehicles have been prepositioned throughout their service area. Rural/Metro serves the city and inner suburbs; their EMS vehicles travel relatively short distances to the scene and do not use the interstates to get to the scene, Mike Addario of Rural/Metro told committee members. (At any one time, between six and sixteen Rural/Metro vehicles are scattered throughout the city. Their positioning is based on previous call data regarding where and when incidents tend to occur.)

For the second leg of the journey, transport to hospital, Rural/Metro drivers choose not to rely on I-81, said Addario. Highway construction shuts down entrances and exits in an unpredictable way; an unanticipated closure of an on- or off-ramp can significantly slow the journey of a driver traveling to a Syracuse hospital. Rural/Metro is one of 21 ambulance services in Onondaga County but takes roughly two-thirds of the EMS calls, 50,000 a year. Other ambulance services, particularly those serving outlying areas, may be more likely to use highways during their hospital transports. With 6,500 calls per year, North Area Volunteer Ambulance Corp (NAVAC) services Mattydale, Hinsdale, North Syracuse Village, Clay, Cicero, and up to Bridgeport, according to Chris Bitner, the Corps' executive director. While highway routes are not a factor in "response to scene" travel, when transporting patients to Syracuse hospitals, NAVAC drivers generally do use the highway, Bitner said, typically exiting north of downtown, to St Joseph's Hospital.

For travel in the Almond Street corridor, the University Hill Transportation study concludes that "emergency vehicles would be provided more travel route options, which can be critical in cases of congestion or during special events on the University Hill" with a boulevard in place of the interstate viaduct for local traffic.

The power of connectivity and traditional street grid design is being recognized in many different contexts, including emergency vehicle operations. A recently published report on the *Emergency Response & Street Design Initiative*, a partnership of The Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and fire marshals from across the county, concludes that compared to wider streets with higher speeds, the traditional street grid, "can improve emergency response times by providing several routes to any given address." The initiative, which seeks to reduce traffic injuries and deaths

through better street design, promotes traditional neighborhood design as an alternative to the cul-de-sacs and extensive road networks of suburban sprawl.

Physical Impacts in the Corridor

When Syracuse newspaper editorial writers called for "landscaping and beautification of the unsightly route" that was the newly built I-81 viaduct over 40 years ago, they were not alone in their disillusionment. As freeways were built through cities, it became apparent to many that they defaced the landscape and cut off neighborhoods from one another. Opposition rose at many levels, from grassroots to government. Famed San Francisco newspaper columnist Herb Caen helped stop an extension of the Embarcadero Freeway when he termed it the "Dambarcadero."

The Embarcadero Freeway was replaced with a boulevard in 2002. The conditions that plagued it and other elevated urban freeways exist today in the area around I-81. The I-81 project affected city blocks to the east and west of the roadway for much of its run through the city. The most noticeable impact was the demolition of scores of buildings, interrupting the physical density that defined the city. The resulting physical and visual chiasm created a nondescript, inhospitable streetscape and divided adjacent neighborhoods from one another.

Aerial photographs of the I-81 corridor clearly show how the freeway cuts the city into sectors and creates block shapes and arrangements with limited possibilities for development. In a presentation to the study committee, urban planner and study committee member Christine Capella-Peters pointed to the spaces under the highway and on either side of it as "lost space," not suitable for many uses beyond that of parking lots and garages. The recently constructed hospital parking garage at Almond, Harrison and Adams Streets "turns its back" to the corridor and gives pedestrians and passing motorists the blank face of brick walls. The unappealing physical state of the corridor makes a garage seem a logical choice, as opposed to housing or retail, Capella-Peters explained. With an ideal urban boulevard design, and planning guidelines, parking structures would incorporate commercial space supporting nearby institutions and their employees and visitors.

The few historic and older buildings scattered in these otherwise barren blocks have suffered because of such bleak surroundings and therefore many have been subjected to disinvestment and in some cases

abandonment. The location and design of the limited number of newer buildings enhances the wall-like character of the corridor. And the land itself, whether used for parking or configured as open space is, at best, unkempt and, at worst, actively deteriorating – making the overall view of the city unattractive and disjointed.

The devaluing influence of the overhead expressway leaves historic buildings that are ripe for preservation, such as the row of buildings along Townsend Street punctuated by the Hyman Smith Building, sadly deteriorating. Located to the southwest of the intersection of I-81 and I-690, walled-off by the highways, and plagued by noise and air pollution, these historic buildings present a lost redevelopment opportunity.

The viaduct looms large in the reasons for lackluster development in the blocks on either side of it. Construction of the roadway altered more than the land occupied by the travel lanes and shoulders, entrance and exit ramps, bridges and viaduct. The physical impacts of the pending decision cannot be overlooked, and should be a principal concern in considering the future of the I-81 corridor.

Environmental Issues

Once options for I-81 have been selected for further study, the environmental impacts of each scenario will be studied in depth. Historic buildings, protected sites, noise, storm water runoff, and air quality are covered by various state and federal regulations. An environmental assessment is part of the current NYSDOT I-81 Corridor Study being undertaken by Stantec, an engineering and design consultant. The assessment will provide an environmental inventory of protected sites, including wetlands, streams, endangered species habitats, and historic buildings as a basis for evaluating potential alternatives. The inventory indicates areas to be avoided or where mitigation measures might be necessary. More detailed environmental analyses of specific alternatives will be part of subsequent DOT studies during the I-81 planning process.

Air pollution and its effects on global warming, and on health, are of particular concern in highway projects. Projects should not contribute to an increase in vehicle emissions. Rerouting of through traffic from the current I-81 to I-481/81 could increase total vehicle miles traveled in the region, and increase pollutants that contribute to global warming, if it is assumed that land use and local travel patterns in the University Hill/downtown area or elsewhere in the region do not change. Removing I-81 through traffic from the

Almond Street corridor, however, would have the positive effect of significantly reducing emissions carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides and volatile organic compound (VOC) within the surrounding area, according to an air quality analysis memorandum in the University Hill Transportation Study.

Research shows that the pollutants in vehicle emissions have negative effects on the health of those living close to freeways. In 2007, the Air Resources Board of the California EPA released a report compiling the work of numerous studies on the health impacts of living close to highways. Among the findings of a ten-year study of 5,500 children:

- adverse effects on lung function growth, asthma, school attendance
- an 89 percent increase in asthma risk
- significant decrease in lung function, measured as worse within 500 meters and 1000 meters of freeway
- five to eight percent increase in risk of acute respiratory infection in schools close to high-traffic roads
- for newborns exposed to high traffic and high carbon monoxide levels in vitro, a 36 percent increase in prevalence of low birth weight, 27 percent increase in prevalence of premature birth and up to three times the risk of cardiac birth defects

Distance from a highway seems to be a mitigating factor. A 2007 University of Southern California study followed 3,600 children over 13 years. The study showed that children living within 500 yards of a freeway (about the length of four football fields or slightly more than a quarter of a mile) had increased lung impairment compared to children living 1500 yards (.85 miles) from the highway. During the course of the study, roughly one third of the children moved to other homes within the same communities. Those who moved farther from the highway suffered less damage than those who remained in close proximity, according to a 2007 article in the *Los Angeles Times*. “The finding is important ‘because it shows that within communities, some children are at higher risk than others,’” Dr. Thomas Sandstrom and Dr. Bert Brunekreef wrote in an editorial accompanying the paper. “Thus, environmental equity is an issue of local rather than regional dimensions.”

Monitoring of air quality in proximity to I-81 in Syracuse demonstrates that points closer to the high-

way have poorer air quality. Understanding how the ambient environment affects the built environment in urban areas is an objective of the Syracuse Center of Excellence in Environmental and Energy Systems (Syracuse CoE), whose headquarters is currently under construction. Field measurements were taken in June 2008 at seven locations around the perimeter of the CoE building site bounded by Almond Street, Erie Boulevard, and Washington Streets, near the intersection of I-81 and I-690. The highways carry about 6,000 vehicles per hour during rush hour, according to NYSDOT. The data show that the concentration of pollutants produced by gas and diesel-powered

vehicles, particularly carbon monoxide (CO), Black Carbon (BC), and Ultrafine Particles (UFP) increased with proximity to the highways within that block.

The University Hill Transportation Study leaves us with this thought: "...it is necessary to examine more sustainable and less cost-intensive options of mobility than what is currently practiced. In addition, it is important to consider the impact of the transportation system on environmental and public health-related issues such as air emissions, obesity rates and asthma rates. This raises the question: 'Is there a more sustainable way to travel to and through University Hill?'"

III. Lessons Learned From Other Cities

The Freeway Removal Alternative: A Growing Trend

The freeway revolts of the 1960s laid the groundwork for the freeway removal projects underway today. As freeways were built to ring around and cut across cities, citizens witnessed the destructive impact of the highways on neighborhoods and mobilized to fight against extension of the system. The way cities were being redefined to serve motorists at the cost of local businesses, residents, and public spaces was wrong, they protested.

In **Vancouver**, the only major North American city without a freeway built through it, freeway opponents

saw an example of a thriving city where roads had been designed to lead people into the city, not to race through it. A proposal in the 1960s to build a freeway through Vancouver was blocked by grassroots neighborhood efforts. **Portland, Oregon** became known as the first city to demolish an existing freeway. In 1968 the city recommended removing a functioning expressway to build a park to enhance connectivity between the city's downtown and its waterfront, and in 1974 Harbor Drive freeway was closed without causing any traffic snarls.

In many cases, action on freeway removal hinges on the physical failures of the elevated freeways themselves. In **San Francisco**, it took an earthquake.

San Francisco

In the last two decades, the city of San Francisco has removed two of its elevated highways: the Embarcadero and Central Freeways.

The Embarcadero, the six-lane, tree-lined boulevard along the waterfront that replaced the Embarcadero Freeway in many ways epitomizes the freeway-to-boulevard movement. The double-decker freeway, which separated downtown from the waterfront, was completed in 1959 as part of an intended freeway system connecting the Bay and Golden Gate Bridges. However San Francisco's "Freeway Revolt," a grassroots rebellion that stopped the building of numerous sections of a planned freeway system, left the Embarcadero Freeway as a one-mile connector to the North Beach and Chinatown areas, carrying 60,000 cars a day at its peak.

The freeway was closed after being damaged in the 1989 Loma Prieta Earthquake, and demolished in 1991 over the objections of merchants in Chinatown. Now a "complete street," serving not just 26,000 cars a day but pedestrians, streetcar riders and other travelers, the Embarcadero has made the waterfront an attractive destination for tourists and locals alike. Since the demolition of the freeway, the area has seen restoration of the Ferry Building, establishment of new residential areas, and other redevelopment, including a flourishing Chinatown.

The demolition of the Embarcadero Freeway is an impressive example of how freeway removal can have a positive impact on the visual environment, and a catalytic effect on development in the right-of-way and even in nearby neighborhoods.

Although the boulevard is broad, it is designed for pedestrians, bikes and transit riders, as well as vehicles, and has provided a connection to the waterfront and the restored Ferry Building. And while about half the traffic on the former freeway was diverted onto alternate routes, traffic was successfully absorbed without disruption.

While the removal of the Embarcadero Freeway spurred economic development in a tourist-oriented, waterfront location, the removal of San Francisco's Central Freeway occurred in a primarily working class, residential neighborhood, and also served to transform it. Like the Embarcadero, the Central Freeway was completed in 1959, envisioned as a part of a larger freeway system that was stopped by a citizen-led freeway revolt. At its peak, Central Freeway carried approximately 100,000 cars a day. Damaged by the earthquake, a segment of the freeway was demolished and engineers began planning a rebuild of the remaining freeway. Citizens and local officials, however, began to consider alternatives. When roadwork closed a segment of the remaining viaduct for four months without causing the anticipated gridlock, a surface boulevard concept gained in favor. In 1999, citizens voted for the boulevard alternative

over the freeway retrofit and the freeway closed for good in 2003.

Octavia Boulevard opened in 2005 with four center lanes for through traffic, landscaped dividers, two side lanes of local traffic and two lanes of on-street parking. The surrounding residential neighborhood has been transformed, green space added, new housing units are planned, and commercial property values in the area have increased. While the boulevard is still heavily used as a through route, traffic in the corridor dropped by half, as some of the traffic moved to alternate routes with sufficient capacity to handle the displaced traffic, and a small percentage of drivers switched to transit.

While it was the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake that ultimately led to the demolition of the Embarcadero and Central Freeways, it was rejection by the citizens and board of supervisors of the original 1955 freeway plan that kept San Francisco from becoming an automobile-oriented city in the first place. As the city began building the Embarcadero Freeway along the waterfront, and residents could envision the effect of the full freeway construction plan on neighborhoods and businesses, a powerful opposition movement emerged. The neighborhood quality of life and economic development priorities that fired opposition in the 1950s and 1960s came to play again the decision in the 1990s to reject the rebuilding of high-speed expressways through the city.

The Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989 damaged two elevated freeways, forcing closures and a citywide realization that traffic patterns altered to accommodate the shutdowns. Before the earthquake, tear-down proponents had held a referendum to bring down the Embarcadero Freeway. Opponents cried gridlock and the referendum failed. But after the earthquake, when the freeway closed and the feared gridlock failed to materialize, opinion shifted. The Embarcadero and Central Freeways were torn down and street-level boulevards built in their places.

The “earthquake” that is shifting opinions in other cities is less violent, but no less profound. In **Milwaukee**, John Norquist, the grassroots organizer who headed early freeway protests ultimately became the mayor who spearheaded the 2003 removal of the Park East Freeway to reknit the heart of that city.

As other cities begin to examine the costly prospect of rebuilding aging elevated highways, officials are becoming aware that other options exist. In **Seattle**, an earthquake damaged viaduct with a limited lifespan has encouraged thinking on a broad range of alternate transportation choices. As success stories of freeway removal in one city inspire consideration in others,

the idea of freeway removal is becoming closely linked with efforts at downtown and neighborhood revitalization.

A great deal of variation exists in how authorities deal with the freeway removal question, suggest authors of a recent paper “Shifting Urban Priorities? Removal of Inner City Freeways in the United States.” Overall, write authors Francesca Napolitan of Nelson/Nygaard and P. Christopher Zegras of MIT, a “fix-it-first” attitude prevails. “The standard approach when developing alternatives requires a ‘no-build’ option to be considered together with build-rehabilitate options. Perhaps the time has come to add a ‘tear-down’ option; shifting to a more systematic rather than an accidental way of evaluating options.”

Lessons Learned From Other Cities

The study committee took away several findings from the experiences of places that have selected alternatives to rebuilding freeways through their central cities.

Connectivity matters. In the 1970s, Portland, Oregon was the first U.S. city to remove a freeway. Despite the original predictions of traffic engineers that the plan was impossible, officials closed a four-lane, under-

Milwaukee

In 1971, the first section of Milwaukee’s Park East Freeway connecting I-43 to downtown was complete, and a block-wide swath of houses and businesses had been cleared to make way for continuation of the freeway to the lakefront. But neighborhood and environmental activists created sufficient opposition to stop construction of the extension, which would have bisected and blighted a major city park, cutting it off from Lake Michigan.

Thirty years later Milwaukee went a giant step further — they demolished the existing stretch of Park East Freeway, removing a dividing wall that cut through the city’s downtown, opening up 24 acres to development and increasing the development value of the land in the shadow of the former elevated highway.

One of the activists who opposed the freeway plan in the 1970s was John Norquist, a lathe operator and community organizer, who later became a state legislator and then mayor in 1988. As mayor,

Norquist saw the benefits that flowed when the state released the vacant land that had been cleared for the unbuilt section of the freeway. Sold off for redevelopment, that acreage became the East Pointe neighborhood, a mixed-use area of townhouses, condos, restaurants, shops, even a supermarket with pedestrian-friendly entrance on one side and parking lot on the other. The Urban Land Institute, presenting the project an Award for Excellence, noted: “East Pointe represents the culmination of a two-decade struggle to evolve from a proposed freeway that would have divided and further damaged a neighborhood into the creation of one of the country’s most successful examples of urban housing.”

Norquist also paid attention when the students of Peter Park, an adjunct professor at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee School of Architecture and Urban Planning, explored removal of the freeway in design studio projects. Park was invited to serve as the City’s Planning Director, and worked with Norquist in heightening the importance of comprehensive planning and design standards.

Demolished in 2003 and replaced by a six-lane street level boulevard, the Park East freeway removal has been deemed a success. Traffic congestion was actually alleviated by the reconfiguration of limited access streets which collected traffic from the freeway’s three entry/exit points — the restored city street grid dispersed traffic over many streets and traffic flow improved. Instead of spending \$100 million to rebuild the viaduct, only \$25 million was spent on demolition and at-grade street improvements. And the economic development hoped for has begun to materialize. By 2007 projects totaling over \$300 million in investment had been completed, approved or proposed.

The freeway created negative space in a downtown where there was potential for local growth and neighborhood connection. When the freeway came down, it was replaced by three linked neighborhoods. Ugly surface level parking lots began to disappear and housing, commercial and institutional projects took over, bringing vibrancy to areas where people hadn’t wanted to walk before.

utilized roadway that ran along the Willamette River and cut off the city from its waterfront – to build a park.

The demise of Harbor Drive brought about a connection between Portland's then less-than-booming downtown and its waterfront. The riverfront park led to the creation of the Downtown Waterfront Urban Renewal Area; since its implementation in 1974, assessed land values in downtown Portland have increased an average of 10.4% annually. Freeway removal became one prescription in a series of bold urban planning moves that revitalized downtown Portland and made it a model studied by urban planners.

The benefits of connection can also be seen through the lens of Milwaukee, a city with economic challenges similar to those of Syracuse. In Milwaukee, the land cleared for the Park East Freeway extension, divided the existing neighborhood. When the State eventually released the land for redevelopment, that acreage became the East Pointe neighborhood, a thriving, mixed-use area of residential, restaurants and shops.

Freeway teardowns stimulate economic growth *within* neighborhoods.

The city of Milwaukee has experienced more than \$300 million in economic projects in formerly devalued neighborhoods since the teardown of the Park East Freeway. No longer in the shadow of an urban viaduct, many parking lots near the former freeway have been developed. A Fortune 500 corporation moved its headquarters within a block of the former highway and mixed-use developments are blossoming along the boulevard. According to the Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU), average assessed land values per acre in the footprint of the freeway grew by 180 percent and in the Park East Tax Increment District grew by 45 percent between 2001 and 2006, compared with a citywide increase of 25 percent.

In San Francisco, Hayes Valley, the devalued neighborhood that surrounded the Central Freeway has experienced a similar renaissance. Before the elevated freeway was replaced with Octavia Boulevard, condominium prices were 66 percent of San Francisco

Seattle

How do you replace an unsafe elevated highway when no one likes the alternatives? That problem has been plaguing the city of Seattle. In 2001 an earthquake damaged the Alaskan Way Viaduct, a 1.4 mile section of Highway 99 that divides Seattle's downtown core from its waterfront. What seemed an opportunity to redefine the city's transportation system and to link two vital neighborhoods that are divided by the viaduct became mired in divisive politics. Conflict led to a public referendum in March 2007, giving Seattle citizens a choice between rebuilding an elevated highway and constructing an underground tunnel. Residents voted "no" to both.

Ranked #1 on the Congress for the New Urbanism's "Freeways Without Futures" list, the Alaskan Way Viaduct is a major regional route into Seattle, carrying about 105,000 vehicles a day. The highway was built on fill, so the underground piles have become a problem, and the seawall that hold up the highway is also deteriorating.

After the 2007 referendum, the Seattle City Council called for the Seattle DOT to develop an Urban Mobility Plan – a systems approach, includ-

ing surface road, transit and other improvements – to replace the highway capacity. Tom Brennan is a Portland, Oregon-based transportation consultant, whose firm Nelson/Nygaard, is currently working with the City of Seattle. N/N is developing the Urban Mobility Plan, part of the Center City Seattle Access Strategy – strategic transit service and surface street grid improvements and demand management strategies that together would absorb the current traffic on the viaduct.

In a presentation to the "Rethinking I-81" study committee, Brennan explained that even before the earthquake damaged the elevated freeway, environmental issues, energy concerns, and growth projections were forcing Seattle to take a comprehensive systems approach to moving people and goods to and through downtown. The Vice-Chair of the City Council's Transportation committee put it this way: "The replacement of the viaduct is a fantastic opportunity to begin the creation of a 21st century transportation system. The car can no longer rule all our decisions. There's got to be a better way."

In June 2008, the State DOT released eight proposals for a new roadway, including boulevard, elevated viaduct, underground tunnel and cut-and-

cover tunnel alternatives. The State originally had a \$2.8 billion budget, but had spent nearly half of that on work to stabilize the existing viaduct. In January 2009, the Governor selected the underground tunnel alternative, expected to cost \$4.3 billion and take four years to construct, opening in 2015. The People's Waterfront Coalition, an association of organizations and citizens continues to promote a "No-Highway" solution based on four strategies:

- Fix missing or broken links in the larger road system and spread Viaduct traffic out;
- Take advantage of excess capacity of the new transit systems coming online;
- Create truck-only lanes on important freight corridors to keep freight moving; and
- Reduce demand with dense, walkable neighborhoods and disincentives for excessive driving.

These improvement projects, they say, could create a more fluid transportation system that in the long-term is a better solution than a costly megaproject without the flexibility to adapt to changing travel needs.

average prices; afterwards, they rose to 91 percent of average prices, with the most dramatic increase in prices along the new boulevard, according to CNU. In instances where intense commercial development has occurred, such as the businesses that line the Embarcadero, (jobs in that area increased by 23 percent), nearby housing has also mushroomed (by 51 percent.)

We are not alone in considering alternative options.

As communities face the need for massive expenditures for reconstruction of aging highways, they are beginning to reconsider the sustainability of current transportation systems, and their impact on other aspects of the community. Though only a few urban areas have actually torn down elevated highways, many other cities are in the process of doing so, and many more are considering the option. In fact, it is now becoming the norm to consider a teardown option in most cases.

The Congress for New Urbanism has included Syracuse in a list of cities they deem the Top Ten “Freeways Without Futures.” Chosen from more than 40 “candidates,” these cities, CNU concludes, present the best opportunities for freeway removal based on factors including the age of the structure, redevelopment potential, potential cost savings, ability to improve both overall mobility and local access, existence of pending infrastructure decisions, and local support. According to CNU, “Cities around the world are replacing urban highways with surface streets, saving billions of dollars on transportation infrastructure and revitalizing adjacent land with walkable, compact development. Transportation models that support connected street grids, improved transit, and revitalized urbanism will make reducing gasoline dependency and greenhouse gas emissions that much more convenient. It pays to consider them as cities evaluate their renewal strategies – and as the U.S. evaluates its federal transportation and climate policy.”

Where highways are eliminated from the central city, city street grids create additional traffic routes, and head off anticipated gridlock. In Milwaukee, traffic congestion was created by the limited access nature of the Park East Freeway. Just three exits served drivers to the area. When the freeway came down, boulevard access to a dozen streets allowed traffic to flow more logically. Drivers no longer had to use a specific exit and then backtrack to their destination, so underutilized streets absorbed some of the traffic. Bottlenecks that had existed at exit and entrance ramps were no longer an issue. In Seattle, planners are working on an Urban Mobility Plan – including street grid, transit, and parking and traffic management improvements – that can absorb traffic from the crumbling Alaskan Way Viaduct.

Freeway removal is more likely when the community considers values such as quality of life and economic development in transportation planning.

In the case studies, freeway removal became an option when the freeway became underutilized (as in Portland), or in need of major repair or rebuilding, as in San Francisco, Milwaukee and Seattle. There were also individuals, or groups with influence who believed in the freeway alternative. The authors of “Shifting Urban Priorities” concluded that another consideration of importance in those cities is that mobility of vehicles was a lower community priority than other goals such as quality of life or economic development. In Portland, city beautification was important; in San Francisco, the residents valued quality of life over high-speed access; in Milwaukee the economic development potential of the re-knit downtown and waterfront was the higher priority than vehicle mobility. The authors suggest a new framework for evaluating freeway projects that recognizes a paradigm shift away from engineering efficiency to include other community priorities.

Conclusion

Independent voices such as Common Councilor Van Robinson have long spoken out about the neighborhood devastation caused by the construction of I-81 through Syracuse's 15th Ward. Robinson was also an early voice in the call to bring down the elevated highway, a proposal that many dismissed as impossible. But in 2007, SMTC issued the University Hill Transportation Study, a blueprint for area growth in the coming decades. Among the recommendations was one relating directly to the I-81 corridor. The report suggested that with a relocation of through traffic to I-481, an "Almond Boulevard" could replace the existing elevated viaduct, which was already determined by the DOT to be deteriorating beyond simple repairs. The University Hill report suggested further study to confirm that the plan was technically feasible, and outlined several potential benefits.

That recommendation was the starting point for this study. Replacing a high speed elevated highway with a street level urban boulevard, the study committee hypothesized, would be part of an overall plan to regenerate the area and rejoin downtown Syracuse with University Hill. The study encouraged a new way of thinking: Take it down and they will come. With the obstructive, land-devaluing presence of highway I-81 gone, residential, institutional and business growth could happen around the highway corridor. This would create the potential for an attractive urban neighborhood that would provide space for the expansion of the growing hospitals and educational institutions and knit together the Hill and downtown areas.

The OCL study committee proceeded to research the merits of this recommendation. The conclusion: *Rerouting traffic around the city and replacing a section of I-81 with an at-grade urban boulevard is a desirable concept that would benefit the region. The study committee believes this option should be given the most serious consideration in the NYSDOT planning and study process currently underway.*

The committee cannot determine if the plan is technically feasible – that will be left to the NYSDOT engineering studies and the traffic demand modeling studies of consultants.

Initially, there were skeptics on the OCL committee – people who were concerned about emergency transportation routes and clogged city streets, people who raised issues such as "How will we get around the city without I-81?" and "Won't putting a highly trafficked

street-level road through the city actually create a less attractive environment for urban growth?"

We listened to transportation planning experts. We studied what other cities had done. We looked closely at the city and county "land-use plans," the documents most people consider the prescription for what sort of city we want to become in the 21st century. And point by point, we realized that the things that initially seemed like obstacles were not deal breakers. It became clear that the potential positive outcomes outweighed any drawbacks.

The fact that I-81 cannot remain as it is, that it must be rebuilt or torn down, has given the community a chance to explore its options and to realize some of its dreams. A land use plan is an expression of a community's dreams, and the vision expressed in both city and county comprehensive plans calls for a modern, economically viable city and suburban core. To attain this vision, the community must actively participate in the I-81 planning process. Ultimately, the reconfiguration of I-81 needs to be understood not as a transportation issue but as an attempt to achieve other long-held goals:

- **Neighborhood and Job Growth.** SUNY Upstate Medical University and Syracuse University are the area's two largest employers. Together with Crouse Hospital, the Veterans Administration Hospital, and SUNY Environmental Science & Forestry, these institutions need room to develop and expand, which will foster additional employment opportunities. A forward-looking land use plan incorporating an urban boulevard concept can relieve traffic congestion, create attractive development sites, and facilitate area development.
- **Economic Development.** Downtown represents the economic, cultural, and social hub of the Central New York region, the "calling card" of the region. An urban boulevard is the best option to encourage connection to University Hill. A better connection to the tens of thousands of students and visitors to the University Hill area will spell better business potential for restaurants, shops, hotels, museums and galleries, hotels and entertainment venues in the adjacent downtown area.
- **Environmental Improvements.** A coordinated transportation and land use plan, one that gives equitable consideration to transit, pedestrian and bicycle users as well as cars, and incorporates green spaces as well as asphalt, can lead to a

reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and a healthier environment.

Only by achieving these goals can the region aspire to compete in the global economy. Without a strong core, every part of the region suffers. Syracuse must be attractive to the region's young people as well as prospective employees and creative talent. Residents need to see that the region can offer not only a good range of job opportunities but also a well-crafted urban landscape that can rival aspects of today's most successful cities.

Our goal for the community is to see that we meet the I-81 challenge with a vision that is not mired in the past, but clearly anticipates the needs of tomorrow.

Resources

Books

Vanderbilt, Tom. *Why We Drive the Way We Do (And What It Says About Us)*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2008.

Fogelson, Robert M. *Downtown: Its Rise and Fall 1880-1950*. New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 2001.

Websites Articles

FHA Office of Legislation and Intergovernmental Affairs Program Analysis Team. 2005. **A Summary of Highway Provisions in SAFETEA-LU**.
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/safetealu/summary>

Hecox, Doug. 2008. **American Driving Reaches Eighth Month of Steady Decline**. Press Release U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Public Affairs.
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/pressroom>.

Norquist, John. O. 2000. **Tear It Down**. Blueprint magazine. <http://www.dlc.org>.

Pierce, Neil. 2008. **Transportation Disputes: 300+ Days and Holding**. Washington Post Writers Group. [http:// www.postwritersgroup.com/archives](http://www.postwritersgroup.com/archives).

Polikov, Scott. 2008. **Sustainability Matched: New Economics of Place**.
<http://citiwire.net/post>.

Schalch, Kathleen. 2009. **Americans Driving Less**. National Public Radio.
<http://www.npr.org>

Studies and Reports

CNU Report on Emergency Response & Street Design, 2009
[http://www.cnu.org/sites/www.cnu.org/files/CNUEmergency%20Response_FINAL.pdf](http://www.cnu.org/sites/www.cnu.org/files/CNUEmergency%20Response%20FINAL.pdf)

Seattle Urban Mobility Plan, January 2008, Nelson/Nygaard

Urban Renewal, the 15th Ward, the Empire Stateway and the City of Syracuse, New York
Aaron C. Knight May 2007

Shifting Urban Priorities?: Removal of Inner City Freeways in the United States
by Francesca Napolitano and P. Christopher Zegras
http://web.edu/czegras/www/Napolitan_Zegras_FreewayRemoval_Final.pdf

Stent (or Dagger?) in the Heart of Town: Urban Freeways in Syracuse, 1944–1967 Joseph F. C. DiMento University of California <http://jph.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/8/2/133> -

SUNY ESF Design Studio Project

Websites

Complete the Streets <http://completestreets.org/>

Congress for the New Urbanism, Highways to Boulevard <http://universityhillstudy.com/>

The Preservation Institute, Removing Highways, Restoring Cities
<http://www.preservenet.com/freeways/index.html>

Streetfilms.org <http://www.streetfilms.org/archives/lessons-from-san-francisco/>

University Hill Transportation Study, SMTC, <http://universityhillstudy.com/>

Previous OCL Studies

- | | | | |
|---------|---|-----------|--|
| 1979 | <i>Equality and Fairness in Property Assessment</i>
– Co-chairs: John Searles, Margaret Charters | 1994 | <i>The Delivery of Human Services: Opportunities for Improvement</i> – Co-chairs: Robert McAuliffe, Janet Starr, Phillip Trainor |
| 1980 | <i>Young People in Trouble: Can Our Services be Organized and Delivered More Effectively?</i>
– Co-chairs: Jean Reeve, Roberta Schofield | 1995 | <i>Reinvesting in the Community: Opportunities for Economic Development</i> – Co-chairs: Marcene S. Sonneborn, Michael J. Atkins, Donald MacLaughlin |
| 1981 | <i>The County Legislature: Its Function, Size and Structure</i> – Co-chairs: Helen Zych, Elma Boyko | 1996 | <i>Building a Non-Violent Community: Successful Strategies for Youth</i> – Co-chairs: Paula Freedman, Carol Cowles, Jesse Dowdell |
| 1982 | <i>Declining School Enrollments: Opportunities for Cooperative Adaptations</i> – Chair: Margaret Charters | 1997 | <i>Security Check: Public Perceptions of Safety and Security</i> – Co-chairs: Michael Freedman, Corinthia Emanuel |
| 1983 | <i>Onondaga County Public Works Infrastructure: Status, Funding and Responsibilities</i> – Chair: Samuel P. Clemence | 1998 | <i>Onondaga County School Systems: Challenges, Goals, and Visions for the Future</i> – Co-chairs: Patricia Schmidt, Bethaida Gonzalez |
| 1984 | <i>Police Services in Onondaga County: A Review and Recommendations</i>
– Chair: John Kramer | 1999 | <i>Economic Development: Models for Success</i> – Co-chairs: Shiu-Kai Chin, Susan Crossett, N. Thomas Letham |
| 1985 | <i>The City and County Charters: Time for Revision?</i> – Chair: Thomas J. Maroney | 2000 | <i>Housing and Neighborhoods: Tools for Change</i> – Co-chairs: John McCrea, Joanne Reddick, Russell Andrews |
| 1986-87 | <i>Blueprints for the Future: Recommendations for the Year 2000</i> – Co-chair: Robert McAuliffe, Eleanor Shopiro, Helen Anderson | 2001 | <i>Civic Leadership for Community Transformation</i> – Co-chairs: Melissa Hall, Judith Mower |
| 1988 | <i>The Role of the Food Industry in the Economy of Onondaga County</i> – Chair: Kay Benedict | 2002 | <i>State of the Arts</i> – Chair: Fred Fiske |
| 1989 | <i>Poverty and its Social Costs: Are There Long-term Solutions?</i> – Co-chairs: Darlene D. Kerr, Marilyn Higgins | 2003 | <i>Mental Health Services: Access, Availability and Responsiveness</i> – Chair: Helen B. “Jinx” Crouch |
| 1990 | <i>Syracuse Area Workforce of the Future: How Do We Prepare?</i> – Co-chairs: James J. Murphy, Anne L. Messenger, Patrick A. Mannion | 2004 | <i>Disappearing Democracy? A Report on Political Participation in Onondaga County</i> – Chair: Steven Kulick |
| 1991 | <i>Schools that Work: Models in Education that Can be Used in Onondaga County</i> – Co-chairs: Georgette Cowans, Gary Grossman, Gerald Grant | 2005 | <i>Strategic Government Consolidation</i> – Chair: Laurence Bousquet |
| 1992 | <i>Town and Village Governments: Opportunities for Cost-effective Changes</i> – Co-chairs: Carol Dwyer, N. Thomas Letham, Helen Zych | 2006 | <i>Fixing the Hub: Leveraging Better Outcomes for Downtown</i> – Co-chairs: Joseph Ash, Jr., Douglas Sutherland |
| 1993 | <i>The Criminal Justice System in Onondaga County: How Well is it Working?</i> – Co-chairs: M. Catherine Richardson, James E. Introne, N. Thomas Letham | 2007 | <i>How Inequality Makes Us Sick: The Growing Disparities in Health and Health Care</i> – Chair: Betty DeFazio |
| | | 2008-2009 | <i>Rethinking I-81</i> – Chair: Rebecca Livengood |

Our Mission

The Onondaga Citizens League fosters informed public discourse by identifying and studying critical community issues affecting Central New York, developing recommendations for action, and communicating study findings to interested and affected groups.





Onondaga County Legislature

DEBORAH L. MATURO
Clerk

J. RYAN McMAHON, II
Chairman

KATHERINE FRENCH
Deputy Clerk

401 Montgomery Street • Court House • Room 407 • Syracuse, New York 13202

Phone: 315.435.2070 Fax: 315.435.8434

www.ongov.net

January 16, 2014

RECEIVED

Mr. Jonathan McDade
New York Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Building
7th Floor, Room 719
Clinton Avenue and N. Pearl Street
Albany, New York 12207

Ms. Debra Nelson JAN 2 2014
NYS DOT
50 Wolf Road Operating Division
Albany, New York 12232

RE: I-81 Project – Syracuse Area Corridor

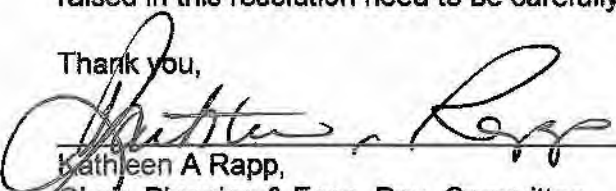
Dear Mr. McDade and Ms. Nelson:

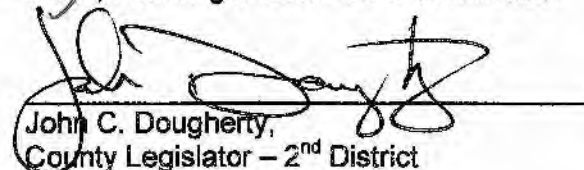
On behalf of the Onondaga County Legislature, we thank the Federal Highway Administration and New York State Department of Transportation for allowing us the opportunity to formally submit our input for consideration in deciding the future of Interstate 81 in Central New York. This is a watershed moment for the entire region, and as such, it is crucial that those directly affected have a stake in the decision making process.

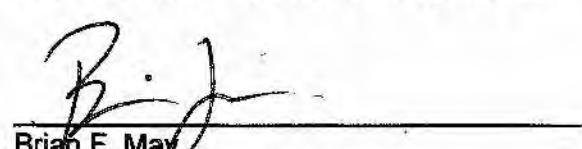
In this submission, you will find the Onondaga County Legislature's resolution rejecting the state's proposed plan to replace Interstate 81 with a local boulevard through the City of Syracuse. It is clear that many area residents and elected officials are deeply concerned with the negative consequences that re-routing Interstate 81 will bring to the entire Central New York region. These negative effects include declined economic growth, increased traffic congestion, longer and more stressful commutes, and compromised public safety.

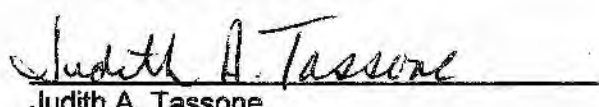
We hope the Department of Transportation and other decision-makers will thoroughly consider our viewpoints when deciding the best plan for Interstate 81. Our resolution should be made part of the FHWA/NYS DOT NEPA and SEQRA record. **While we are open to many of the ideas presented, we firmly believe the best option will maintain interstate 81's current function and designation as an interstate highway through Syracuse.** If FHWA and NYSDOT determine to continue to pursue the proposed boulevard option, the critical issues raised in this resolution need to be carefully and thoroughly weighed by FHWA and NYSDOT.

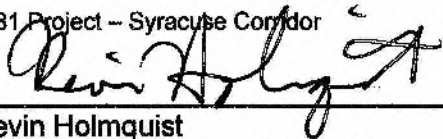
Thank you,


Kathleen A. Rapp,
Chair, Planning & Econ. Dev. Committee

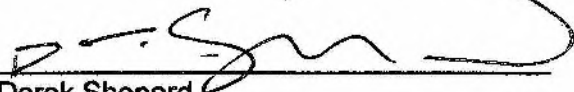

John C. Dougherty,
County Legislator – 2nd District


Brian F. May,
County Legislator – 1st District

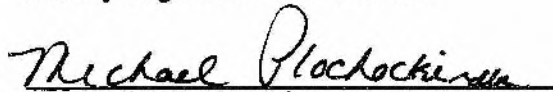

Judith A. Tassone,
County Legislator – 4th District



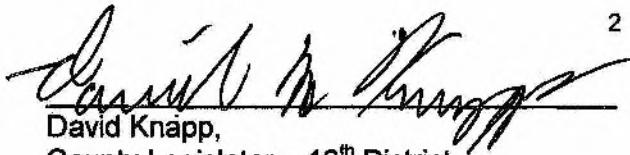
Kevin Holmquist
County Legislator - 10th District



Derek Shepard,
County Legislator - 13th District



Michael Plochocki,
County Legislator - 6th District



David Knäpp,
County Legislator - 12th District



Casey E. Jordan,
County Legislator - 14th District

May 7, 2013

Motion Made By Mrs. Rapp,

RESOLUTION NO. _____

070

Mrs. Ervin, Mr. Jordan, Mr. May, Mr. Knapp, Mrs. Tassone,
Mr. Dougherty, Mr. Plochocki, Mr. Liedka, Mr. Andrews

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THIS LEGISLATURE REGARDING THE NEED TO
MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE

WHEREAS, for the last 50 years, Interstate Route 81 has served as a vital backbone for the economy of the Central New York region, connecting commuters, businesses, tourists, other visitors, and through-travelers alike; and

WHEREAS, among its important functions, I-81 provides vital access to downtown Syracuse, all of our hospitals, Syracuse University, Destiny USA and all of the residents and businesses clustered along its route; and

WHEREAS, although there are a variety of ways to deal with I-81's aging infrastructure, the existing "Interstate" function and designation must be preserved, because any solution which would remove I-81's vital function from its present alignment would irreparably cripple the regional economy and corresponding employment that has grown up around the highway network; and

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for the next 100 years; and

WHEREAS, quality of life is important to residents of Onondaga County, and few, if any, major cities offer the range of opportunities for our citizens and allow them the convenience to access those assets in 20 minutes or less; and

WHEREAS, the freedom to commute between work, home and leisure activities without fighting the gridlock of traffic is a major advantage to living in Central New York, and it is illogical and contrary to the best interests of our citizens to compromise one of our finest assets; and

WHEREAS, we have spent decades promoting Greater Syracuse as a destination for sports, medicine, the arts, education, recreation, shopping and commerce, and denigrating easy access to those destinations now would be unthinkable and counter-productive; and

WHEREAS, citizens require easy and quick access to emergency medical services; first-responders require expeditious routes for the public's safety and well-being, businesses need efficient routes for commercial transport and convenient access to customers; and

WHEREAS, many of our communities and businesses have grown-up because of I-81's function and alignment, it is imperative that we do not create new problems in an attempt to solve an existing problem, further, it is critical that the selected solution does not burden the taxpayers with unintended and costly consequences; and

WHEREAS, in 1947, when the decision was made to build I-81 through Syracuse it was concluded, "Syracuse is a city on the rise. The gridlock of traffic that now congests its' core is a major factor in restricting future growth", and it is important that we learn from the past and not repeat our mistakes; and

WHEREAS, I-81 and the New York Thruway are the economic lifeblood of our community, and cutting off one of our major arteries now would jeopardize an already fragile business climate; and

WHEREAS, it is the sense of this Legislature that any decision reached by the NYS DOT should satisfy function first, as form can and will naturally follow, and should be closely tailored to satisfy that function; and

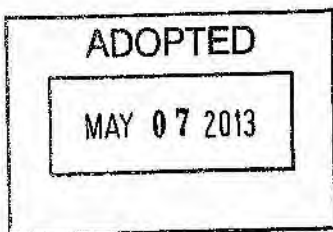
WHEREAS, we support the creation of a new and welcoming entrance to Syracuse, and the integration of the hospitals and university areas with the rest of downtown, we believe it must not be accomplished by compromising one the most significant advantages of living, working, doing business and visiting Onondaga County; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Onondaga County Legislature hereby rejects the concept of replacing I-81 with a boulevard that halts traffic flow with a series of traffic lights; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that this Legislature memorializes its determination that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an interstate highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Clerk of this Legislature is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, to the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and to the various legislative members representing Onondaga County at the state level.

Memorializing - Route 81.doc
kam



I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND EXACT COPY OF LEGISLATION DULY ADOPTED BY THE COUNTY LEGISLATURE OF ONONDAGA COUNTY ON THE

7th DAY OF May, 2013.

Debra S. Matusz

CLERK, COUNTY LEGISLATURE
ONONDAGA COUNTY, NEW YORK

13 MAY - 7 PM 12:55

RECEIVED
ONONDAGA COUNTY
LEGISLATURE



RECEIVED SEP 02 2014

Onondaga County Legislature

401 Montgomery Street • Court House • Room 407 • Syracuse, New York 13202

Phone: 315.435.2070 Fax: 315.435.8434

www.ongov.net

September 2, 2014

Joan McDonald, Commissioner
State of New York DOT
50 Wolf Road
Albany, New York 13223

RE: Route 81

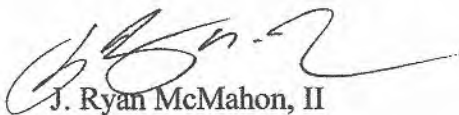
Dear Commissioner McDonald:

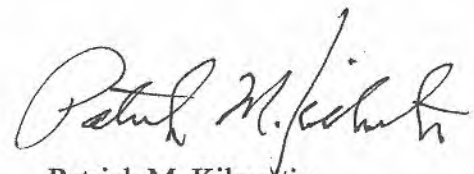
As members of the Onondaga County Legislature, we have attended and actively participated in numerous meetings, local forums and public and private briefings with our concerned constituents concerning the future of Interstate 81.

After listening to and reviewing all of the various proposals and plans, we believe that the Access Syracuse Plan would best meet the objectives of everyone involved. The combination of a shortened tunnel and the desired "boulevard" would provide improved connectivity between the University Hill area and downtown, while maintaining an Interstate Highway status of Route 81 into and through the City of Syracuse. This "hybrid" solution also enables keeping more cross streets open as well as reducing the amount of land acquisition required for a pure boulevard or tunnel option.

It is our position that, for the economic vitality of our region, the Access Syracuse Plan be given serious consideration and included in the DOT's Final Scoping document and full analysis in the Environmental Impact Statement process.

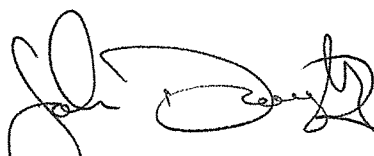
Very truly yours,


J. Ryan McMahon, II
Chairman


Patrick M. Kilmartin
Majority Leader



Brian F. May
1st District



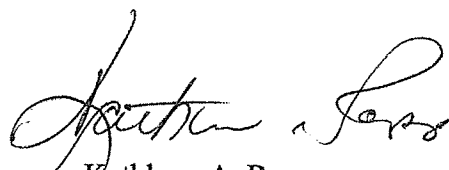
John C. Dougherty
2nd District



James Corl
3rd District



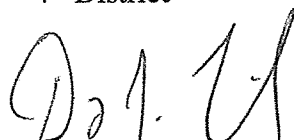
Judith A. Tassone
4th District



Kathleen A. Rapp
5th District



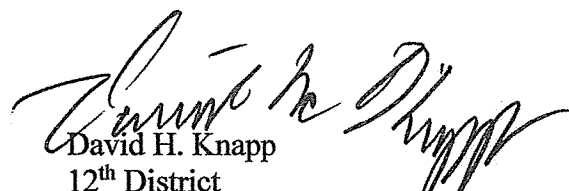
Michael E. Plochocki
6th District



Danny J. Liedka
7th District



Kevin A. Holmquist
10th District



David H. Knapp
12th District



Derek T. Shepard, Jr.
13th District



Casey E. Jordan
14th District

Contact the Project Team

dot.sm.webcentral

Sun 8/24/2014 11:47 AM

Retain

To:dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>;

Last name - Osborne

First name - Gary

Affiliation -

Address 1 - 449 Lincoln Ave

Address 2 -

City - Oneida

State - NY

Zip - 13421

Phone -

Email Address - gary_wo@hotmail.com

Question or Comment - The best plan would be for s street level boulevard with through traffic routed to 690 and 481. Routes 690 and 481 would have to be enhanced to accommodate the increased traffic.

SMTC

4-3-13

126 NO. SALINA ST. SUITE 100

SYRACUSE NY 13202

ATT: MARIO COLONE - RT 81 CORRIDOR.

I WOULD LIKE TO SUGGEST THAT
RT. 81 BE BUILT ALONG ONONDAGA CREEK
FROM NEDROW TO DESTINY, BUILD A
TWO LANE HIGHWAY WITH A FIVE LANE
ON EACH SIDE WITH GREEN AREAS
ALONG THE ROUTE.

START AT NEDROW ALLEGES FERRY
VALLEY PK. - COLVIN ST. - ARBUTHNOT ST.
690 EXT. - BUTTERCUT ST. - COLONY ST.
& DESTINY.

THERE ARE MANY GREEN AREAS.
SOME PARTS MUST UNDER GROUND.

THE OVERHEAD BRIDGES FOR THE
FEW CROSS STREETS WOULD HAVE
MUCH WORK.

THIS PROJECT WOULD LAST AT LEAST
3 TO 4 YEARS JUST AS THE 81 PROJECT.
THIS WOULD BEAUTIFY MANY PARTS
OF THE ROUTE, THANK

WALTER C. OTIS
115 HERBERT ST.
RD. SYRACUSE NY 13202

Walter C. Otis
TEL: 315-314-7930

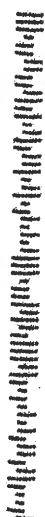


Mr. Walter Ots
115 Herbert St.
North Syracuse, NY 13212

ATTN:
MARIO CALONE

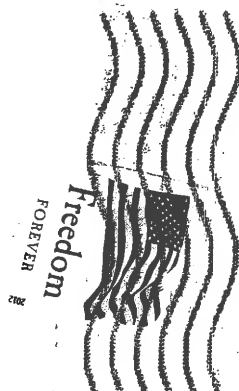
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13202

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I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: Edward L. Olt

Address: 124 Olive Street

City: Syracuse

State: NY Zip: 13204

Phone: (315) 844-5087

Email: otto747@yahoo.com

Comments: Anything short of doing a responsible reconstruction of the current configuration of the I-81 viaduct will prove to be a major detriment to not only the city of Syracuse, but also to the surrounding suburbs as well.

I heard about what happened when a similar situation presented itself involving I-87 in the Catskills. The state decided to re-route that section of highway and it proved to be devastating to those communities in the front that they essentially ceased to exist.

The same can be said for the "tunnel" idea. I've heard the horror stories involving Boston's "big dig" which cost over a billion dollars and wasn't completed in time. To add insult to financial injury, the tunnel soon after had to be repaired because of leaks that let it take in water.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

**Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014**

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481 8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation



AIA Central New York

A Chapter of The American Institute of Architects

AIA CNY / I-81 Planning & Design Resolution

The Central New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA CNY) resolves to support and engage with SMTC (Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council), the State DOT and the Federal Highway Administration's planning & design process, for the highway project known as the Interstate 81 Viaduct Project (Onondaga County, New York)

Whereas the AIA CNY resolves the following:

Resolved to support a task force of the AIA CNY Chapter Urban Design Committee.

Resolved to continue AIA CNY planning support of the local, state and federal agencies involved in the SMTC "The I-81 Challenge" through it's "Steering Committee" over the past 2-1/2+ years.

Resolved to continue to support the public input involvement in developing the potential study options to be considered by the DOT Engineering team and consultants.

Resolved to propose "Standards of Excellence" for Urban Design & Planning.

Resolved to provide "case study precedence" for successful urban highway reconstruction options.

Resolved to support the economic analysis of the potential land uses in the I-81 Viaduct Project area.

Resolved to support & assist the development of "Form Based Design Guidelines" for the downtown I-81 Viaduct Project area.

Resolved to propose Draft Enabling Legislation to assist in the City & County planning process

Resolved to assist with visualizations of proposed planning & design options to the public & key decision makers.

Be it Resolved:

On this Date, September 12, 2013, this Resolution was passed unanimously by the AIACNY Board of Directors.

Travis C. Overton, AIA
Secretary on Behalf of the Board of Directors
American Institute of Architects Central New York Chapter

From: [David Paccone](#)
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Subject: Interstate 81 Policy Statement from Syracuse Housing Authority
Date: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 1:27:01 PM
Attachments: [I-81 Policy Statement-SHA Chair & Director 11-13-2013.pdf](#)

As a neighbor to Interstate 81 in the City of Syracuse, the Syracuse Housing Authority would like to enter into the record, its policy statement on the future of the interstate highway.

Thank you.

David Paccone
Assistant Director for Development and Central Office Administration
Syracuse Housing Authority
516 Burt Street
Syracuse, NY 13202
315-436-8003
315-470-4203 (fax)

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**POLICY STATEMENT
SYRACUSE HOUSING AUTHORITY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
CONCERNING INTERSTATE 81**

The Syracuse Housing Authority Board of Commissioners is aware of the planning and public outreach for comments by the New York State Department of Transportation concerning the future of the elevated viaduct of Interstate 81 through the City of Syracuse.

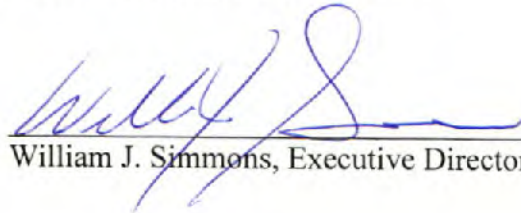
The Syracuse Housing Authority is perhaps the largest stakeholder concerning the elevated portion of the viaduct as it owns all the property on both sides of the from its southern edge Adams Street, with the exception of one block which Syracuse University controls. As such, and with nearly over 900 households housing over 2600 residents within this corridor, the Syracuse Housing Authority has grave concerns over the final solution and the imminent construction process.

Therefore, it is the position of the Syracuse Housing Authority Board of Commissioners that any action is made with the understanding that individual's housing and daily lives will be impacted, and that the existence and strength of this residential community need to be impacted in the least disruptive manner. It is our position that the solution to the elevated viaduct issue be one which enhances the residential community, provides greater pedestrian access through the neighborhood, and affords the opportunity for further housing and economic development for those who live there.

November 13, 2013



Bruce Conner, SHA Board Chair



William J. Simmons, Executive Director

LT.	Construction
Design	Fleet Admin.
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✓ P.O. - Pg. 1	Michelle

COMMENTS ON ROUTE 81
Joyce Packard

PAGE 1

Save 81 as a raised highway. It is an interstate highway. It also allows for easy travel around the Syracuse area. One can get almost anywhere in the Syracuse area within 15-20 minutes with the 81-690 connection.

Repair/Rebuild as needed, making it more attractive. (See new bridges over Onondaga Creek and over 81 North at Butternut, Catawba, etc.) Make it slightly wider between Adams Street and 690 to allow for pull-overs for disabled vehicles or accidents.

Strictly enforce 45/50 mph speed limit through the interchange.

Use lighting, landscaping, and art to make underpasses more attractive to pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Look at highways in Stockholm, Sweden.

Note: I didn't see all of the other locations shown at the November 13 meeting. Is there a video feed via internet for that?

Eliminate fees at Syracuse Thruway exits as they did in Buffalo to encourage more traffic use there. Also have only one fee to and from Syracuse area so that the charge is the same no matter which entrance/exit you use in the Syracuse area. Maybe truckers would not mind driving a little farther if it didn't increase their charges.

If possible build an express lane/road over/along Route 81, connecting the Mattydale/Thruway area and the 481/Nedrow area. The Thruway could then be the alternate connector to 690 west or east.

PROBLEMS WITH ALTERNATE PLANS:

Boulevard: Having a boulevard would create more headaches than problem solving.

1. Traffic backups and gridlocks as people in Syracuse enter intersections with no thought of clearing it first. Observe the W. Fayette/West Street intersection at rush hour.

COMMENTS (cont'd)

PAGE 2

Joyce Packard

2. Syracuse traffic lights do not stay consistent. Computerized systems seem to go haywire whenever it rains/snows. Motion sensors seem to stop whoever is moving whether or not there is cross traffic in sight, look again at Fayette/West Street intersection. We don't enjoy sitting on W. Fayette on a Sunday morning when there is absolutely no traffic on West Street. Drive up and down South Geddes Street and enjoy stopping at every light.

3. Pedestrians and bicycles would not have a prayer of traveling in Safety.

Below Grade:

1. Interstate 81 has been known to flood under the Butternut Street Bridge. Syracuse is somewhat in a bowl, was built on a swamp and geographically could have been another Finger Lake. Extreme care would have to be taken to prevent flooding.

2. You still have to build and maintain bridges over the highway, probably giving the City of Syracuse more expenses than it can afford. Snow plowing and removal would be a major problem.

3. More bridges for people to throw objects at passing cars below or for suicidal incidents as has happened at Bear Street/Court Street bridges. Pedestrians aren't on the raised highway.

jfp

12/7/13

Joyce F. Packard
4811 McDonald Road
Syracuse, NY 13215
(315) 476-9121

Reg. Dir.	Asst. Reg. D.	
LT.	Construction	
Design	Fleet Admin.	
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Participate in the Committee

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Fri 5/2/2014 8:54 AM

Managed Folders

To:dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>;

Last name - Packard

First name - Joyce

Affiliation -

Address 1 - 4811 McDonald Rd.

Address 2 -

City - Syracuse

State - New York

Zip - 13215

Phone - 315-476-9121

Email Address - tojopack@twcny.rr.com

Question or Comment - Look into ways to combine an overhead viaduct with Boulevard below.

I strongly urge retaining Route 81 as an overhead viaduct.

1. It is an interstate highway.
2. It works perfectly well as an integrated highway connection in and around Syracuse for local residents. Allows travel within and through the city a 15-20 minute commute.
3. It provides an overview of Syracuse for interstate travelers. They get to see The SU Dome and Crouse College on the SU hill as well as a good share of Syracuse. It allows easy excess to downtown, to north side, Destiny USA, and Liverpool./Salina area. The viaduct needs to stay within or as close as possible to its current footprint. Moving it west of its current location would destroy and/or seriously impact some historical buildings in the area just west of McBride Street between Almond Street and Pearl Street entrance ramps, (i.e. McMahon Ryan Building for abused children, Park Central Presbyterian Church, the former St. John's Catholic church, just for starters).

The southbound side of 81 to remain, modernize in or near its current footprint.

1. If feasible, improve the congestion under 81 at Adams Street on and off ramps.
2. Consider the relocation of 81 South ramp at Adams /Almond to Burt Street, using South Townsend. Traffic exiting the hospital/university area would continue one block farther west on Harrison Street, turn Left (south) on Townsend, crossing Adams, turning Left at Burt Street, entering a newly created ramp heading south on 81. This would relieve a lot of congestion in the 81/Adams/Almond intersection.

Thoughts for improving 81 Northbound:

1. If feasible, add an express lane (an upper level if necessary) for thru traffic with a connector to 690 East. A variation of the V-3 plan may work but moves 81 too far over to the west (as noted in 3 above).
2. Use current 81 Adams Street off- ramp. Use Almond/Harrison on ramp to access 81 North and current connector to 690 West.
3. Relocate 690 East on- ramp further down Almond Street; may replace current McBride on-ramp merge lane. This would eliminate cross-over problem.

Connecting 81 Southbound to 690 West and 690 Eastbound to 81 North would be very destructive to recently refurbished areas. I don't believe there is enough priority to do this as current signage directs commuters via short local connectors.

Justification for keeping an I-81 Viaduct:

1. Replacing I-81 with a boulevard makes no practical/common sense:

- a. It breaks up the continuity of 81 Interstate from Tennessee to Canada.
 - b. It eliminates introduction/overview of Syracuse for out-of-towners. (See 3 above).
 - c. I believe a boulevard will create a traffic nightmare of traffic jams, and gridlocks making it extremely dangerous for pedestrians and bicycles. Coordinated traffic lights have never worked well in Syracuse.
 - d. Creates a traffic nightmare for emergency vehicles, ambulance, fire, police, etc.
2. Likewise re-routing I-81 onto 481/690W will not work.
- a. It makes for a longer commute to the north side.
 - b. It eliminates an alternate route should accidents, construction, snow/ice, etc. causes a close down of the highway. This happens frequently in central New York.
 - c. People living on east side of Baldwinsville, Liverpool and Salina will have a longer commute to the south side/Valley area.

Things that can be done:

- 1. Repair/Modernize as much as possible, maintaining current footprint as close as possible.
- 3. Use lighting, art work, plantings under the underpasses to make them more aesthetically pleasing.

NOTE: The overview picture of Syracuse at Hancock Airport (Jet Blue luggage claims) makes Syracuse look inviting and the 81/690 highway makes sense.

Joyce Packard
315-476-9121

From: dot.sm.webcentral
Sent: Sunday, August 31, 2014 11:43:41 AM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)
To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities
Subject: Contact the Project Team

Last name - Packard
First name - Joyce
Affiliation -
Address 1 - 4811 McDonald Road
Address 2 -
City - Syracuse
State - NY
Zip - 13215
Phone - [315-476-9121](tel:315-476-9121)
Email Address - tojopack@twcnny.rr.com

Question or Comment - After many hours of study and actually driving around Syracuse, I still don't understand the need to destroy an overhead highway that readily moves traffic thru and to destinations within and around the City of Syracuse. Yes, it needs updating and beautifying. The reasons for tearing it down do not make sense. Some people feel it will provide space for more real estate but at what expense? A boulevard would only add more congestion, traffic gridlock, and parking woes in the area. Where do all the cars go that currently use parking spaces under the bridge?

Some wish to tear down I-81 as it visually divides downtown and SU/hospital area. At the same time, the idea of connecting 690W to 81N will destroy another commercial/residential area and divide downtown from the north side, newly renovated living areas, and destroy half of ?Little Italy?. If a boulevard is good enough to replace 81, then why isn't a Bear Street or Hiawatha boulevard good enough to connect 81 to 690.

I still strongly suggest that Route 81 remain a viaduct as close to its current foot print as possible without impacting surrounding residences, historic churches and other buildings, medical facilities, service institutions, commercial buildings, etc.

One suggestion to relieve the congestion at Almond/Adams Street intersection is to relocate the south bound on-ramp to 81. This would lessen the traffic; give more time for pedestrians crossing at that intersection. The southbound on ramp could be relocated to Burt Street, using Harrison Street/Townsend to a new ramp at Burt Street.

From: tojopack@twcny.rr.com

Sent: Sunday, August 31, 2014 4:42:25 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)

To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities

Subject: i81 Viaduct

My husband and I have enjoyed following this project and can only hope and pray that the right decision for the future of Syracuse will be made. We thank you for the opportunity for public in-put.

My biggest fear is that a Syracuse I81 bypass could make Syracuse a ghost town, never to be seen again.

The out-of-town travelers will not even get a glimpse of our fair city, let alone be tempted to stop awhile. With the SU Dome on one end, Destiny USA on the other, and a now lovely lake, some may even Google us up to see what we have to offer.

Syracuse has a rich history from Salt mining, barrel making, the Erie Canal, etc. We have lovely historical buildings, some with gargoyles.

We have SU sports, a winning Chiefs baseball team, the Rosamond Gifford Zoo, art and history museums, Symphoria, and much, much more.

We want people to come thru Syracuse. What better way to see it than from a viaduct.

Joyce

Thomas N. Packard
4811 McDonald Road
Syracuse, NY 13215

Subject: **Route 81 Scoping Meeting**

Reg. Dir.	Asst. Reg. Dir.
LT.	Construction
Design	Fleet Admin.
Admin. Svcs.	PPM
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Real Estate	Safety
Traffic	Operations
All GDs	All REs
✓ P10 Pa1	Michelle

First off, I want to thank you for the scoping meeting that took place Nov. 13 at the Syracuse ON Center. I left the meeting having a fuller vision of what should be done than when I went in.

My vision:

Keep Routes 81 and 690 through the city as overpasses. Maintain their footprints as closely as possible. Eliminate many (if not all) entrance and exit ramps within the city boundaries. Establish a network of traffic corridors in the city. Have access to this network via north/south gates on Route 81 and east/west gates on Route 690. Federal, state and city would plan this idea together, creating a "win-win" for all parties. Through this process of mutual cooperation maybe there would be cost savings for the taxpayer to boot!

Discussion:

Route 81 reminds me a lot of New Orleans, not necessarily their traffic infrastructure but that borough in the lowlands neighboring the dikes that got flooded out during Hurricane Katrina. Just as the city of New Orleans gradually expanded into that area as the city grew year by year where it shouldn't have, so has the city of Syracuse grown up around the two highways. The highways are now blocked in by Pioneer Homes, Destiny, the hospital complex, and the Townsend Street high rise apartments, among other examples. (Perhaps from the city's perspective the highways represent many parcels of land already removed from the tax base and why give away even more land for generous right-of-ways!) In any event, the highways are blocked in and that resists adding lanes and bringing the ramps up to current standards. And one common voice last night was that if anything people want the highways quieter and less divisive of the city than they already are. So part of my vision is to eliminate the ramps in the city altogether except for those that let you get from the one highway to the other. And without those ramps, the traffic on Almond Street would be substantially abated, allowing those Syracuse University students and that hapless bicyclist that spoke last night to get to the city from university hill without risking life and limb.

Now that is all well and good but in itself would be a disaster: How would people then get to the city? That's how the network of traffic corridors comes into play. These corridors would be thoughtfully chosen streets in the city that already exist whose number of lanes would remain the same (or even preferably get reduced) yet be made more accessible. There are things that must be done to make them more accessible: Many if not all would need to be resurfaced and in some instances re-bedded. And also the traffic control system would need to be brought into the 21st century, configured to move traffic in both directions at a steady, safe speed (28 MPH?) with minimal or no traffic light stoppage. Today, city traffic lights will stop you at an intersection for a couple of minutes even when there are no other cars. And certainly traffic lights can be made to default to the major roadways when there is no car on the side street, e.g. the intersection of Beverley Drive and Rt. 173. Philosophically, that

network of corridors could unite the city. People would travel the city instead of trying to dodge as much of it as possible. Non-corridor roads with less traffic would be safe harbors for bicyclists and pedestrians. Even though the result would be less city traffic on the two highways and more on the city streets, since the city traffic would be moving along better than it is now (just check out South Geddes St. at 4PM!) it might actually give the city a feeling of being less congested.

And now the gates. The idea is to select four existing exits with great care to be the north, south, east and west access points to the traffic corridor network. The modifications to those exits should be minimal so as not to adversely affect their immediate neighbors and their appearances esthetically inviting. After all, those exits would then be major gateways to the city. By way of example, although it is a little far away, maybe the Nedrow exit would be selected as the south gateway and South Salina Street part of the network of corridors.

I am a 40 year resident of Onondaga Hill and travel the city a lot. As I reflect on my driving habits I act as if Routes 690 and 81 divide the city in four quadrants. If our destination is in our quadrant we get there using city streets. However, when our destination is to a different quadrant we use Route 81 and/or 690 to get there. I think what you want to do is to keep travelers like me off of those two highways as much as possible. With the corridor system my habits would change: I would opt for using the corridor system as the direct way to my destination instead of traveling out of my way to use the highway system.

As described, the city and the state planners would have to be joined at the hip. The city provides a viable option to the state that I don't think is in a position to enhance Route 81 by itself. And money saved from having to create a Route 81 monstrosity (one that no one wants, I might add) can be reallocated to the city to fix infrastructure that the city cannot afford by itself. And that's where the win-win part of the idea comes in. I am hoping that our levels of government are flexible enough to be able to unite on issues of mutual benefit. If so, my vision might give you a reasonable option to consider.

Other Stuff:

I hope that Route 81 remains as an overpass through the city. I don't see how Routes 690 and 81 as tunnels could intersect and I think the amount of traffic makes the boulevard idea for Route 81 totally dysfunctional.

I would like the overpasses to be esthetic just as the replacement Court Street Bridge over Route 81 with its stone work is esthetic. Also, I would like the cement surface on the overpasses to be of a quality that resists salt and that reduces traffic noise. Contradicting my "keep the same footprint" objective a tad, I would like the Rt. 81 and 690 shoulders widened a foot or two to accommodate emergency stops and snow removal.

T. Packard
December 7, 2013

Reg. Dir.	Asst. Reg. Dir.	Reg. Dir.	Asst. Reg. Dir.
LT.	Construction	LT.	Construction
Design	Fleet Admin.	Design	Fleet Admin.
Admin. Svcs.	PPM	Admin. Svcs.	PPM
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Real Estate	Safety	Real Estate	Safety
Traffic	Operations	Traffic	Operations
All GDs	All REs	All GDs	All REs
✓ P10 Pg 2	Michelle	✓ P10 Pg 2	Michelle

From: tojopack@twcnny.rr.com

Sent: Monday, September 1, 2014 12:59:31 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)

To: dot.sm.mo.l81Opportunities

Subject: Rte 81 Comments

Thomas N. Packard
4811 McDonald Road
Syracuse, NY 13215

tojopack@twcnny.rr.com <<mailto:tojopack@twcnny.rr.com>>
[315-476-9121](tel:315-476-9121)

Thank you for the opportunity extended to the public to comment about the Route 81 project through Syracuse. We have attended each and every scoping meeting.

My wife and I continue to hold fast to the viaduct option in a foot print that is not necessarily conducive to ultra-high speed traffic but that has little or no impact on adjoining structures. We think the tunnel idea that seems to have gained traction locally is a bit bizarre for the reasons presented during the scoping meetings. And we continue to believe that the street level option wrecks neighborhoods as some neighbors on the south side have pointed out. Also, it strikes us that the depictions of the boulevard presented at the scoping meetings are purely visionary and not showing how things really will be. One shows only five cars on it, no cars backed up for a traffic light, no rush hour grid lock, no pedestrian pushing a button in an attempt to cross. And the city (or state) has not had a penchant for street-scaping, and we will have 'er looking like the current weed-infested Route 81 shoulders through Syracuse in no time.

The only letter in our local newspaper that resonated with me was one in favor of the viaduct and and overhead pedestrian way that would be more than just "stairs up and stairs down", in the style of Dallas, Texas. Naysayers who would like to tear down the viaduct would probably want to eliminate that old wall in Rome, Italy too, but thankfully they don't live there.

Syracuse has a lot of history that it can be justly proud of. Although my wife and I like "preserving history" we are absolutely adamant about "respecting history."

With that in mind, the first attachment "Townsend Street" illustrates some of the disruptiveness that boosting street traffic on South Townsend Street, one of the options that has been presented, would have on a historic area of town. Park Central Church (19) would be separated from the park (20), as would the Teall Carriage House (18) and the Hamilton White House (21). The photos of this district came from a booklet "Downtown Syracuse Walking Tour" published by the Downtown Committee of Syracuse, Inc.

Having been there, I think what makes that old Roman wall so charming is its portals, how it draws you to wanting to cross one area of the city to another. So my letter is directed to what can be done to make some charming portals in Syracuse. There is an opportunity to make a charming portal for Erie Blvd (which will form the remainder of this letter) but I think there is also something that could be done at Harrison and Adams Streets. Whereas the one at Erie Blvd would focus on an Erie Canal, the ones at Harrison or Adams could focus on a light show, the university, or the hospital complex, or the downtown skyline.

The way the Erie Canal theme and the Rt. 81 viaduct should be viewed is Rte. 81 is the 850 mile long northern gateway to Canada. In its day, the Erie Canal was referred to as the gateway to the west. There is only one place in the entire nation where those two gateways intersect.

Of course, the Erie Canal was where the present day Erie Blvd is situated. In the second attachment you can see that in its day the canal went right through Clinton Square and those prominent buildings to the left and right still exist, thank goodness! Unfortunately the Third County Court House on Clinton Square (third attachment) was torn down. If you proceed east from the square you can see how the canal passed by our city hall (fourth attachment), another building that thankfully still exists. And

lastly, if you proceed a half block further east you have the weigh lock building (fifth attachment) that exists today as a museum. Those photos came from Images of America, Erie Canal by Martin Morganstein and Joan H. Cregg, Arcadia Publishing, 2001.

Now with those historical pictures in mind, fast forward to about a month ago when we ate an outdoor restaurant along Erie Blvd facing eastwardly to the Canal Museum and the viaduct beyond. The viaduct was in no way, shape or form, compatible with history! Even worse, to the left it extended along the other side of Erie Blvd over a weedy parking lot which angled southwardly to cross over the boulevard. The line of vision as evidenced in the second attachment was entirely wiped out. There's was nothing attractive to draw the eye ahead as in the good old days.

Here's my vision of what could be done and something that would infuse interest in the viaduct alternative. What you'd do where the viaduct crosses Rt. 81 is make an archway in the same limestone used for the canal, to resemble the appearance of aqueducts along the old canal, purely an ornamental touch (sort of like attachment 6 as a single arch). In the fifth attachment you can see a bridge that crossed the canal, and so overhead on the viaduct itself, you could create similar rails where it crosses over the boulevard, drawing attention to the historical nature of the city and its origins to the passerby. And here's the coupe de gras thought: a few years ago it was reported that the old bell tower from the third court house has been stored in pieces at our local airport. Wouldn't it be cool to get it reassembled and maybe located along Erie Blvd in the vicinity of that overpass. A low-strung stone wall along that far shoulder of Erie Blvd, again in "canal limestone" could visually integrate things. Although all of those suggestions are purely faux, I would argue that they would serve to "respect our history" and would serve to boost the meaningfulness of the canal to the citizenry ten fold.

From a dollars and cents standpoint, if the viaduct saves money over the tunnel idea being widely supported (but not by us) hopefully a reasonable chunk of the savings would be put toward harmonizing the viaduct with the community.

And as a parting thought, the viaduct, like or lump it, has become part of our history! It has been here for fifty years and the city is about 150 years old overall. Our neighborhoods have grown up around it.

I think the viaduct needs to be respected, just as with the above thoughts there are opportunities available to the civil engineers and architects to do a much better job of respecting the history of our fair city.

Tom Packard

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: Joe Papa

Address: 3129 Gates Rd

City: Vestal

State: NY Zip: 13850

Phone: ()

Email:

Comments:

A 2-level Replacement. Perhaps one level for travel
1 for thru way for only motor intersection connections
we already have a semblance of a BVD (as shown in)
As for all this alleged economic development, there is
no land along Almond now, so where will it occur?

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name:

MILE PARLYCH

Address:

621 HIXSON AVE

City:

SYRACUSE

State:

NY

Zip:

13206

Phone: (315) 472-8444

Email:

ALPAR-OWEN@HOTMAIL.COM

Comments:

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2 BILLION!

PUTS DOWNTOWN BACK TOGETHER!
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Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
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www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) 181-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Name: Thomas K Pelis

Address: 750 E. Adams St.

City: Syr.

State:

Zip:

Phone: (315) 464-4689 Email: PelisT@upstate-ny.edu

Comments:

Not a single word about integration of mass transit.
This is key to mitigating disruption. It should be
largely built before the new highway solution is constructed

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name: Justin Pelligrina

Address: 28 Turnstone Circle City: Syracuse State: NY, Zip: 13219

Phone: () Email:

Comments:

Syracuse has many concrete support structures for sections of Rt 690 + Rt 81. They are dull grey and unattractive. I noticed here tonight photographs of art work done in other cities. Art sculptures or murals would be very attractive for use here in Syracuse. This could be done on sections not involved with the current viaduct alternative situation. Also I favor the boulevard alternatives which would open part of the city aesthetically and for potential economic activity. If the sections of I-81 under consideration were removed this ^{would} potentially help both Syracuse University and Upstate University Hospital. These are our two largest employers which seek to be continually expanding. Lets assist them by opening this area to them.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

From: no-reply@dot.state.ny.us
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Subject: Contact the Project Team
Date: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 11:01:51 AM

Last name - Pellow
First name - David
Company name -
Address 1 - 6330 Meridan Road
Address 2 -
City - Jamesville
State - NY
Zip - 13078
Address 2 -
Email Address - davidpellow@yahoo.com
Message -

Question or Comment - I have lived at the Dewitt/Jamesville address for about a year. I use I-481 and the Thruway to commute to work. Previously, I lived inside the Syracuse City Line, and, for 30 years, worked in downtown Syracuse.

I think that a plan for the future would redesignate I-481 as I-81, much as Mass. 128 was eventually designated as I-95, to accept the reality that sending interstate traffic through an urban center was not the best plan. If the interests of presently-located businesses and landowners was most important, we would not have moved to an improved Erie Canal, from the canal to railroad, or from the railroad to the interstates.

If an elevated interstate is reconstructed in the same basic ROW of I-81, then I propose a reverse-High Line. Set that portion of the highway south of Erie Boulevard higher than present, to allow more light underneath (especially if the new roadbed is wider) and better sight lines. Under the highway, instead of a paved no-man's land, have a strip park. Or, buildings that would create a continuous neighborhood from downtown to Hill (in New Haven, there is a large parking garage that spans a couple of blocks, but storefronts at ground level along the cross streets creates a continuous streetscape for pedestrians) Maybe a way could be found to create light wells, and strong lighting underneath should be provided. One challenge will be capturing and draining away the salt slush from the road, so it does not drip down on buildings, plantings, and pedestrians.

I'm not so sure that the elevated highway is the barrier between downtown and "the other side". I think the emptiness along Harrison/Adams, and the concentrated traffic of Almond Street and the on/off ramps is what creates the psychological barrier. Reorganizing the on/off points should be given a lot of thought.

Thanks.

Additional Information 1 -
Additional Information 2 -
Additional Information 3 -
Additional Information 4 -
Additional Information 5 -

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: Jennifer Pelow

Address: King & King Architects
358 West Jefferson St.

City: Syracuse State: NY Zip: 13202

Phone: (315) 622-1180

Email: jpelow@kingarch.com

Comments: I would like more information on how each of these options will impact the neighborhoods surrounding the project ie: traffic, connections safety, quality of life.

How are we looking at long term impacts of this project?
ie: what transportation will look like in 20 years or 50 years, vs lifecycle, maintenance

How does this impact West Street (whatever the solution)?
There has been a large concern with the I81 project hindering many studies and attempts to improve safety + connection with the West Side ~~and~~ to downtown across West Street.
Many businesses + community groups located in the near West Side have worked diligently to improve West Street. We don't want to see it go backwards.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:
I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:
www.i81opportunities.org
Information Hotline:
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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

11.20.13

NYSDOT
Regional Director Carl Ford
State Office Building
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Reg. Dir.	Asst. Reg. D.
LT.	Construction
Design	Fleet Admin.
Admin. Svcs.	PPM
RECEIVED REG. DIRECTOR R-3	
JAN 09 2014	
Real Estate	Safety
Traffic	Operations
All GDs	All REs
	Michelle

Re: I81 Opportunity in relation to West Street and the Near West Side Neighborhood

Dear Mr. Ford:

I would like to start out by thanking the NYSDOT for continuing to make the I81 project as transparent as possible to the Central New York Community and for continuing to offer opportunities for residents and business owners to stay involved with this project.

Representatives from our firm have had the opportunity to attend many of the public forums including the one held at Fowler High School on October 29th. Joe Flint was gracious in his responses to many of the statements and questions focused specifically around concerns about the impacts the near west side is currently facing due to West Street's current state and impacts the neighborhood will face with future decisions made to I81.

Our firm is located on the Near West Side of Syracuse, specifically at the intersection of West Jefferson Street and West Street. Seven years ago, King + King began the process of selecting a location for our new headquarters. The vision and mission of the Near West Side Initiative, residents, and business owners stood out to our firm. We chose this neighborhood because of the community spirit, support of art and expression, passion for education, as well as the want and need of economic development.

In those seven years, we personally have participated in many initiatives, forums and group discussions focusing on quality of life, engagement and development within the Near West Side. Our staff frequently participates in studies and competitions focusing on better connections between the Near Westside and Downtown Syracuse. A major theme in all of these discussions continues to be this monstrosity, the "Berlin Wall" quoted by residents and business owners, know as West Street.

As many alternatives and preliminary designs for West Street have been created and presented to the NYSDOT, our voices seem to go unheard. The city is ready and willing to make the changes needed that address some of the economic and social barriers that West Street currently creates.

We have heard Mr. Flint say that the NYSDOT is looking at reasonable solutions or alternatives for I81 that will have positive social, economical and environmental

Peter G. King, AIA

David A. Johnson, AIA

Kirk W. Narburgh, AIA, ASLA

James R. King, AIA



Date
TO
Project #
Page 2 of 2

impacts on our community. The use of West Street as a temporary or permanent byway for traffic flow is not a reasonable alternative and further more will go against the goals of this project, as it will have negative impacts socially, economically and environmentally.

I also understand that one of the major goals of the I81 Project is to address the barrier it creates between University Hill and downtown Syracuse. At what cost are we willing to achieve this goal? I ask because a large group of the community members have similar goals for West Street. (The barrier between the Near Westside and downtown). However, I do not see the same emphasis being placed on this connection, in fact I see the NYSDOT doing nothing but hinder the progress we are trying to make for this neighborhood. My question for you Mr. Ford is, does the NYSDOT place residents of the University Hill neighborhood on a higher pedestal than the residents of the Near Westside?

I encourage you to revisit many of the proposed alternatives for West Street and give City Officials, residents and business owners more involvement in the decisions made or not being made that directly impact West Street and the Near West Side. I personally ask the NYSDOT take the all of the requests made in regards to West Street under immediate consideration.

Sincerely,

King + King Architects LLP

Jennifer Pelow

From: no-reply@dot.state.ny.us
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Subject: Contact the Project Team
Date: Tuesday, November 12, 2013 8:47:40 AM

Last name - Penizotto

First name - Peter

Company name -

Address 1 - 7291 Dabney lane

Address 2 -

City - Fayetteville

State - NY

Zip - 13066

Address 2-

Email Address - pjpenizo@syr.edu

Message - None

Question or Comment - I can not make the meeting on Wed Nov 13 but I do not support keeping the I81 bridges that cut through the city and create a divide between the city and the University. I work at SU and see this as a devastating divide that must be changed.

Thanks You

Pete

Additional Information 1 -

Additional Information 2 -

Additional Information 3 -

Additional Information 4 -

Additional Information 5 -

RECEIVED

JAN 11 2014

Operating Division

TO:
New York State Department of Transportation
I-81 Corridor Study Comments

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All this history, briefly described above, covers a long, tedious, aggravating period of my early traffic life in Syracuse. The traffic conditions and the traffic control faults were to my mind by far the worst feature of living in or near Syracuse.

Then, finally, the southern leg of Highway 81 through Syracuse was completed including the now much maligned viaduct. I had business in Cortland County, and this was the situation that caused me to try out the new highway. It was *NIRVANA!* I almost had the feeling that I was experiencing a StarTrek scenario, and that someone had "beamed" me through the city of Syracuse and launched me toward Cortland before I even had a chance to think about it! I appreciate this infrastructure every time I use it, since I have a vivid memory of the traffic difficulties that I endured before its existence.

It is currently popular to characterize the 81 viaduct as a barrier or a "Berlin Wall" separating two halves of Syracuse. I don't buy it! Rather than separating those two parts it provides a connection between the parts that can be used by the cross traffic and pedestrians, without having to buck the I-81 arterial traffic. There are difficulties, especially for pedestrians, but this is a product of the ground traffic control, not the existence of an overhead bridge. If the viaduct were replaced by a "boulevard" all this cross traffic would have to share time with the Interstate traffic and that traffic would have to pass a

gauntlet of stop and go lights. I believe that the viaduct is the key to the integration of downtown and the University-Medical complex. It even provides an enhancement of the recent development of the "Connective Corridor".

There are admittedly back-ups primarily during the morning rush hours on the interchange bridges. The worst case is the back-up from the south-bound off-ramp to Harrison and Adams Streets. This is not the fault of the interchange design in my opinion. The trouble can be assigned to the inadequate traffic control on the ground level starting at the exit point of the ramp. The solution is to provide a much heavier priority to this off-ramp traffic. The goal should be to always keep the traffic moving off the highway. The traffic lights not only need to be synchronized effectively, but should be heavily time-weighted in favor of the southerly flow onto Almond Street, then crossing Harrison Street, making the left turn at Adams Street and proceeding up the hill to the garages, the University, and the Medical Center of the city. Any Almond Street drivers distressed by the resulting very short part of the time cycle can easily find better routes on the ground during the rush period.

I have an engineering background and as a result I have a positive view of the overall center city interchange. I think it is a very excellent design, providing seamless streamlined passage for the transfers between Interstates 81 and 690 that drivers wish to make. Of the eight possible transfers between the two routes, six are provided with extremely efficient connectors without any sharp turns. This is all accomplished with an amazingly small ground footprint free of clover-leaves and/or excess bridges. For example, I think that one centrally located clover-leaf might require condemnation and demolition of half of downtown Syracuse! Of course, the transfers between the western part of 690 and the northern part of 81 involve the use of Bear Street. It would not be a very expensive proposition to make this connection seamless as well.

I believe that the replacement of the viaduct by a Boulevard would be an unfortunate *act of insanity!* It would be a set-back returning us to the earlier days that I have cited above. It would create the only official *unlimited*-access link in the entire length of Interstate 81 from Canada to Tennessee! It would be a violation of the rules of interstate routes.

How fortunate we are to have these two great highways, Interstate routes 81 and 690, crossing in the heart of downtown Syracuse, with all the attendant convenience that is the result. One could argue that Albany has at least a similar crossing along the Hudson River, but Utica, Rochester and Buffalo do not have such centrally located interstate crossings. Our interchange is something of which we should be proud. If the viaduct needs repair, let us "fix" it, and call it that, or call it "reconstruction" if we must. But I implore you authorities not to ruin a truly important and valuable asset that was obtained after a half-century of struggle.

Sincerely,



William A Penn
3630 Doyle Road
Baldwinsville, New York 13027

wpenn1@twcny.rr.com

RECEIVED AUG 29 2014

To: New York State Department of Transportation
ATT: Mark Frechette
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, New York 13202

Dear Sir:

I am writing you to express my thoughts on the highway 81 viaduct debate.

I am mindful of your deadline of September for inputs. Please accept the enclosed copy of the letter that I sent you earlier this year, my intention being to be sure it is read and considered. There is nothing in the letter that I would change at this point. I have several additional comments.

My primary concern is that we do not lose the enormous convenience provided by our interstate system in the city of Syracuse. We are so fortunate to have a cross of two important interstate roads, route 690 representing the urban alternate to its parent east-west national artery, Route 90 (Thruway). My previously sent enclosed letter traces my experience in Syracuse over the last half-century. Removal of the limited access link between the downtown intersection and the South would be a drastic degenerate step backwards to the conditions that existed decades ago. These conditions involved continuous rush hour miles-long traffic jams, and gauntlets of unsynchronized traffic lights producing the most tedious and aggravating traffic conditions imaginable.

Options based on a simple perspective of the quality of a final infrastructure, with the preservation of a southern limited-access link, the issue boils down to 1) a tunnel-boulevard or 2) a simple restoration of the viaduct. Thus to me, the choice is obvious. I think most informed persons will believe the construction of a tunnel in Syracuse will come in very much over-budget in both time and cost. A witness to this is the Boston "Big Dig". I personally would not expect to see the end of it in my lifetime.

Senator Dirksen said it best almost a half century ago: "A billion here and a billion there, and pretty soon it adds up to some real money!" With our current federal national debt, I view it as *unpatriotic* to spend this amount of federal money on "cosmetic improvement" i.e. the boulevard-tunnel option that I don't view as an improvement at all. When and how are we going to retire this debt with the spendthrift mindset that still seems rampant on the part of our politicians?

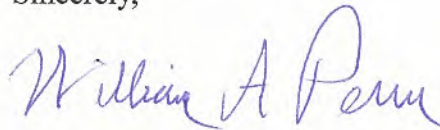
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Is the viaduct a “barrier” or a “Berlin wall” that divides the city in two? Not in my view. Rather it provides an easy pathway for traffic or pedestrians going from one half to the other, without having to contend with the “through” traffic flowing harmlessly overhead. Instead of a barrier, on a practical basis, it is a “uniter”.

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Thank you for reading my input and adding it to your considerations.

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wpenn1@twcnny.rr.com

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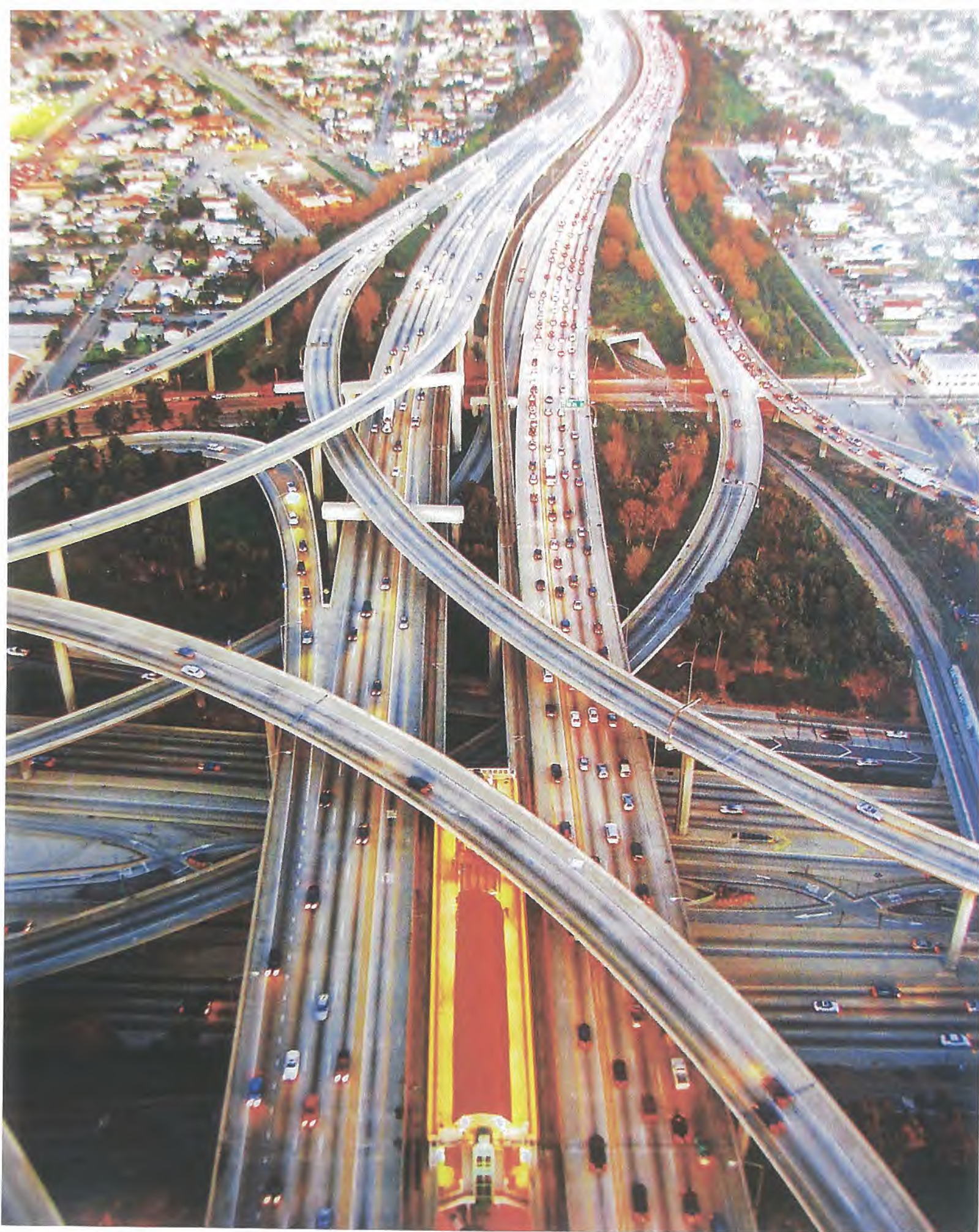
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3630 Doyle Road
Baldwinsville, New York 13027

wpenn1@twcnny.rr.com



To: Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council
 126 North Salina Street, 100 Clinton Square, Suite 100
 Syracuse, New York 13202

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All this history, briefly described above, covers a long, tedious, aggravating period of my early traffic life in Syracuse. The traffic conditions and the traffic control faults were to my mind by far the worst feature of living in or near Syracuse.

Then, finally, the southern leg of Highway 81 through Syracuse was completed including the now much maligned viaduct. I had business in Cortland County, and this was the situation that caused me to try out the new highway. It was *NIRVANA!* I almost had the feeling that I was experiencing a StarTrek scenario, and that someone had "beamed" me through the city of Syracuse and launched me toward Cortland before I even had a chance to think about it! I appreciate this infrastructure every time I use it, since I have a vivid memory of the traffic difficulties that I endured before its existence.

It is currently popular to characterize the 81 viaduct as a barrier or a "Berlin Wall" separating two halves of Syracuse. I don't buy it! Rather than separating those two parts it provides a connection between the parts that can be used by the cross traffic and pedestrians, without having to buck the I-81 arterial traffic. There are difficulties, especially for pedestrians, but this is a product of the ground traffic control, not the existence of an overhead bridge. If the viaduct were replaced by a "boulevard" all this cross traffic would have to share time with the Interstate traffic and that traffic would have to pass a gauntlet of stop and go lights. I believe that the viaduct is the key to the integration of downtown and the

University-Medical complex. It even provides an enhancement of the recent development of the "Connective Corridor".

There are admittedly back-ups primarily during the morning rush hours on the interchange bridges. The worst case is the back-up from the south-bound off-ramp to Harrison and Adams Streets. This is not the fault of the interchange design in my opinion. The trouble can be assigned to the inadequate traffic control on the ground level starting at the exit point of the ramp. The solution is to provide a much heavier priority to this off-ramp traffic. The goal should be to always keep the traffic moving off the highway. The traffic lights not only need to be synchronized effectively, but should be heavily time-weighted in favor of the southerly flow onto Almond Street, then crossing Harrison Street, making the left turn at Adams Street and proceeding up the hill to the garages, the University, and the Medical Center of the city. Any Almond Street drivers distressed by the resulting very short part of the time cycle can easily find better routes on the ground during the rush period.

I have an engineering background and as a result I have a positive view of the overall center city interchange. I think it is a very excellent design, providing seamless streamlined passage for the transfers between Interstates 81 and 690 that drivers wish to make. Of the eight possible transfers between the two routes, six are provided with extremely efficient connectors without any sharp turns. This is all accomplished with an amazingly small ground footprint free of clover-leaves and/or excess bridges. For example, I think that one centrally located clover-leaf might require condemnation and demolition of half of downtown Syracuse! Of course, the transfers between the western part of 690 and the northern part of 81 involve the use of Bear Street. It would not be a very expensive proposition to make this connection seamless as well.

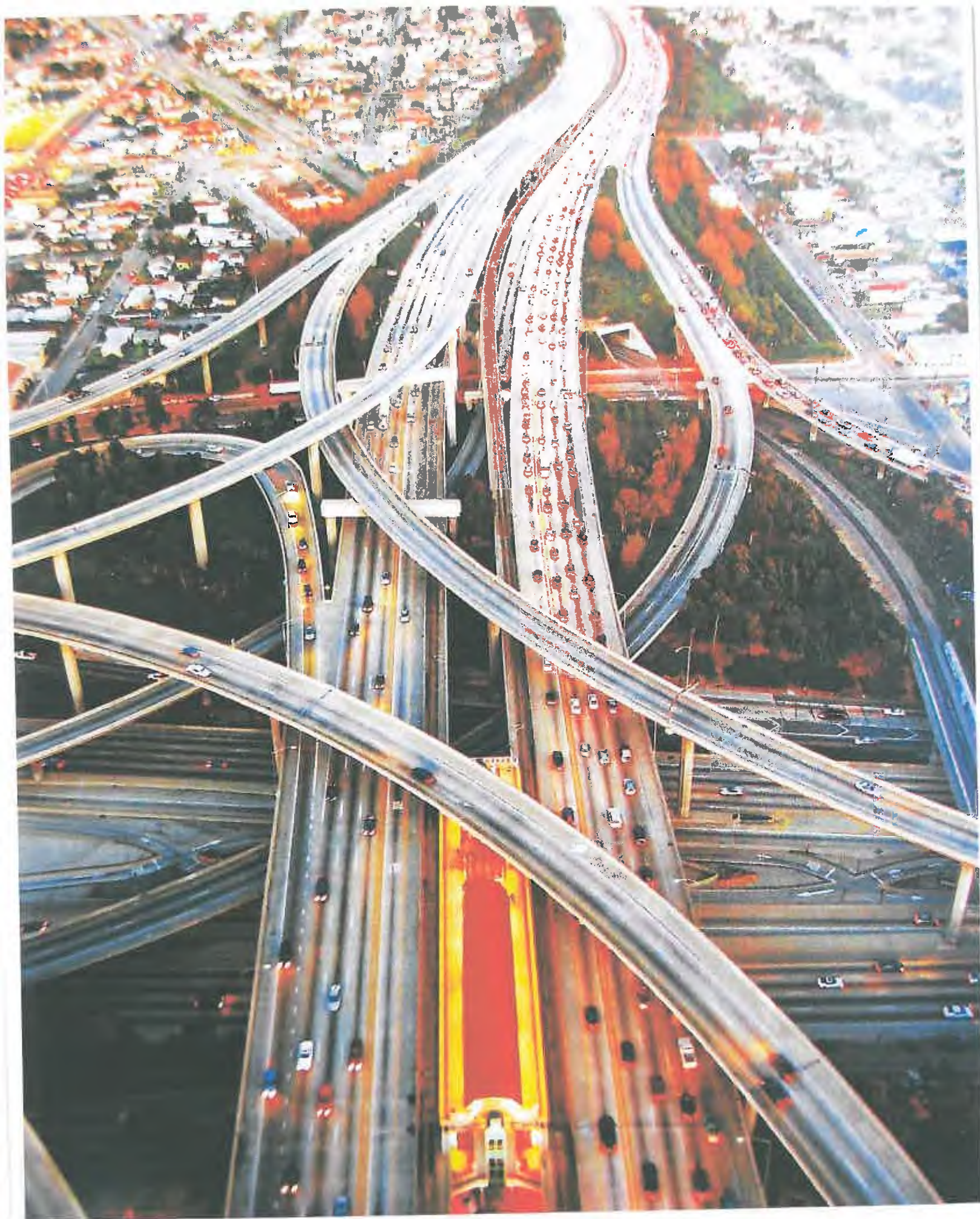
I believe that the replacement of the viaduct by a Boulevard would be an unfortunate *act of insanity!* It would be a set-back returning us to the earlier days that I have cited above. It would create the only official *unlimited*-access link in the entire length of Interstate 81 from Canada to Tennessee! It would be a violation of the rules of interstate routes.

How fortunate we are to have these two great highways, Interstate routes 81 and 690, crossing in the heart of downtown Syracuse, with all the attendant convenience that is the result. One could argue that Albany has at least a similar crossing along the Hudson River, but Utica, Rochester and Buffalo do not have such centrally located interstate crossings. Our interchange is something of which we should be proud. If the viaduct needs repair, let us "fix" it, and call it that, or call it "reconstruction" if we must. But I implore you authorities not to ruin a truly important and valuable asset that was obtained after a half-century of struggle.

Sincerely,

William A Penn
3630 Doyle Road
Baldwinsville, New York 13027

wpenn1@twcnny.rr.com



George Peters
6659 Colton Road
Lafayette, N.Y. 13084

New York State DOT Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, N.Y.

Attn. Mr. Carl Ford Regional Director

Re: Route 81 Alternative

Carl

You now have the chance to dictate the growth of the Syracuse area over the next 50 to 100 years in what decision your people reach in relocating route 81. The most logical plan you have now is to utilize 481 as the new 81 but this plan will restrict the growth of the city to the east side, bring more traffic to 690 east and west in the city and be obsolete within 25 years.

Carl get bold!!! Take route 81 between Tully and Lafayette and build a new road somewhere west of Cardiff and ending up in Fairmont tying into 495. You can rebuild 495, with a major interchange at 690, cross Onondaga Lake with a viaduct and tie into the existing 81 by Old Liverpool Road. Existing 81 will become 481 with an exit at a new boulevard to be built where the 81 viaduct now stands. Also something can be done to 81 north of 690 and lots of bridges could be removed.

I believe this idea will create growth for both the east and west sides of Syracuse and keep the major truck traffic to the thruway out of the city by utilizing 481 to the east and the new 81 to the west.

Your people are talking about costs of a billion and I can't see this proposal costing much more and worth every penny of what you will spend.

Whatever you do will not affect me since I am retired and have no intrest in any decision that is made so that is why I have not spoken up about this subject.

Carl good luck and if this helps keep it for yourself.

George Peters

Reg. Dir.	Asst. Reg. Dir.
LT.	Construction
Design	Fleet Admin.
Admin. Svcs.	PPM
RECEIVED REG. DIRECTOR R-3	
JUL 08 2014	
Real Estate	Safety
Traffic	Operations
All GDs	All REs
	Michelle

RECEIVED

JUL - 8 2014
NYS DOT REGION 3
MAIL ROOM

PETITION FOR TRANSPORTATION JUSTICE

Fixing Interstate 81 in Syracuse:

We Want More Mass Transit, Affordable Housing, Clean Air, and Good Jobs

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EMAIL

Ethan Bodnaruk	<i>Ethan Bodnaruk</i>	850 Maryland Avenue	315 876-0430	ebodnaruk@gmail.com
Kate Montgomery	<i>Kate Montgomery</i>	212 Buckingham Ave ^{Syracuse 13210}	315-471-7316	Katema2@gmail.com ✓
Ronnie McElain	<i>Ronnie McElain</i>	121 Weiser Ct, #A Syr, NY 13202	315 313-0927	ronniemcElain@gmail.com ✓
Jane Singletary	<i>Jane Singletary</i>	116 Weiser Ct	315 476-1144	
Shameka Davis	<i>Shameka Davis</i>	146 Weiser Ct	425-5348	
Earnestine Davis	<i>Earnestine Davis</i>	101 Weiser Ct.	476 6042	✓
Christine Davis	<i>Christine Davis</i>	115 Hamilton Rd.	345-814-	ChristineDavis3@gmail.com ✓
Don Jordan	<i>Don Jordan</i>	552 Oak Hill Dr	430-4381	MRDJORDAN@MSN.COM ✓
Lisa Bighel	<i>Lisa Bighel</i>	115 Stewart Ct	(315) 810-2395	✓
Nancy Gwin	<i>Nancy E. Gwin</i>	464 Broad St. Syracuse NY 13210	315-422-4689	

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PETITION FOR TRANSPORTATION JUSTICE

Tag with I-81

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Christine Patterson	<i>[Signature]</i>	905 SALT SPRING RD	315 415 9199	christine.patterson@att.net
Melissa Fierke	<i>[Signature]</i>	254 Rensselaer St Syracuse	315 299 7312	Fierke@att.net
Tim Rice	<i>[Signature]</i>	22 JAMES ST SYRACUSE NY	315 482 9799	timrice@att.net
Christopher?	<i>[Signature]</i>	460 Hill St	315 482 3526	Christopher@att.net
Jessica Chasnoff	<i>[Signature]</i>	203 Barrett St Syracuse NY	315 477 4472	jessica.chasnoff@att.net
Barbara Thummal	<i>[Signature]</i>	300 Burt St Syracuse NY	315 422 2230	
Wanda E. Reel	<i>[Signature]</i>	300 Burt Syracuse NY	315 472 8998	
Evelyn Shephard	<i>[Signature]</i>	300 Burt Syracuse	315 299 4193	
Wylene Bass	<i>[Signature]</i>	300 Burt Syracuse	315 472 8412	
Brian K. Lewis Sr	<i>[Signature]</i>	300 Burt Syracuse	315 463 5609	Brian.Lewis@att.net

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KEN GIFFORD	<i>[Signature]</i>	408 CARROLL ST. SYR NY 13204	518-932-7461	GIFFORD.KEN@gmail.com
Chris Thomas	<i>[Signature]</i>	100 Bristol St. Syracuse NY 13204		C
Josh Harris	<i>[Signature]</i>	100 Bristol Pl. Syracuse NY 13210	315-708-2880	scham01@syr.edu
Alyssa Julian	<i>[Signature]</i>	142 Oakland St. SYR NY		
Nicole Harbordt	<i>[Signature]</i>	142 Oakland St. SYR NY		
Isabella Lawrence	<i>[Signature]</i>	340 Redfield Pl. SYR NY		isabella.lawrence@syr.edu
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Mary Ruppel	<i>[Signature]</i>	120 Maple Ave. SYR NY	607-733-2513	MARYRUPPEL@gmail.com

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Michael Dillon	<i>Michael Dillon</i>	722 Clarendon St		mdillon@sy.rr.edu ✓
Henry Schmidt	<i>Henry Schmidt</i>	142 Oakland St		
Evangelina Dannelly	<i>Evangelina Dannelly</i>	142 Oakland St		edannel@sy.rr.edu ✓
Michaela Russo	<i>Michaela Russo</i>	142 Oakland Street		mm Russo@sy.rr.edu ✓
Sean Meiryman	<i>Sean Meiryman</i>	142 Oakland St. Apt 20	435-8310	SM Meiryman@sy.rr.edu ✓
Devon Peasinger	<i>Devon Peasinger</i>	142 Oakland St		devon.peasinger@gmail.com ✓
Jessica Warrall	<i>Jessica Warrall</i>	142 Oakland St		jwarrall@sy.rr.edu ✓
David Hunter	<i>David Hunter</i>	112 Avondale Pl		dhunter@sy.rr.edu ✓
Caleb Rudge	<i>Caleb Rudge</i>	950 Lancaster Ave	845-706-6181	ccrudge@sy.rr.edu ✓

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PRINTED NAME	SIGNATURE	ADDRESS	PHONE	EMAIL
Brenda Broadforth	Brenda Broadforth	1207 Almond Street Apt 601	315-424-3870	
ROBERT CYR	ROBERT CYR	1207 Almond St. Apt 1107		
CATHLEEN	CATHLEEN	1207 ALMOND APT 014		
Bruce Pyke	BRUCE PYKE	1207 Almond St. Apt 1812		
Cynthia Fleury	Cynthia Fleury	1207 Almond St. Apt 711	315 807 3644	
Daniel O'Grady	Daniel O'Grady	501 CROUSE AVE 025		
Maria Gault	Maria Gault	501 S. CROUSE AVE		
Maria Gault	Maria Gault	501 S. CROUSE ST #507	315-7664205	
Abdul Sharif	Abdul Sharif	501 S. CROUSE AVE 17210	315 664 5225	
SONNE	SONNE	501 S. CROUSE ST		

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Tony Epp	Tony Epp	504 Union Ave #302 Syr NY 13210		
Toshika Cosby	J. Cosby	142 Kenwood Ave		
Margaret Moore	M. Moore	132 Cliffside Dr		
Robert C. ...	Robert C. ...	1043 ...		
Michael King	Sandra King	1018 S. ...		
Vincent Kowalski	V. Kowalski	82 N Lewis St Auburn NY		
Jim D. Park	JIM PARKER	852 Oak St		
Jennifer Rizer	Jennifer Rizer	7782 Barbara Ln		
John John ...	John John ...	115 Alvin St - Syrac		
Mercedes Mudd	Mercedes Mudd	715 Spring St		

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Frederica Swann	Frederica Swann	300 Bust St apt B-404	(315) 748-0440	
Roy Carmont	Roy Carmont	300 Bust St apt A-705	(315) 863-8879	
Robert Walker	Robert Walker	440 W. Main St	315-474-4410	
Josephine Walker	Josephine Walker	440 W. Main St	315-474-4410	
Curtis King	Curtis King	341 Fullman street	315-383-4778	
Sharon Brown	Sharon Brown	1207 Almond St	863-2017	
JULIE VESEY	Julie Vesey	1207 Almond St.	424-0134	
Leigh C. Stafford	Leigh C. Stafford	1207 Almond St. 2010	295-0032	
Pearl Hinnifed		1207 Almond St	478-7084	
Linda Sawyer	Linda Sawyer	1207 Almond St	378-4658	

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Timothy Smith	Timothy Smith	MARK AVE	210-0079	
Anthony McMiller	Anthony McMiller	221 W. Kenworthy St.	210-0099	AMcMiller@gmail.com
Walter Brown	Walter Brown	123 Weiser Ct. APT B	426-1912	
Elleen Coyle	Elleen Coyle	403 S WE BOWLE ST	412-7046	
Ted Doychinov	Ted Doychinov	738 Westcott		
Barry Lentz	Barry Lentz	1011 Westcott St. 13210	477-5401	helsyr@aol.com
Michael Donnelly	Michael Donnelly	5100 High Bridge St Fayetteville		
Annette Bailey	Annette Bailey	753 James St. Syr. 13206	218-3796	Scorpioncastle@yahoo.com
Pete King	Pete King	600 Thurston St. 13210	560-3017	peteking@earthlink.net
Geoff Oldfield	Geoff Oldfield	300 Berkeley Dr. Syr. 13210	450-6811	goldfinger13208@gmail.com

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Gary Bonaparte	[Signature]	206 Glendale St Syracuse 13206	(315) 717-5717	gobonaparte@msn.com
Pat M. Lord	[Signature]	5015 COUSE AVE # 306	315-450-4795	
BETTY BURLEY	[Signature]	501 S. CLAUSE AVE	315-476-2211	
Mary Martin	[Signature]	501 S. CLAUSE AVE	315-476-5056	
Douglas Martin	[Signature]	111 Ligonette Rd APT 602 Syracuse, NY 13205	415-1656	douglas.martin@msn.com
LAURENCE COFFIN	[Signature]	3000 S. CLAUSE AVE # 120	315-757-6251	
Paula F. Smith	[Signature]	467 Addison Ave Ste 13210	315-500-0446	msmith@att.net
Paula F. Smith	[Signature]	142 Cambridge St 13210	414-7726	ursula_fsmith@gmail.com
Barbara Humphrey	[Signature]	834 Westcott St 13210	315-440-9341	bhumphrey@gmail.com
David Pittman	[Signature]	114 Euclid ave 13210	315-507-145	d.pittman@Syr.edu

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- **MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING.** We don't want to be moved from our homes by demolition or price increases resulting from fixing I-81. We want any new housing built in the I-81 corridor to include affordable housing for low and moderate income people.
- **MORE CLEAN AIR.** We want the I-81 solution to minimize the air pollution that causes asthma and other lung disease from car and truck traffic in the central city.
- **MORE GOOD JOBS** for central city residents in fixing the I-81 problem and in any new businesses and institutions built in the I-81 corridor after it is fixed.

PRINTED NAME

SIGNATURE

ADDRESS

PHONE

EMAIL

SUSAN J. NUCCIO	<i>Susan J. Nuccio</i>	608 PLYMOUTH DR. SYRACUSE NY 13206	315/437-5711	
Michael Messina-Yauchan	<i>Michael Messina</i>	435 E. GENESEE PKWY SYRACUSE NY 13214	315-663-5640	mmmy229@gmail.com

PETITION FOR TRANSPORTATION JUSTICE

Fixing Interstate 81 in Syracuse: We Want More Mass Transit, Affordable Housing, Clean Air, and Good Jobs

To the New York State Department of Transportation:
To the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council:
To the Central New York Regional Transportation Authority:
To city, county, state, and federal elected officials representing Syracuse:

We want the I-81 solution to focus on how to move people – rather than on how to move traffic – safely and affordably without pollution. We want less traffic and more transportation of people and goods. We want fewer trucks, cars, and parking garages and more people, housing, business, jobs, and parks in the I-81 corridor through the center of Syracuse.

We want:

- **MORE MASS TRANSIT.** Everyone should have the right to affordable transportation to jobs, shopping, civic affairs, cultural events, and visits with family and friends. Central city residents who don't have personal cars have as much right to move around the city and go to the suburbs as suburban residents who do have personal cars.
- **MORE AFFORDABLE HOUSING.** We don't want to be moved from our homes by demolition or price increases resulting from fixing I-81. We want any new housing built in the I-81 corridor to include affordable housing for low and moderate income people.
- **MORE CLEAN AIR.** We want the I-81 solution to minimize the air pollution that causes asthma and other lung disease from car and truck traffic in the central city.
- **MORE GOOD JOBS** for central city residents in fixing the I-81 problem and in any new businesses and institutions built in the I-81 corridor after it is fixed.

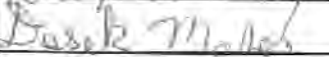
PRINTED NAME

SIGNATURE

ADDRESS

PHONE

EMAIL

Leah Rizzo		5303 Cambridge Rd	315 315-2442	leah.rizzo@syrr.edu
Richard E. Perry		832 Madison Ave	—	recary@syrr.edu
Debbie Mason		111 Keweenaw Rd NY 13116	315 451-9474	cmason@syrr.edu
Michael Chosick		632 Park Ave	315-471-6025	SYRACUSE @ SYRACUSE.EDU
Annelle B. Riley		753 Jones St	315-218-5276	Syracuse Hwy 1

Please return to: Transportation Justice Petition, P.O. Box 562, Syracuse NY 13205 or call 474-7055

SOUTHSIDE SYRACUSE NEEDS I-81

I live in the Southside Syracuse neighborhood and want my voice to be heard regarding the future of Interstate 81. I am concerned that replacing I-81 with a street-level boulevard through my community will have numerous negative effects, including:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ☒ increased noise | ☒ longer commutes |
| ☒ traffic congestion | ☐ job losses |
| ☒ hurting church attendance | ☒ more air pollution |
| ☒ endangering pedestrians | ☐ infrastructure damage |

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address (all Syracuse)</u>	<u>Received</u>	<u>Boxes Checked</u>
Vincent Brown	223 Girard Ave	1/14/14	all, also more crime
Barbara Jean Brown	same		same
Betty Barner	300 Audubon Pkwy	1/14/14	all
Carl Knight	300 Burt St	1/14/14	commutes, jobs, infrastructure
Dorothy Jackson	3149 Bellevue Ave	1/14/14	all
Greater Evangelical	4325 S Salina St	1/14/14	commutes, church attendance
Willie Johnson	1605 Midland Ave	1/14/14	all
Ira Davis	115 Crippen Place	1/14/14	all except jobs
Linda Stackhouse	804 Northway St	1/14/14	all
Virginia Rush	138 Jamesville Ave	1/14/14	noise, traffic, church, commutes
Anonymous	107 W Newell St	1/14/14	all except jobs, infrastructure
Marjorie Worrell	226 Seneca Dr	1/15/14	all
Lynette Gilbert	833 E Brighton Ave	1/15/14	all
Ida Stewart	232 W LaFayette Ave	1/15/14	all except jobs
Minerva Dean	432 Kirk Ave	1/15/14	all
Ida Branch	175 W Matson Ave	1/15/14	all except noise and jobs

Floyd Stephens Jr	1010 Valley Dr	1/15/14	all
Loretta Seals	133 Bishop Ave	1/15/14	all
Cerio (?) Darris	1427 S McBride St	1/15/14	all
K. Daniel	107 W. Newell St	1/15/14	all except jobs
Erma Reed	604 Lynch Ave	1/15/14	all except infrastructure
Kenneth Reed	107 W. Newell St	1/15/14	all but noise, jobs, pollution
Derrick Rice	615 Atlantic Ave	1/16/14	all
Sharon Rice	350 Baker Ave	1/16/14	all
Gwen Jones	48 N. Fulton St	1/17/14	traffic, peds, commutes
John Butler	Seneca Dr #2E	1/17/14	all
Mildred Sampson	155 Bishop Ave	1/17/14	all
Anna Mae Tyler	324 Rich St	1/17/14	none (no boxes checked)
Doris Black	223 Barrington Rd	1/17/14	all but noise, pollution, infrastructure
Kennedy Sparks	236 E Colvin St	1/17/14	all
Tonya McNed (?)	129 W Lynhurst	1/17/14	all
Teakira Sparks	246 McLennan Ave, #2	1/17/14	all
Tamika Arnold	129 Lynhurst Ave	1/17/14	all plus housing & health
Sharon Arnold	821 E Brighton Ave, #214	1/17/14	all but church, jobs, pollution
Trina McNeal	246 McLennan Ave	1/17/14	all but church, jobs plus loss of housing
Trenton Sparks	246 McLennan Ave	1/17/14	all
Tammy Arnold	129 Lynhurst Ave	1/17/14	all
L. Diamond-Walls	118 Radisson Ct #B	1/17/14	all
Annie Rankins	101 Albert Terrace	1/17/14	all
Rosa Walker	211 LaFayette Rd, #421	1/21/14	all
Christola Walker	211 LaFayette Rd, #432	1/22/14	all but jobs, infrastructure
Eleanor Thomas	133 McKinley Ave	1/22/14	all but church and job loss
Rev R. Stackhouse	804 Northway St	1/22/14	all
Cornelia Brown	161 Bertram Pl	1/22/14	traffic & commutes
Bernadette Cole	2027 E. Genesee St, #4	1/22/14	noise, traffic, peds
Elizabeth Rohdfox	501 Dakin St	1/24/14	no boxes checked
Sheila Lucas	24 S Moore Ave, #4K	1/27/14	all but traffic and commutes
Narshawn(?) Branch	175 W Matson Ave	2/3/14	all

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: JERRY PROSONIC

Address: 406 AVERY AVE.

City: SYR

State: NY Zip: 13204

Phone: 315 179-9899

Email: JIMPROSO@AOL.COM

Comments: REPAIRING IS ALWAYS CHEAPER THAN REBUILDING. EIS ^{SHOULD} ~~BUT~~ HAVE PRIMARY IMPACT RELATIVE TO HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS. NON-CONFORMING AND NON-STANDARD ARE RAMPANT IN ANY OLDER HIGHWAY. WILL ANY OPTION OTHER THAN REPAIR BE BETTER? WHO KNOWS, AND WORSE IS FINDING ~~IT~~ OUT AFTER DEMOLITION THAT REPAIR WAS THE BETTER OPTION. AESTHETICALLY AND PRACTICALLY REVISIT THE ROADWAY BENEATH EL 81 IN THE HARRISON & ALMOND STREET AREA. ELEVATED 81 PROVIDES THE REDUNDANCY THAT SYRACUSE NEEDS AS WE DEAL WITH OUR OLDER INFRASTRUCTURE. IT PROVIDES EXCELLENT TIME SAVING AND FUEL EFFICIENCY WHEN GOING TO POINTS CLOSE IN TO OR EVEN IN THE CITY. TIME IS OUR MOST VALUABLE COMMODITY. EL 81 AND RT 690 SHOULD BOTH HAVE AT LEAST ONE EXIT SOUTHBOUND AND ONE EXIT WESTBOUND RESPECTIVELY WITHIN THE CITY. AS THEY EXIST, BOTH HIGHWAYS OFFER EXCELLENT ACCESS TO OUR HOSPITALS. EL 81 THROUGH THE CITY RELIEVES CITY CONGESTION AND ELEVATES THE ^{AIR} POLLUTION FOR BETTER DISPERSAL. I SAY FOR DRIVERS ON THE HIGHWAY FOR A WEEK, AS THEY ARE THE REAL USERS, FORGET SPECIAL INTERESTS, BUREAUCRATS OR "REMOTE AUTHORITIES."

Please continue comments on back if needed.

BY THE WAY, WHEN WILL WE BRIDGE ONONDAGA LAKE??

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name: FRANCIS CO AKUTR

Address: 4529 South Salina ST City: Syracuse State: NY Zip: 13205

Phone: 315 807 2033 Email: -

Comments:

The Boulevard is THE BEST OPTION FOR THE
CITY OF SYRACUSE

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



US Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

Rath, Walter_09-24-2013

From: Walter Rath [wdrath@yahoo.com]

Sent: Tuesday, September 24, 2013 11:48 AM

To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities

Subject: I-81 through Syracuse

As a Central New Yorker who uses I-81 as an efficient route to go to the Washington, D.C. area and, on

occasion, to go north to Canada, one of my primary concerns about alternate plans

(such as making it a

boulevard and having I-81 through traffic go around the city via I-481, or the high costs of a tunnel or

recessed road) is the impact on I-81 as an efficient travel route, not just for

Central New Yorkers, but for

everyone who uses it, including those travelling through Syracuse.

It seems to me that the best option for the most people would be to keep it where it is, and make any

necessary structural improvements.

Thank you for setting up this e-mail venue as another way for letting Syracuse area residents to

be heard on this matter.

Sincerely,

Walter D. Rath

3187A Bellevue Ave. #5

Syracuse, NY 13219

315-468-4206

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Name: DAVID REED

Address: 201 maple

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone: (315) 4141338 Email: dreedesg@gmail.com

Comments:

Viaducts will be built for 60-70 years —

How do we know what our vehicle transport needs will be in 20 years?

I vote for surface options — They leave us the greatest flexibility to easily correct our errors!

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

Contact the Project Team

dot.sm.webcentral

Tue 6/24/2014 11:17 AM

Retain

To:dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>;

Last name - Reed

First name - Marthe

Affiliation - Syracuse resident

Address 1 - 951 Comstock Ave

Address 2 -

City - Syracuse

State - New York

Zip - 13210

Phone - 315-450-7519

Email Address - marthereed@gmail.com

Question or Comment - I write to strongly support the dismantling of the I-82 through Syracuse and its rerouting around the city. The noise, air pollution, and community disruption and harm all illustrate the problems this highway presents to our community.

I urge you in the strongest possible way to recognize the environmental and social harms the highway does to the city of Syracuse and act to protect our community from those harms.

Sincerely,

Marthe Reed

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: NICHOLAS REEVES

Address: 333 EAST WASHINGTON STREET City: SYRACUSE State: NY Zip: 13202

Phone: (315) 428-4394 Email: NICHOLAS.REEVES@DOT.NY.GOV

Comments: I WOULD LIKE TO PROPOSE I-81 VIADUCT BE REPLACED
ON ITS CURRENT ALIGNMENT WITH NO ADDITIONAL TAKINGS, A TWIN
TIER ELEVATED INTERSTATE, UTILIZING STAGED CONSTRUCTION
ABOVE EXISTING, TO MAINTAIN TRAFFIC WITHOUT INTERRUPTION TO SERVICE
AND WITHIN REASON INTERCHANGEABLE DIRECTIONAL TRAFFIC IE S.U.
BASKETBALL → ALL RAMPS 690 & 81 BOTH DIRECTIONS TO LOWER LEVEL
SOUTH OF T-690 INTERCHANGE TO EXPEDITE FLOW TO STADIUM.
NEW COLUMNS COULD BE BUILT OUTSIDE EXISTING AND WITHOUT MEDIAN
PER LEVEL WIDER LANES WITH SHOULDERS POSSIBLE HIGHER SPEED LESS
ACCIDENTS LESS BACK UPS, AND A GREEN SPACE COULD
BE BUILT BELOW LOWER TIER, MAINTENANCE PER TIER EASILY
ACCOMMODATED AND LOWER TIER PROTECTED FROM WEATHER BY UPPER.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481 8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name: Charles H. Reiners

Address: 4580 Stoneledge Lane City: Maulius State: NY Zip: 13124

Phone: (315) 682-9458 Email: chrmr@aol.com

Comments: I hope the various options are/will be
available on-line. The details are impossible
for this layman to appreciate/understand in
this crowded sphere

Thank,
Chuck Reiners

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) 181-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

ReThink 81
Steering Committee

Robert Doucette
Jason Evans
Robert Haley
Joseph Hucko
Van Robinson
Andrew Schuster
Michael Stanton

July 8, 2014

Mr. Mark Frechette
Planning & Program Management
NYS Dept of Transportation
State Office Building
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

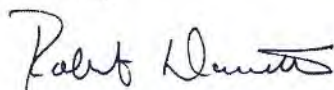
Dear Mr. Frechette:

Rethink 81 is a group of concerned citizens that have formed to advocate for the permanent removal of the Route 81 viaduct. Rethink 81 has conducted an analysis of the property value and real estate tax implications of the elevated and street level alternatives that the NYSDOT has presented to replace the Interstate 81 viaduct in Syracuse, and has enclosed this analysis for your consideration. Based upon an analysis of these alternatives, the following forecasts were made:

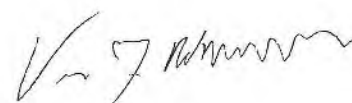
- In order to meet current federal highway standards a new viaduct would need to be wider, higher, and more extensive than the existing viaduct. These changes would require property seizures, demolitions, and impacts that would result in an annual tax loss of about \$3.3 million to the city and county.
- The removal of the Interstate 81 viaduct would allow for the development of approximately 7 acres of land that are currently owned by the NYSDOT. The potential exists to accommodate \$138.8 million in property value on this land, which could bring an additional \$5.3 million in property tax revenue to local governments each year. This is a conservative estimate given the real estate development opportunities that will open up beyond the footprint of the State's right of way.
- The total opportunity cost associated with building a new viaduct is \$224.3 million in property value, and \$8.6 million in annual property tax revenue. This equates to \$431.4 million in potential property taxes lost over the course of the new viaduct's lifespan (50 years).

We respectfully request that this analysis be given careful consideration as the planning process proceeds. We look forward to responding to any questions or comments that you may have. Thank you for your time and interest in this matter.

Sincerely,



Robert Doucette
Representing ReThink 81
Enc.



Van Robinson
Representing ReThink 81



WHITE PAPER
Impacts of the DOT Viaduct and Boulevard
Alternatives on Tax Parcels and Values

June 2014

RETHINK81
Reconnect Syracuse

The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) is currently considering three elevated roadway and three street-level "boulevard" options for replacing the Interstate 81 viaduct between the University Hill and Downtown neighborhoods in Syracuse.¹ This analysis was conducted to aid in the understanding of the consequences to property values and real estate tax revenue under either an elevated or a street-level scenario.

"Alternative V-2," was chosen as the viaduct scenario for this analysis due to its compliance with all federal highway regulations. After the parcels that stand in or near this proposed path were identified, an estimate of the property value and real estate tax implications of building a viaduct that meets NYSDOT and Federal Highway Administration requirements was compiled using public tax records.

The analysis then determined the approximate extent to which value could be created within the footprint of the existing viaduct, if it is removed. To do so, measurements were obtained from street level "Alternative SL-1." A map of each alternative analyzed here is provided in *Appendices I and II*.

Based on the presentation renderings released for the DOT's "Alternative V-2," 100 tax parcels in the Downtown and Northside neighborhoods of Syracuse would be seized or razed, and at least another 18 would be adversely affected by virtue of their location immediately adjacent to the new highway. This results in a potential loss of \$85.5 million in property value, and an annual loss of up to \$3.3 million in property tax revenue to the City of Syracuse, Syracuse City School District, and Onondaga County. Conversely, removing the viaduct would leave intact the current tax revenue, and has the potential to create an additional \$138.8 million in value, yielding an increase in property tax revenue of about \$5.3 million each year. In terms of property taxes, the opportunity cost of building a new viaduct, defined here as the loss in existing property taxes and the lost opportunity to generate additional tax on this land, is \$8.6 million annually or \$431.4 million over the projected 50-year life of the structure.

Summary of Findings

Elevated Viaduct "Alternative V-2"			
	Tax Parcels	Potential Full Market Value Lost	Potential Annual Taxes Lost
Seized/Razed Properties	100	\$41,817,914	\$1,608,684
Affected Properties	18	\$43,633,206	\$1,678,521
Total	118	\$85,451,120	\$3,287,205

Street-Level Boulevard "Alternative SL-1"			
	Developable Area	Potential Full Market Value	Potential Annual Taxes Gained
Potential New Development	304,750 Sq. Ft. (7 acres)	\$138,836,555	\$5,340,890

Net Forecasted Impact		\$224,287,675	\$8,628,094
------------------------------	--	----------------------	--------------------

¹ Weaver, Teri. "Tunnel, depressed highway not recommended for I-81, NY DOT says." *Syracuse.com*. 23 Jun. 2014.

Seized or Razed Parcels

The 100 tax parcels that would require seizure or demolition to proceed with the "Alternative V-2" viaduct currently have a market value of \$41.8 million. Under present rates, the annual tax levy on this value would be \$1.6 million. All of this value is projected to be lost. These properties are listed in *Appendix III*.

Many buildings that stand in the path of the proposed route are either historic or located within historic districts. Some of the structures that would need to be demolished to make way for this highway include Webster's Landing, Peck and Reid Halls, Nettleton Commons, Learbury Centre, and St. John the Evangelist Church.

Appendix VII contains images of selected buildings that would need to be razed to accommodate this project based on NYSDOT's presentation.

Affected Parcels

The 18 parcels identified in this analysis as affected do not abut the highway, yet under "Alternative V-2," they would become adjacent to a viaduct. These parcels currently have a combined market value of \$49.6 million, which would yield an annual tax bill of approximately \$1.9 million under 2014 rates. If "Alternative V-2," is implemented, these properties may lose \$43.7 million in value and contribute \$1.7 million less annually in property taxes.

The potential loss in value to these parcels was calculated using public tax information for a sample of existing properties located near Interstate 81 or 690. The properties analyzed near a viaduct have an average value of \$55 per square foot of land, compared with \$473 for those that are not. Therefore, an 88% drop in value was applied to the 2014 market value and potential tax levy of affected parcels to estimate the effect of a new viaduct on properties that would be adjacent to it. *Appendix IV* summarizes this calculation.

The affected list includes buildings such as the Lofts on Willow, Jefferson and Madison Towers, and 100 Clinton Square. *Appendix IV* depicts the precipitous decline in value surrounding Interstate 81's current viaduct, and *Appendix V* contains a list of affected properties and the predicted change in value to each.

Value Created by Removing the Viaduct

Approximately 7 acres of developable land that is currently owned by the NYSDOT is expected to become available as a result of removing the Interstate 81 viaduct and replacing it with a street-level solution. Although there are many ways to estimate the value of this land, this analysis concludes that it could potentially be used to create \$138.8 million of property value, adding \$5.3 million in revenue each year to city and county tax rolls.

To estimate the potential value of this land, information from public tax records was collected for a sample of buildings representing the types of structures that could be built in this space. The sample includes office and professional buildings, hotels, apartments, institutional space, and mixed-use buildings from both University Hill and Downtown. The buildings are primarily newly-built or recently renovated to simulate the effect of new construction along a boulevard. Each property's market value

per square foot of land was calculated, and the average of this value was applied to the land area freed for development along the current route of the Interstate 81 viaduct between Downtown and University Hill.

Appendix II shows the size and location of land analyzed for potential development, and *Appendix VI* details the calculation used to estimate potential value created by the viaduct's removal.

Methodology

This analysis identified specific parcels that would be affected by the "Alternative V-2" plan, regardless of the parcel's current state. Once these parcels had been identified, the full market value from current public tax records was used to determine the value of the impacted properties. All potential tax figures were calculated by multiplying these values by the current tax rate for parcels in the City of Syracuse (\$38.4689 per \$1,000 of value for 2014).

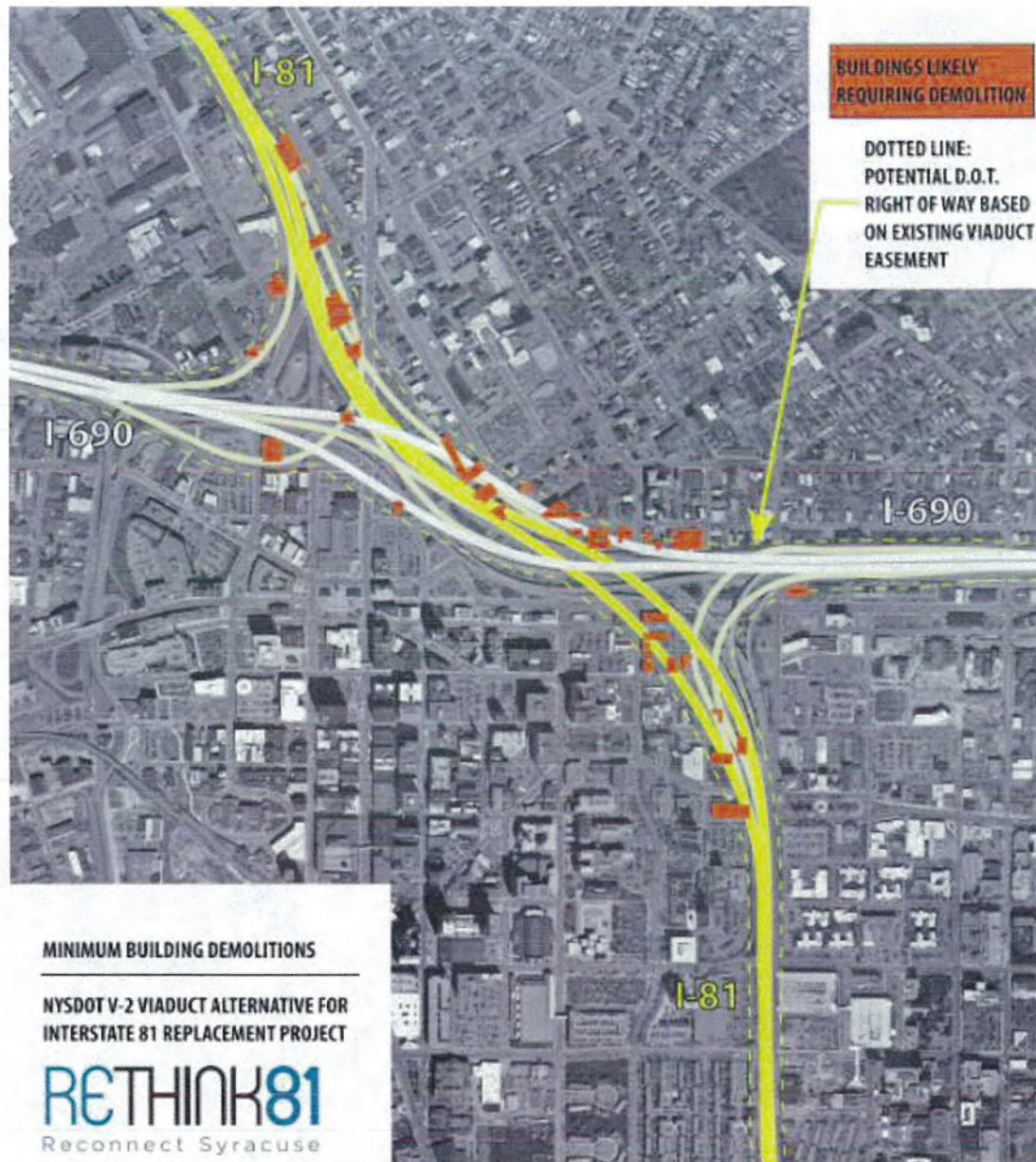
The result does not account for any appreciation in property value or an increase in tax rates over time. It also does not attempt to quantify the effect on property values near the current highway, where additional development may occur if the viaduct is removed. These factors may magnify the potential impact of choosing a street-level solution over a viaduct, and consequently the effect on property values and tax revenue may actually be much greater than stated in this report. Other communities have experienced significant increases in property values when removing urban viaducts. For specific examples, please visit www.rethink81.org.

Conclusion

The value of a number of parcels through the City of Syracuse will be significantly affected by the new location of Interstate 81. As shown in this analysis, a new viaduct may remove \$85.5 million in property value through seizures and the devaluation of nearby land. A street-level solution, however, could result in the net creation of \$138.8 million in value. The opportunity cost associated with building the viaduct, expressed here as the \$224.3 million difference in property values and \$8.6 million in annual tax revenue between these options, highlights the significance of this decision.

The community must consider the highest and best use for the land in question: Do we want to construct an elevated highway that is bigger, wider and will require significant property takings and displacement in our neighborhoods? Or, do we want to enhance our building stock and create economic opportunity by fostering uses that encourage growth of our tax base and the creation of new productive built space in Syracuse's urban core in which Central New Yorkers will live, work, and play?

Appendix I. Map of Proposed Viaduct "Alternative V-2"



Appendix II. Map of Proposed Street-Level "Alternative SL-1"



Appendix III. Properties to be Seized/Demolished for Interstate 81 Viaduct "Alternative V-2"

Tax ID	Property Street	Building Type	2014 Full Market Value	Potential Tax Revenue
104.-02-02.0	220 Herald Place	Office Bldg	\$876,074	\$33,702
104.-02-01.0	200-10 Herald Place	Billboard	\$270,675	\$10,413
104.-09-11.0	212 North Franklin St.	Att Row Bldg	\$309,202	\$11,895
104.-04-01.0	106-24 Herald Place	Parking Lot	\$202,454	\$7,788
104.-03-02.2	493 Oswego Blvd.	Vacant Comm	\$122,699	\$4,720
118.-09-01.2	499 Oswego Blvd.	Vacant Comm	\$273,620	\$10,526
103.-21-02.0	516 East Water St.	Parking Lot	\$242,945	\$9,346
103.-13-01.0	500 Erie Blvd. East	Manufacture	\$582,577	\$22,411
103.-21-01.0	500 East Water St.	Parking Lot	\$62,822	\$2,417
103.-25-09.0	205 South Townsend St.	Converted Res	\$170,552	\$6,561
103.-21-09.0	501 East Washington St.	Det Row Bldg	\$490,798	\$18,880
103.-21-06.0	517 East Washington St.	1 Use Sm Bld	\$426,994	\$16,426
102.-06-03.0	550 East Genesee St.	Office Bldg	\$752,147	\$28,934
102.-04-02.0	555 East Genesee St.	Office Bldg	\$981,595	\$37,761
103.-24-02.0	603 East Fayette St.	1 Use Sm Bld	\$195,092	\$7,505
102.-05-01.0	601 East Genesee St.	Spec School	\$2,834,356	\$109,035
103.-14-01.0	421 East Water St.	Branch Bank	\$388,834	\$14,958
103.-25-06.0	507 East Fayette St.	1 Use Sm Bld	\$242,945	\$9,346
103.-25-07.1	505 East Fayette St.	Det Row Bldg	\$687,117	\$26,433
103.-25-01.0	506 East Washington St.	Office Bldg	\$674,847	\$25,961
104.-06-02.0	128 North Warren St.	Det Row Bldg	\$650,307	\$25,017
104.-03-01.0	One Websters Landing	Office Bldg	\$1,625,767	\$62,541
008.-09-01.0	1025 North State St.	Other Storage	\$577,914	\$22,232
103.-08-02.0	106 Burnet Ave.	Parking Lot	\$21,104	\$812
103.-09-05.0	107 Brown St.	Vacant comm	\$12,147	\$467
103.-08-03.0	112-16 Burnet Ave.	Apartment	\$171,779	\$6,608
008.-20-01.0	117 Butternut St.	Other Storage	\$368,098	\$14,160
103.-09-04.0	117 Townsend St.	Office Bldg	\$244,172	\$9,393
103.-09-01.0	122-24 Burnet Ave.	Manufacture	\$658,896	\$25,347
103.-08-01.0	128 North State St.	Vacant Comm	\$44,172	\$1,699
103.-09-02.0	128-30 Burnet Ave.	Vacant Comm	\$20,245	\$779
103.-09-03.0	132 Burnet Ave.	Det Row Bldg	\$139,877	\$5,381
103.-10-01.0	200 Burnet Ave.	Converted Res	\$116,564	\$4,484
017.-13-16.0	200-04 East Belden Ave.	Det Row Bldg	\$450,307	\$17,323

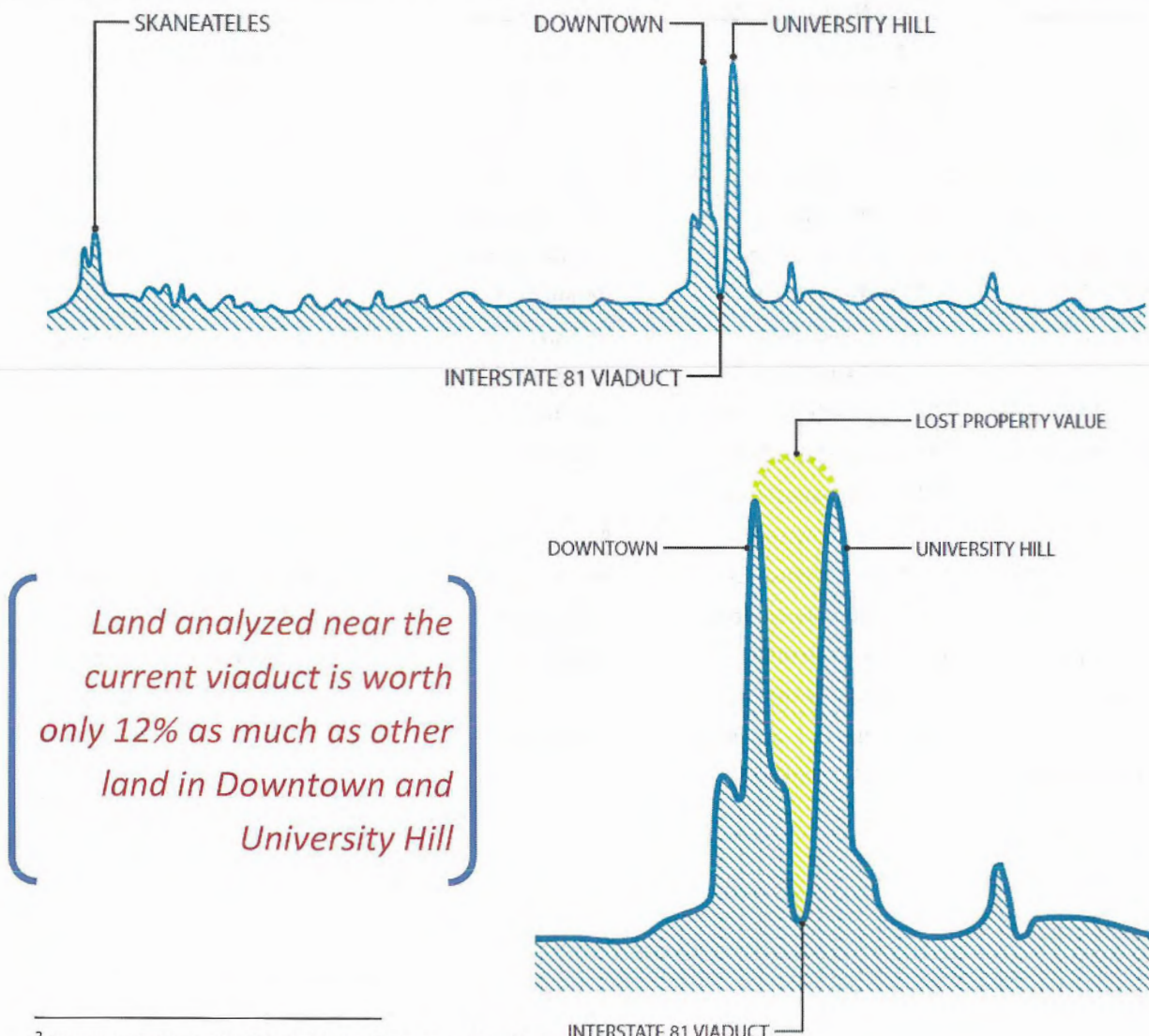
Tax ID	Property Street	Building Type	2014 Full Market Value	Potential Tax Revenue
103.-10-02.0	204 Burnet Ave.	Manufacture	\$55,215	\$2,124
017.-22-02.0	209 North State St.	Com Vac w/Imp	\$57,669	\$2,218
103.-10-03.0	210 Burnet Ave.	Converted Res	\$73,620	\$2,832
103.-10-04.0	212 Burnet Ave.	Det Row Bldg	\$119,018	\$4,578
017.-21-14.0	214 North State St.	Converted Res	\$306,748	\$11,800
017.-22-01.0	215 North State St.	Culture bldg.	\$466,258	\$17,936
103.-10-05.0	216 Burnet Ave.	Manufacture	\$282,209	\$10,856
103.-11-01.0	300 Burnet Ave.	Prof Bldg	\$245,399	\$9,440
103.-11-02.0	306 Burnet Ave.	Other Storage	\$60,000	\$2,308
103.-11-03.0	308 Burnet Ave.	Converted Res	\$155,828	\$5,995
103.-11-04.0	312 Burnet Ave.	Det Row Bldg	\$61,350	\$2,360
103.-11-05.0	314 Burnet Ave.	Converted Res	\$98,160	\$3,776
103.-11-06.0	316 Burnet Ave.	1 Use Sm Bld	\$83,436	\$3,210
017.-01-02.0	319-25 North Salina St.	Det Row Bldg	\$503,067	\$19,352
103.-11-07.0	320 Burnet Ave.	Apartment	\$79,755	\$3,068
017.-14-02.0	320-24 Pearl St.	Manufacture	\$282,209	\$10,856
103.-11-08.0	322-24 Burnet Ave.	Restaurant	\$89,571	\$3,446
017.-22-03.0	323-35 James St.	Det Row Bldg	\$782,822	\$30,114
017.-01-01.0	329 North Salina St.	Office Bldg	\$3,558,282	\$136,883
017.-12-16.0	330 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$126,380	\$4,862
017.-12-17.0	344 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$527,607	\$20,296
030.-05-01.0	400 Burnet Ave.	Other Storage	\$368,098	\$14,160
017.-13-10.0	400 Pearl St.	Other Storage	\$79,755	\$3,068
017.-02-14.1	401-11 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$417,178	\$16,048
017.-13-11.0	404 Pearl St.	Manufacture	\$138,650	\$5,334
017.-21-13.0	407 James St.	Gas Station	\$723,926	\$27,849
103.-03-01.0	408-22 James St.	Apartment	\$1,694,479	\$65,185
017.-13-12.0	410 Pearl St.	Att Row Bldg	\$184,049	\$7,080
017.-13-13.0	412 Pearl St.	Det Row Bldg	\$233,129	\$8,968
017.-02-13.0	413-15 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$74,847	\$2,879
017.-13-14.0	416 Pearl St.	Converted Res	\$76,074	\$2,926
017.-02-12.0	417-19 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$120,245	\$4,626
017.-13-15.0	418 Pearl St.	Det Row Bldg	\$105,521	\$4,059
017.-02-10.1	423-25 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$220,859	\$8,496
017.-02-09.0	429 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$181,718	\$6,990
017.-02-08.0	435 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$213,497	\$8,213

Tax ID	Property Street	Building Type	2014 Full Market Value	Potential Tax Revenue
017.-02-07.0	437 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$115,337	\$4,437
017.-02-06.0	443 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$128,834	\$4,956
017.-02-05.0	447 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$171,779	\$6,608
017.-02-04.0	449 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$159,509	\$6,136
017.-12-12.0	500 Pearl St.	Converted Res	\$47,607	\$1,831
017.-12-13.0	502-04 Pearl St.	Converted Res	\$67,485	\$2,596
017.-12-15.0	506-24 Pearl St.	Parking Lot	\$55,337	\$2,129
017.-01-03.0	514 Oswego Blvd.	Vacant Comm	\$123	\$5
017.-02-03.0	701 North State St.	Det Row Bldg	\$98,160	\$3,776
017.-02-02.0	705 North State St.	Other Storage	\$38,037	\$1,463
017.-02-01.0	707-09 North State St.	Det Row Bldg	\$460,123	\$17,700
008.-20-02.0	801 North State St.	Vacant Comm	\$62,086	\$2,388
008.-09-08.0	899 North State St.	Vacant Comm	\$41,840	\$1,610
008.-09-07.0	901 North State St.	Other Storage	\$527,607	\$20,296
008.-09-06.0	909 North State St.	Other Storage	\$134,969	\$5,192
008.-09-05.0	915 North State St.	Other Storage	\$147,239	\$5,664
008.-09-04.0	921-25 North State St.	Vacant Comm	\$62,086	\$2,388
008.-09-03.0	931 North State St.	Parking Lot	\$43,558	\$1,676
030.-06-05.1	701 Erie Blvd. East	Health Bldg	\$640,491	\$24,639
104.-05-01.0	123-29 East Willow St.	Det Row Bldg	\$437,055	\$16,813
017.-14-01.0	301-19 North State St.	Apartment	\$4,785,276	\$184,084
103.-03-3.0	110 South McBride St.	Other Storage	\$87,975	\$3,384
103.-03-5.0	521-27 East Washington St.	1 Use Sm Bld	\$184,049	\$7,080
103.-03-10.0	115 South Townsend St.	Att Row Bldg	\$37,914	\$1,459
103.-03-11.0	109 South Townsend St.	Manufacture	\$121,472	\$4,673
103.-03-12.0	105 South Townsend St.	Manufacture	\$145,890	\$5,612
103.-25-04.0	513 East Fayette St.	Office Bldg	\$375,460	\$14,444
102.-06-04.0	600 East Genesee St.	Prof Bldg	\$3,315,337	\$127,537
118.-07-05.0	420-24 North Franklin St.	Restaurant	\$245,399	\$9,440
118.-07-06.0	428 North Franklin St.	Bar	\$343,558	\$13,216
Total			\$41,817,914	\$1,608,684

Appendix IV. Summary of Depressed Property Value Adjacent to Existing Viaduct

Sample	Number of Parcels	Land Area (Sq. Ft.)	Value per Land Sq. Ft.
Near Existing Highways	10	572,935	\$55
Away from Highways	11	358,832	\$473
Difference			(\$417)
Percentage Impairment			(88%)

Graphics Based on Actual Assessed Property Values per Acre in Onondaga County²



² Source: Downtown Committee of Syracuse Archives

Appendix V. Properties Affected by Interstate 81 Viaduct "Alternative V-2"

Tax ID	Property Address	Building Type	2014 Full Market Value	Potential Change in Value After Viaduct Construction	Potential Change in Tax Revenue After Viaduct Construction
104.-09-08.0	230 West Willow St.	Det Row Bldg	\$2,969,325	(\$2,613,006)	(\$100,520)
104.-09-06.0	315 North Clinton St.	Converted Res	\$265,031	(\$233,227)	(\$8,972)
104.-09-09.1	234 West Willow St.	Restaurant	\$1,120,245	(\$985,816)	(\$37,924)
104.-12-01.0	300 West Genesee St.	Bar	\$392,638	(\$345,521)	(\$13,292)
104.-07-07.0	100 Clinton Square	Office Bldg	\$819,018	(\$720,736)	(\$27,726)
104.-07-05.0	114 North Salina St.	Vacant Comm	\$245	(\$216)	(\$8)
104.-07-06.0	120 North Salina St.	Vacant Comm	\$1,350	(\$1,188)	(\$46)
104.-07-13.0	136 North Salina St.	Parking Lot	\$357,669	(\$314,749)	(\$12,108)
103.-03-04.0	454 James St.	Motel	\$1,030,675	(\$906,994)	(\$34,891)
103.-14-02.0	400 Erie Blvd. East	Mini-mart	\$711,656	(\$626,257)	(\$24,092)
103.-20-01.0	110 South Townsend St.	Auto Body	\$539,877	(\$475,092)	(\$18,276)
104.-08-01.0	101 North Salina St.	Manufacture	\$18,141,104	(\$15,964,172)	(\$614,124)
102.-06-02.0	500 East Genesee St.	Branch Bank	\$1,187,730	(\$1,045,202)	(\$40,208)
103.-20-05.0	441 East Washington St.	Auditorium	\$208,589	(\$183,558)	(\$7,061)
102.-06-05.0	50 Presidential Plaza	Apartment	\$7,963,190	(\$7,007,607)	(\$269,575)
104.-09-01.0	221 Herald Place	Att Row Bldg	\$251,534	(\$221,350)	(\$8,515)
104.-09-12.0	214 North Franklin St.	Att Row Bldg	\$184,049	(\$161,963)	(\$6,230)
102.-06-06.0	60 Presidential Plaza	Apartment	\$13,439,264	(\$11,826,552)	(\$454,955)
Total			\$49,583,189	(\$43,633,206)	(\$1,678,521)

Projected Property Values After Viaduct Construction \$5,949,983
Projected Property Tax Levy After Viaduct Construction \$228,889

Note: Change in value and tax assessment after viaduct construction are calculated as 88% of 2014 value and potential tax assessment, based on an analysis of value and taxes assessed to properties adjacent to an existing viaduct compared with those that are located away from a highway.

Appendix VI. Calculation of New Value Created by Removing Viaduct

Building	Address	Use	Lot Size (Sq. Ft.)	Full Market Value	Full Market Value Per Land Sq. Ft.
250 Building	250 S. Clinton St.	Office	48,312	\$13,496,933	\$279
Washington Station	333 Washington St.	Office	53,814	\$13,258,896	\$246
Deys Plaza	401 S. Salina St.	Mixed	54,648	\$10,661,104	\$195
Merchants Commons	220 S. Warren St.	Mixed	17,577	\$9,948,466	\$566
Hogan Block	247 W. Fayette St.	Mixed	9,772	\$2,453,988	\$251
Jefferson Clinton Hotel	416 S. Clinton St.	Hotel	8,309	\$7,116,564	\$856
One Lincoln Center	110 W. Fayette St.	Office	20,848	\$20,613,497	\$989
Inns at Armory Square	300 W. Fayette St.	Hotel	55,123	\$20,981,595	\$381
Physicians' Office Building	725 Irving Ave.	Prof Bldg	20,581	\$14,110,429	\$686
CNY Biotech Accelerator	821 E. Fayette St.	Institutional	34,868	\$11,717,791	\$336
Campus West	150 Henry St.	Apartments	73,915	\$19,906,748	\$269
Park Point	417 Comstock Ave.	Apartments	34,980	\$14,417,178	\$412

Total Value \$158,683,189

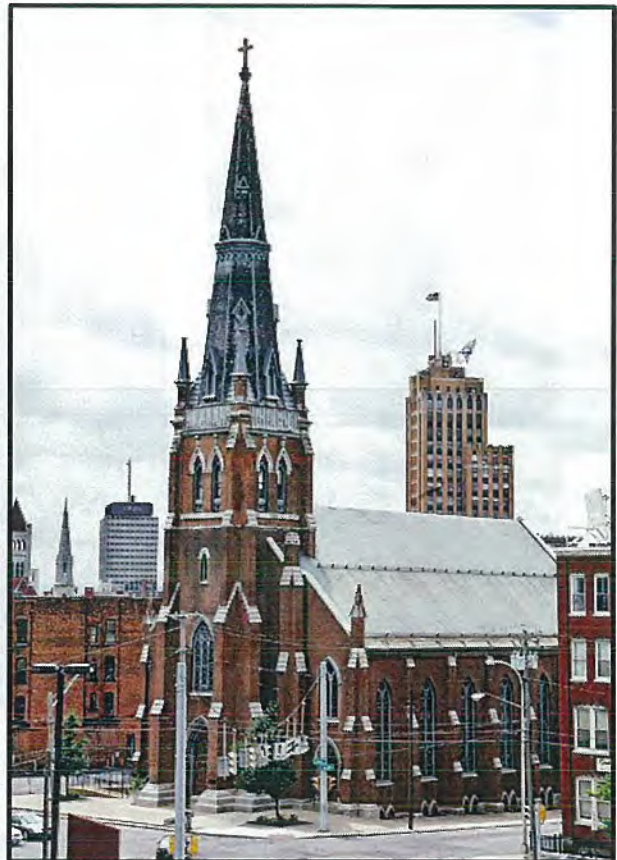
Average Value Per Sq. Ft. \$456

Potential Buildable Land Gained (Sq. Ft.) 304,750

Potential Value Created from New Construction \$138,836,555

Potential Increase in Tax Revenue (Mill Rate = 38.4689) \$5,340,890

**Appendix VII. Images of Selected Buildings Requiring Demolition for Interstate 81 Viaduct
"Alternative V-2"**



Images 1 - 4. Clockwise from top left: Reid Hall, St. John the Evangelist Church, Smith Restaurant Supply, Peck Hall.

Source for Reid Hall: Syracuse University Archives
Source for Other Images: Syracuse.com



Images 5 - 8. Clockwise from top left: 123 East Willow St., One Websters Landing, Nettleton Commons, Learbury Centre. Source: Google

From: Michael Stanton [mailto:mstantn@gmail.com]
Sent: Friday, August 29, 2014 4:32 PM
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov; Campon, Rita
Subject: Fwd: FW: [Rethink81Core] NYSDOT Submittal

Mr. Mark Frechette
Director
New York State Department of Transportation

Dear Mark:

The attached file contains comments from ReThink81.org regarding the "I-81 Viaduct Project" Second Scoping period.

Sincerely,

Michael Stanton

August 27, 2014

Mr. Mark Frechette
Director
New York State Department of Transportation
I-81 Viaduct Project
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Re: "I-81 Viaduct Project" Second Scoping period

Dear Mr. Frechette,

ReThink81 is a coalition of property owners, business owners, and citizens focused on the tremendous opportunities presented with Interstate 81 as it reaches the end of its useful life. Our vision is to create a more efficient, vibrant and livable community. ReThink81 is committed to the economic growth of our region and improved accessibility throughout the Greater Syracuse area.

At the closing of the "Second Scoping Period", ReThink81 supports your findings to date, regarding the "I-81 Viaduct Project. We agree with your conclusion that a "Street Level Option" should be advanced. This option holds the greatest potential for the economic vitality of Syracuse and the CNY region.

We also agree that the "Tunnel Option" and the "Depressed Option" should not advance further. These options are not appropriate in scale for the Syracuse project, requiring longer construction time periods, unjustifiable construction costs, and would cause significant new damage to the streets and properties of Syracuse.

Further, ReThink81 is convinced that the criteria of "long-term economic growth" is essential to the future success of Syracuse. We hold that an evaluation criteria for "economic growth impact" for this project has not been addressed sufficiently in the DOT study to date. As this is an urban impact project, the EIS process needs to evaluate the "economic impact" to real property for the city's future.

To articulate the property value impact, as well as potential City & County tax revenues, we have prepared the *"White Paper-Impacts of the DOT Viaduct and Boulevard Alternatives on Tax Parcels and Values"*. We submit this here for the record. We also request that the economic development potential of future options be maximized, as the primary goal for future evaluations. We have lost too much land to the highway infrastructure of the past and need to reverse it's negative impact on the City of Syracuse for our region to thrive.

In addition, we believe it critical at this stage in the project for NYS DOT to significantly expand upon its evaluation criteria comparisons, in the areas of 1) construction duration schedules, 2) impact on local businesses, 3) impact on housing and residential units, 4) urban design improvement strategies, 5) environmental impact strategies, 6) recycling plan for demolition materials, and, 7) long-term economic growth.

We would appreciate your response to these issues before new options are advanced.

Sincerely,

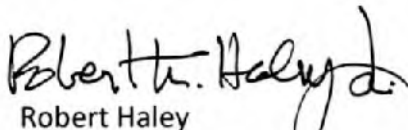
Rethink 81



Robert Doucette



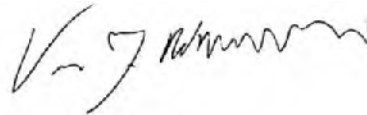
Michael Stanton



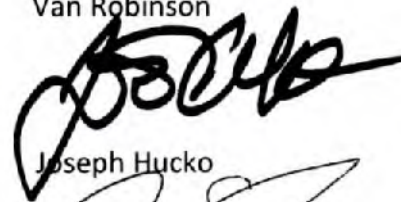
Robert Haley



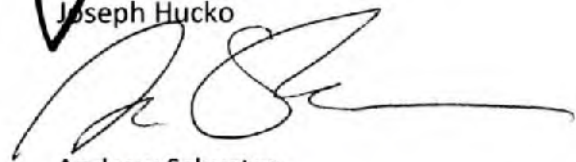
Jason Evans



Van Robinson



Joseph Hucko



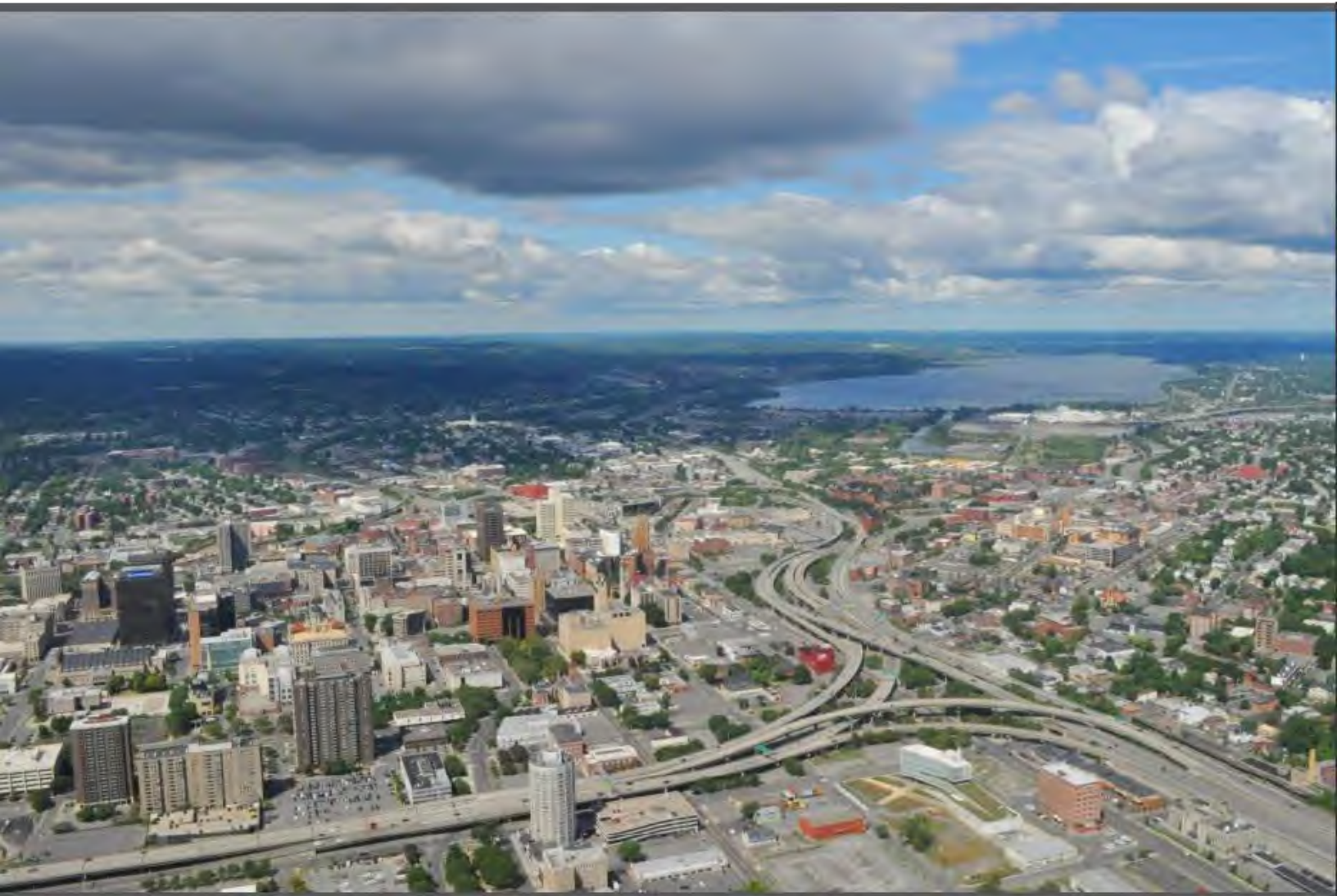
Andrew Schuster



Matt Oja

cc: Governor Andrew Cuomo, New York State
Joan MacDonald, Commissioner, New York State Department of Transportation
Mayor Stephanie Miner, City of Syracuse
County Executive Joanie Mahoney, Onondaga County

Enc.



WHITE PAPER
Impacts of the DOT Viaduct and Boulevard
Alternatives on Tax Parcels and Values

June 2014

RETHINK81
Reconnect Syracuse

The New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) is currently considering three elevated roadway and three street-level “boulevard” options for replacing the Interstate 81 viaduct between the University Hill and Downtown neighborhoods in Syracuse.¹ This analysis was conducted to aid in the understanding of the consequences to property values and real estate tax revenue under either an elevated or a street-level scenario.

“Alternative V-2,” was chosen as the viaduct scenario for this analysis due to its compliance with all federal highway regulations. After the parcels that stand in or near this proposed path were identified, an estimate of the property value and real estate tax implications of building a viaduct that meets NYSDOT and Federal Highway Administration requirements was compiled using public tax records.

The analysis then determined the approximate extent to which value could be created within the footprint of the existing viaduct, if it is removed. To do so, measurements were obtained from street level “Alternative SL-1.” A map of each alternative analyzed here is provided in *Appendices I and II*.

Based on the presentation renderings released for the DOT’s “Alternative V-2,” 100 tax parcels in the Downtown and Northside neighborhoods of Syracuse would be seized or razed, and at least another 18 would be adversely affected by virtue of their location immediately adjacent to the new highway. This results in a potential loss of \$85.5 million in property value, and an annual loss of up to \$3.3 million in property tax revenue to the City of Syracuse, Syracuse City School District, and Onondaga County. Conversely, removing the viaduct would leave intact the current tax revenue, and has the potential to create an additional \$138.8 million in value, yielding an increase in property tax revenue of about \$5.3 million each year. In terms of property taxes, the opportunity cost of building a new viaduct, defined here as the loss in existing property taxes and the lost opportunity to generate additional tax on this land, is \$8.6 million annually or \$431.4 million over the projected 50-year life of the structure.

Summary of Findings

Elevated Viaduct "Alternative V-2"			
	Tax Parcels	Potential Full Market Value Lost	Potential Annual Taxes Lost
Seized/Razed Properties	100	\$41,817,914	\$1,608,684
Affected Properties	18	\$43,633,206	\$1,678,521
Total	118	\$85,451,120	\$3,287,205

Street-Level Boulevard "Alternative SL-1"			
	Developable Area	Potential Full Market Value	Potential Annual Taxes Gained
Potential New Development	304,750 Sq. Ft. (7 acres)	\$138,836,555	\$5,340,890

Net Forecasted Impact		\$224,287,675	\$8,628,094
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¹ Weaver, Teri. “Tunnel, depressed highway not recommended for I-81, NY DOT says.” *Syracuse.com*. 23 Jun. 2014.

Seized or Razed Parcels

The 100 tax parcels that would require seizure or demolition to proceed with the “Alternative V-2” viaduct currently have a market value of \$41.8 million. Under present rates, the annual tax levy on this value would be \$1.6 million. All of this value is projected to be lost. These properties are listed in *Appendix III*.

Many buildings that stand in the path of the proposed route are either historic or located within historic districts. Some of the structures that would need to be demolished to make way for this highway include Webster’s Landing, Peck and Reid Halls, Nettleton Commons, Learbury Centre, and St. John the Evangelist Church.

Appendix VII contains images of selected buildings that would need to be razed to accommodate this project based on NYSDOT’s presentation.

Affected Parcels

The 18 parcels identified in this analysis as affected do not abut the highway, yet under “Alternative V-2,” they would become adjacent to a viaduct. These parcels currently have a combined market value of \$49.6 million, which would yield an annual tax bill of approximately \$1.9 million under 2014 rates. If “Alternative V-2,” is implemented, these properties may lose \$43.7 million in value and contribute \$1.7 million less annually in property taxes.

The potential loss in value to these parcels was calculated using public tax information for a sample of existing properties located near Interstate 81 or 690. The properties analyzed near a viaduct have an average value of \$55 per square foot of land, compared with \$473 for those that are not. Therefore, an 88% drop in value was applied to the 2014 market value and potential tax levy of affected parcels to estimate the effect of a new viaduct on properties that would be adjacent to it. *Appendix IV* summarizes this calculation.

The affected list includes buildings such as the Lofts on Willow, Jefferson and Madison Towers, and 100 Clinton Square. *Appendix IV* depicts the precipitous decline in value surrounding Interstate 81’s current viaduct, and *Appendix V* contains a list of affected properties and the predicted change in value to each.

Value Created by Removing the Viaduct

Approximately 7 acres of developable land that is currently owned by the NYSDOT is expected to become available as a result of removing the Interstate 81 viaduct and replacing it with a street-level solution. Although there are many ways to estimate the value of this land, this analysis concludes that it could potentially be used to create \$138.8 million of property value, adding \$5.3 million in revenue each year to city and county tax rolls.

To estimate the potential value of this land, information from public tax records was collected for a sample of buildings representing the types of structures that could be built in this space. The sample includes office and professional buildings, hotels, apartments, institutional space, and mixed-use buildings from both University Hill and Downtown. The buildings are primarily newly-built or recently renovated to simulate the effect of new construction along a boulevard. Each property’s market value

per square foot of land was calculated, and the average of this value was applied to the land area freed for development along the current route of the Interstate 81 viaduct between Downtown and University Hill.

Appendix II shows the size and location of land analyzed for potential development, and *Appendix VI* details the calculation used to estimate potential value created by the viaduct's removal.

Methodology

This analysis identified specific parcels that would be affected by the "Alternative V-2" plan, regardless of the parcel's current state. Once these parcels had been identified, the full market value from current public tax records was used to determine the value of the impacted properties. All potential tax figures were calculated by multiplying these values by the current tax rate for parcels in the City of Syracuse (\$38.4689 per \$1,000 of value for 2014).

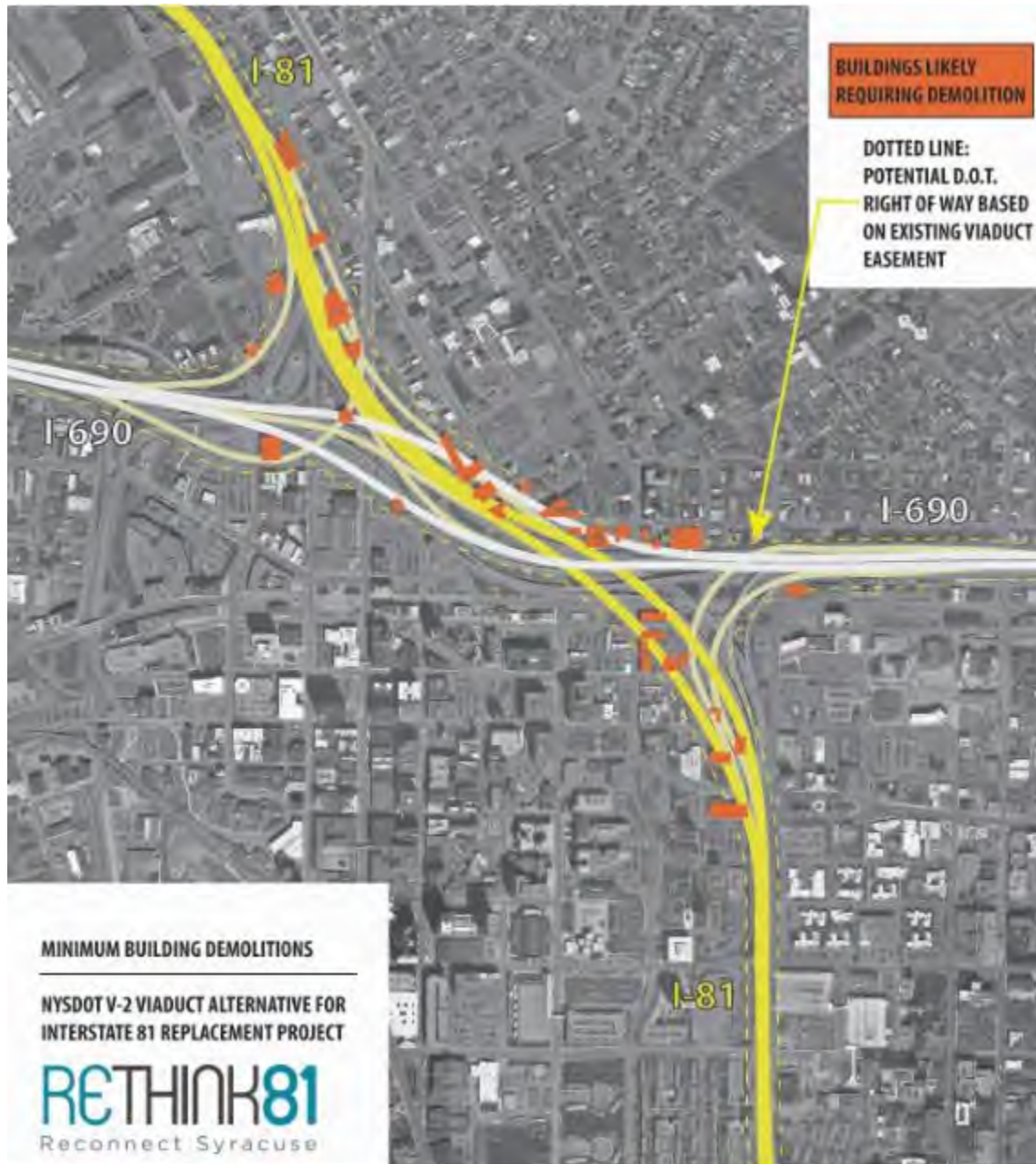
The result does not account for any appreciation in property value or an increase in tax rates over time. It also does not attempt to quantify the effect on property values near the current highway, where additional development may occur if the viaduct is removed. These factors may magnify the potential impact of choosing a street-level solution over a viaduct, and consequently the effect on property values and tax revenue may actually be much greater than stated in this report. Other communities have experienced significant increases in property values when removing urban viaducts. For specific examples, please visit www.rethink81.org.

Conclusion

The value of a number of parcels through the City of Syracuse will be significantly affected by the new location of Interstate 81. As shown in this analysis, a new viaduct may remove \$85.5 million in property value through seizures and the devaluation of nearby land. A street-level solution, however, could result in the net creation of \$138.8 million in value. The opportunity cost associated with building the viaduct, expressed here as the \$224.3 million difference in property values and \$8.6 million in annual tax revenue between these options, highlights the significance of this decision.

The community must consider the highest and best use for the land in question: Do we want to construct an elevated highway that is bigger, wider and will require significant property takings and displacement in our neighborhoods? Or, do we want to enhance our building stock and create economic opportunity by fostering uses that encourage growth of our tax base and the creation of new productive built space in Syracuse's urban core in which Central New Yorkers will live, work, and play?

Appendix I. Map of Proposed Viaduct "Alternative V-2"



Appendix II. Map of Proposed Street-Level "Alternative SL-1"



Appendix III. Properties to be Seized/Demolished for Interstate 81 Viaduct "Alternative V-2"

Tax ID	Property Street	Building Type	2014 Full Market Value	Potential Tax Revenue
104.-02-02.0	220 Herald Place	Office Bldg	\$876,074	\$33,702
104.-02-01.0	200-10 Herald Place	Billboard	\$270,675	\$10,413
104.-09-11.0	212 North Franklin St.	Att Row Bldg	\$309,202	\$11,895
104.-04-01.0	106-24 Herald Place	Parking Lot	\$202,454	\$7,788
104.-03-02.2	493 Oswego Blvd.	Vacant Comm	\$122,699	\$4,720
118.-09-01.2	499 Oswego Blvd.	Vacant Comm	\$273,620	\$10,526
103.-21-02.0	516 East Water St.	Parking Lot	\$242,945	\$9,346
103.-13-01.0	500 Erie Blvd. East	Manufacture	\$582,577	\$22,411
103.-21-01.0	500 East Water St.	Parking Lot	\$62,822	\$2,417
103.-25-09.0	205 South Townsend St.	Converted Res	\$170,552	\$6,561
103.-21-09.0	501 East Washington St.	Det Row Bldg	\$490,798	\$18,880
103.-21-06.0	517 East Washington St.	1 Use Sm Bld	\$426,994	\$16,426
102.-06-03.0	550 East Genesee St.	Office Bldg	\$752,147	\$28,934
102.-04-02.0	555 East Genesee St.	Office Bldg	\$981,595	\$37,761
103.-24-02.0	603 East Fayette St.	1 Use Sm Bld	\$195,092	\$7,505
102.-05-01.0	601 East Genesee St.	Spec School	\$2,834,356	\$109,035
103.-14-01.0	421 East Water St.	Branch Bank	\$388,834	\$14,958
103.-25-06.0	507 East Fayette St.	1 Use Sm Bld	\$242,945	\$9,346
103.-25-07.1	505 East Fayette St.	Det Row Bldg	\$687,117	\$26,433
103.-25-01.0	506 East Washington St.	Office Bldg	\$674,847	\$25,961
104.-06-02.0	128 North Warren St.	Det Row Bldg	\$650,307	\$25,017
104.-03-01.0	One Websters Landing	Office Bldg	\$1,625,767	\$62,541
008.-09-01.0	1025 North State St.	Other Storage	\$577,914	\$22,232
103.-08-02.0	106 Burnet Ave.	Parking Lot	\$21,104	\$812
103.-09-05.0	107 Brown St.	Vacant comm	\$12,147	\$467
103.-08-03.0	112-16 Burnet Ave.	Apartment	\$171,779	\$6,608
008.-20-01.0	117 Butternut St.	Other Storage	\$368,098	\$14,160
103.-09-04.0	117 Townsend St.	Office Bldg	\$244,172	\$9,393
103.-09-01.0	122-24 Burnet Ave.	Manufacture	\$658,896	\$25,347
103.-08-01.0	128 North State St.	Vacant Comm	\$44,172	\$1,699
103.-09-02.0	128-30 Burnet Ave.	Vacant Comm	\$20,245	\$779
103.-09-03.0	132 Burnet Ave.	Det Row Bldg	\$139,877	\$5,381
103.-10-01.0	200 Burnet Ave.	Converted Res	\$116,564	\$4,484
017.-13-16.0	200-04 East Belden Ave.	Det Row Bldg	\$450,307	\$17,323

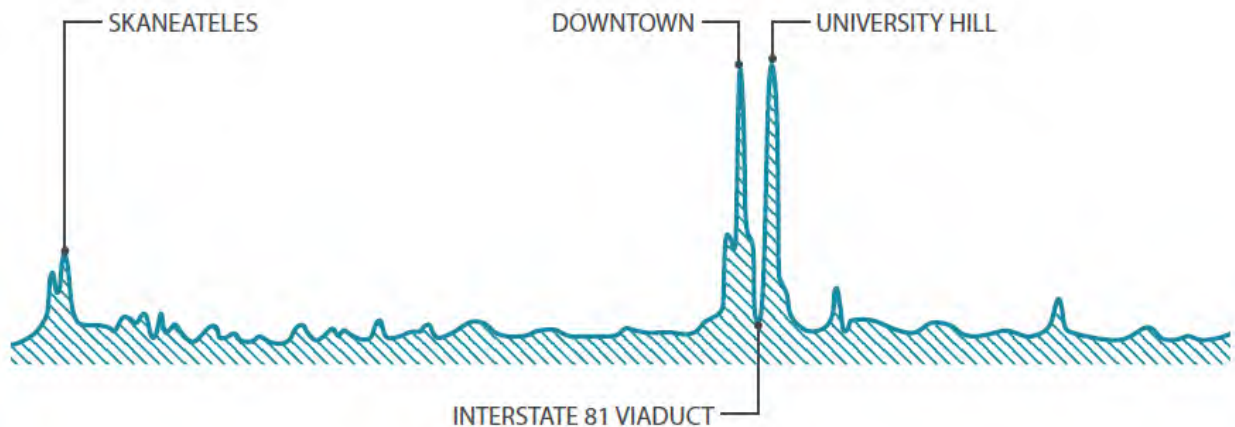
Tax ID	Property Street	Building Type	2014 Full Market Value	Potential Tax Revenue
103.-10-02.0	204 Burnet Ave.	Manufacture	\$55,215	\$2,124
017.-22-02.0	209 North State St.	Com Vac w/Imp	\$57,669	\$2,218
103.-10-03.0	210 Burnet Ave.	Converted Res	\$73,620	\$2,832
103.-10-04.0	212 Burnet Ave.	Det Row Bldg	\$119,018	\$4,578
017.-21-14.0	214 North State St.	Converted Res	\$306,748	\$11,800
017.-22-01.0	215 North State St.	Culture bldg.	\$466,258	\$17,936
103.-10-05.0	216 Burnet Ave.	Manufacture	\$282,209	\$10,856
103.-11-01.0	300 Burnet Ave.	Prof Bldg	\$245,399	\$9,440
103.-11-02.0	306 Burnet Ave.	Other Storage	\$60,000	\$2,308
103.-11-03.0	308 Burnet Ave.	Converted Res	\$155,828	\$5,995
103.-11-04.0	312 Burnet Ave.	Det Row Bldg	\$61,350	\$2,360
103.-11-05.0	314 Burnet Ave.	Converted Res	\$98,160	\$3,776
103.-11-06.0	316 Burnet Ave.	1 Use Sm Bld	\$83,436	\$3,210
017.-01-02.0	319-25 North Salina St.	Det Row Bldg	\$503,067	\$19,352
103.-11-07.0	320 Burnet Ave.	Apartment	\$79,755	\$3,068
017.-14-02.0	320-24 Pearl St.	Manufacture	\$282,209	\$10,856
103.-11-08.0	322-24 Burnet Ave.	Restaurant	\$89,571	\$3,446
017.-22-03.0	323-35 James St.	Det Row Bldg	\$782,822	\$30,114
017.-01-01.0	329 North Salina St.	Office Bldg	\$3,558,282	\$136,883
017.-12-16.0	330 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$126,380	\$4,862
017.-12-17.0	344 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$527,607	\$20,296
030.-05-01.0	400 Burnet Ave.	Other Storage	\$368,098	\$14,160
017.-13-10.0	400 Pearl St.	Other Storage	\$79,755	\$3,068
017.-02-14.1	401-11 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$417,178	\$16,048
017.-13-11.0	404 Pearl St.	Manufacture	\$138,650	\$5,334
017.-21-13.0	407 James St.	Gas Station	\$723,926	\$27,849
103.-03-01.0	408-22 James St.	Apartment	\$1,694,479	\$65,185
017.-13-12.0	410 Pearl St.	Att Row Bldg	\$184,049	\$7,080
017.-13-13.0	412 Pearl St.	Det Row Bldg	\$233,129	\$8,968
017.-02-13.0	413-15 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$74,847	\$2,879
017.-13-14.0	416 Pearl St.	Converted Res	\$76,074	\$2,926
017.-02-12.0	417-19 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$120,245	\$4,626
017.-13-15.0	418 Pearl St.	Det Row Bldg	\$105,521	\$4,059
017.-02-10.1	423-25 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$220,859	\$8,496
017.-02-09.0	429 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$181,718	\$6,990
017.-02-08.0	435 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$213,497	\$8,213

Tax ID	Property Street	Building Type	2014 Full Market Value	Potential Tax Revenue
017.-02-07.0	437 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$115,337	\$4,437
017.-02-06.0	443 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$128,834	\$4,956
017.-02-05.0	447 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$171,779	\$6,608
017.-02-04.0	449 North Salina St.	Att Row Bldg	\$159,509	\$6,136
017.-12-12.0	500 Pearl St.	Converted Res	\$47,607	\$1,831
017.-12-13.0	502-04 Pearl St.	Converted Res	\$67,485	\$2,596
017.-12-15.0	506-24 Pearl St.	Parking Lot	\$55,337	\$2,129
017.-01-03.0	514 Oswego Blvd.	Vacant Comm	\$123	\$5
017.-02-03.0	701 North State St.	Det Row Bldg	\$98,160	\$3,776
017.-02-02.0	705 North State St.	Other Storage	\$38,037	\$1,463
017.-02-01.0	707-09 North State St.	Det Row Bldg	\$460,123	\$17,700
008.-20-02.0	801 North State St.	Vacant Comm	\$62,086	\$2,388
008.-09-08.0	899 North State St.	Vacant Comm	\$41,840	\$1,610
008.-09-07.0	901 North State St.	Other Storage	\$527,607	\$20,296
008.-09-06.0	909 North State St.	Other Storage	\$134,969	\$5,192
008.-09-05.0	915 North State St.	Other Storage	\$147,239	\$5,664
008.-09-04.0	921-25 North State St.	Vacant Comm	\$62,086	\$2,388
008.-09-03.0	931 North State St.	Parking Lot	\$43,558	\$1,676
030.-06-05.1	701 Erie Blvd. East	Health Bldg	\$640,491	\$24,639
104.-05-01.0	123-29 East Willow St.	Det Row Bldg	\$437,055	\$16,813
017.-14-01.0	301-19 North State St.	Apartment	\$4,785,276	\$184,084
103.-03-3.0	110 South McBride St.	Other Storage	\$87,975	\$3,384
103.-03-5.0	521-27 East Washington St.	1 Use Sm Bld	\$184,049	\$7,080
103.-03-10.0	115 South Townsend St.	Att Row Bldg	\$37,914	\$1,459
103.-03-11.0	109 South Townsend St.	Manufacture	\$121,472	\$4,673
103.-03-12.0	105 South Townsend St.	Manufacture	\$145,890	\$5,612
103.-25-04.0	513 East Fayette St.	Office Bldg	\$375,460	\$14,444
102.-06-04.0	600 East Genesee St.	Prof Bldg	\$3,315,337	\$127,537
118.-07-05.0	420-24 North Franklin St.	Restaurant	\$245,399	\$9,440
118.-07-06.0	428 North Franklin St.	Bar	\$343,558	\$13,216
Total			\$41,817,914	\$1,608,684

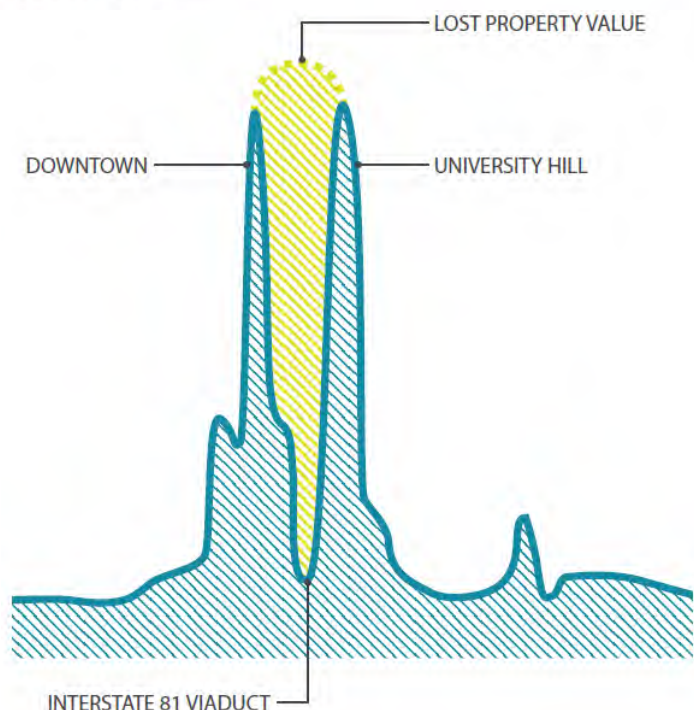
Appendix IV. Summary of Depressed Property Value Adjacent to Existing Viaduct

Sample	Number of Parcels	Land Area (Sq. Ft.)	Value per Land Sq. Ft.
Near Existing Highways	10	572,935	\$55
Away from Highways	11	358,832	\$473
Difference			(\$417)
Percentage Impairment			(88%)

Graphics Based on Actual Assessed Property Values per Acre in Onondaga County²



*Land analyzed near the
current viaduct is worth
only 12% as much as other
land in Downtown and
University Hill*



² Source: Downtown Committee of Syracuse Archives

Appendix V. Properties Affected by Interstate 81 Viaduct "Alternative V-2"

Tax ID	Property Address	Building Type	2014 Full Market Value	Potential Change in Value After Viaduct Construction	Potential Change in Tax Revenue After Viaduct Construction
104.-09-08.0	230 West Willow St.	Det Row Bldg	\$2,969,325	(\$2,613,006)	(\$100,520)
104.-09-06.0	315 North Clinton St.	Converted Res	\$265,031	(\$233,227)	(\$8,972)
104.-09-09.1	234 West Willow St.	Restaurant	\$1,120,245	(\$985,816)	(\$37,924)
104.-12-01.0	300 West Genesee St.	Bar	\$392,638	(\$345,521)	(\$13,292)
104.-07-07.0	100 Clinton Square	Office Bldg	\$819,018	(\$720,736)	(\$27,726)
104.-07-05.0	114 North Salina St.	Vacant Comm	\$245	(\$216)	(\$8)
104.-07-06.0	120 North Salina St.	Vacant Comm	\$1,350	(\$1,188)	(\$46)
104.-07-13.0	136 North Salina St.	Parking Lot	\$357,669	(\$314,749)	(\$12,108)
103.-03-04.0	454 James St.	Motel	\$1,030,675	(\$906,994)	(\$34,891)
103.-14-02.0	400 Erie Blvd. East	Mini-mart	\$711,656	(\$626,257)	(\$24,092)
103.-20-01.0	110 South Townsend St.	Auto Body	\$539,877	(\$475,092)	(\$18,276)
104.-08-01.0	101 North Salina St.	Manufacture	\$18,141,104	(\$15,964,172)	(\$614,124)
102.-06-02.0	500 East Genesee St.	Branch Bank	\$1,187,730	(\$1,045,202)	(\$40,208)
103.-20-05.0	441 East Washington St.	Auditorium	\$208,589	(\$183,558)	(\$7,061)
102.-06-05.0	50 Presidential Plaza	Apartment	\$7,963,190	(\$7,007,607)	(\$269,575)
104.-09-01.0	221 Herald Place	Att Row Bldg	\$251,534	(\$221,350)	(\$8,515)
104.-09-12.0	214 North Franklin St.	Att Row Bldg	\$184,049	(\$161,963)	(\$6,230)
102.-06-06.0	60 Presidential Plaza	Apartment	\$13,439,264	(\$11,826,552)	(\$454,955)
Total			\$49,583,189	(\$43,633,206)	(\$1,678,521)

Projected Property Values After Viaduct Construction \$5,949,983
Projected Property Tax Levy After Viaduct Construction \$228,889

Note: Change in value and tax assessment after viaduct construction are calculated as 88% of 2014 value and potential tax assessment, based on an analysis of value and taxes assessed to properties adjacent to an existing viaduct compared with those that are located away from a highway.

Appendix VI. Calculation of New Value Created by Removing Viaduct

Building	Address	Use	Lot Size (Sq. Ft.)	Full Market Value	Full Market Value Per Land Sq. Ft.
250 Building	250 S. Clinton St.	Office	48,312	\$13,496,933	\$279
Washington Station	333 Washington St.	Office	53,814	\$13,258,896	\$246
Deys Plaza	401 S. Salina St.	Mixed	54,648	\$10,661,104	\$195
Merchants Commons	220 S. Warren St.	Mixed	17,577	\$9,948,466	\$566
Hogan Block	247 W. Fayette St.	Mixed	9,772	\$2,453,988	\$251
Jefferson Clinton Hotel	416 S. Clinton St.	Hotel	8,309	\$7,116,564	\$856
One Lincoln Center	110 W. Fayette St.	Office	20,848	\$20,613,497	\$989
Inns at Armory Square	300 W. Fayette St.	Hotel	55,123	\$20,981,595	\$381
Physicians' Office Building	725 Irving Ave.	Prof Bldg	20,581	\$14,110,429	\$686
CNY Biotech Accelerator	821 E. Fayette St.	Institutional	34,868	\$11,717,791	\$336
Campus West	150 Henry St.	Apartments	73,915	\$19,906,748	\$269
Park Point	417 Comstock Ave.	Apartments	34,980	\$14,417,178	\$412

Total Value \$158,683,189

Average Value Per Sq. Ft. \$456

Potential Buildable Land Gained (Sq. Ft.) 304,750

Potential Value Created from New Construction \$138,836,555

Potential Increase in Tax Revenue (Mill Rate = 38.4689) \$5,340,890

**Appendix VII. Images of Selected Buildings Requiring Demolition for Interstate 81 Viaduct
"Alternative V-2"**



Images 1 - 4. Clockwise from top left: Reid Hall, St. John the Evangelist Church, Smith Restaurant Supply, Peck Hall.

Source for Reid Hall: Syracuse University Archives

Source for Other Images: Syracuse.com



Images 5 - 8. Clockwise from top left: 123 East Willow St., One Websters Landing, Nettleton Commons, Learbury Centre. Source: Google

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Name: Richard J Ricci

Address: PO Box 6418

City: Syracuse

State: NY Zip: 13217

Phone: (315) 433-5115 Email: richardcilli@hotmail.com

Comments:

Dear NYSDOT:

It is extremely important for our community to go w/ the
Speary Tunnel Option (T4), it has no downside. It reaches
consensus. I thought that was the REASON for the Public
comments. Please feel free to call me or email me w/
questions.

Sincerely,

Richard J Ricci

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

From: no-reply@dot.state.ny.us
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Subject: Contact the Project Team
Date: Wednesday, December 18, 2013 10:47:34 AM

Last name - Riggi
First name - Delia
Affiliation -
Address 1 - 230 West Genesee Street
Address 2 - 207
City - Syracuse
State - NY
Zip - 13202
Phone - 551-579-8786
Email Address - Delia.Riggi@Kiewit.com
Question or Comment - Good Morning,

I am working on gaining preliminary bid information for the I-81 Viaduct project. I am writing to find out more information on design or scope. I understand there are public meetings but I was looking for more technical information. Any information would be helpful at this point.

Thank you,
Delia Riggi

Kiewit Infrastructure Co.
551-579-8786

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name: Christine A. Robinson

Address: 1455 E. Genesee St. #3 City: Syracuse State: N.Y. Zip: 13202

Phone: (315) 380-2977 Email: _____

Comments: I am originally from South Jersey but I've been residing here with my daughter for over twenty three years.

There was quite an adjustment at first. I definitely appreciate the rich history Syracuse New York has to offer.

I presently live in a Historic home, and on that particular subject of Historical Homes I hope that that is taken into consideration of all of the Historical Homes are not demolished in the future.

Would you possibly consider a High Speed Line? somewhere down the line?

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

overpostcard 1/51

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Name: Christine A. Robinson
Address: 1455 E Genesee St City: Syr. State: N.Y. Zip: 13210
Phone: 315 380 2977 Email: N/A

Comments: I'd strongly agree with the
"Improving Safety of Pedestrian" (Intersection
on Almond Street and other Local Streets):
"To Be Heated" for obvious reasons.
I'm a victim^{of} at least several times
of black ice on Non snow removal on
the sidewalks forcing pedestrians to walk
into the streets.

P.T.A.C. @ ARISE, at these meetings we
have discussions with (a) or sometimes (more)
representatives from CENTRO.

It is open to the public.
Call ARISE located @ Catherine
and James Street. (Ask for Beata
Karpinski-Prehn for info or etc.). Over

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) 181-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Comments (continued from front):

I as a pedestrian and a CENTRO passenger definitely feel that CENTRO and the persons involved with your project must be involved together taking every thing into consideration.

ARISE just finished with some other organizations had a meeting and a celebration last Thursday.

It was held downtown at the City Hall Commons.

At that event were a representatives from Common Council, Valesky, Pirro and others.

This is what ARISE is involved with especially when we go to Albany and meet with the Legislators.





The CenterState Corporation for Economic Opportunity / Catholic Charities of Onondaga County
 Franciscan Collaborative Ministries / St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center

Reg. Dir.	Northside Urban Partnership	Asst. Reg. D.	
LT.		Construction	
Design		Fleet Admin.	
Admin. Svcs.		PPM	
RECEIVED REG. DIRECTOR R-3			
DEC 09 2013			
Real Estate		Safety	
Traffic		Operations	
All GDs		All REs	
		Michelle	

800 North Salina Street / Syracuse, NY 13208
 315.299.8228 / www.northsideup.org

RECEIVED

DEC - 9 2013
 NYSDOT REGION 3
 MAIL ROOM

December 6, 2013

Carl Ford, Regional Director
 New York State Department of Transportation
 333 E. Washington Street
 Syracuse, NY 13202

Re: I-81 Viaduct Project

Dear Mr. Ford,

On behalf of St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center, the Greater North Salina Business Association, the North East Hawley Development Association (NEHDA), Patricia Body (chair of the Danforth/Pond/Butternut TNT Task Force), Davco Performance, Thanos Import Market, Open Hand Theater, Laci's Tapas Bar, and the All Asian Market, I'd like to take this opportunity to share with you our goals and standards for the I-81 project pertaining to our neighborhood. We feel strongly these can also serve as rallying points for the entire community, resulting in constructive dialogue for all parties impacted by the project. We desire to share these goals with you and your staff:

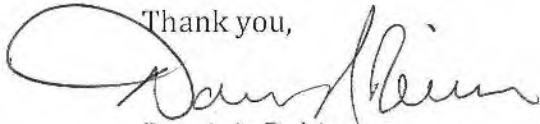
- Connect neighborhoods, employment centers, emergency services and businesses.
 - The chosen design needs reunify our now fractured neighborhoods. However, it is still critical for residents to be able to conveniently and safely access jobs in our community's employment centers - and to retain adequate access for healthcare and emergency services. These goals don't have to be mutually exclusive, so long as planners develop designs that don't look at the highway corridor in isolation, but rather understand and account for its relationship to adjacent neighborhoods.
- Preserve historic resources.
 - Design scenarios proposed to date indicate potential demolition of historic properties in North Side commercial districts. This would undermine our progress and repeat mistakes of the past. Plans for the highway need to preserve existing historic buildings by exploring all

routing options through the city, directing impacts away from areas with heavy concentrations of these limited resources.

- Develop a safe and attractive highway corridor accommodating all transportation modes.
 - Studies indicate the current highway is deficient per current safety standards while transportation trends point to a growing popularity in commuting by means other than a personal vehicle. The new design must make equal accommodations for vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians -- especially at areas of access to and from the highway.
- Regardless of the chosen option, the plan needs to reduce the number of "dead zones" within the highway corridor.
 - Opportunities to spur development and increase urban density in these areas can be advanced through strategically designed infrastructure, as well as the incorporation of interesting visual elements such as art and low maintenance landscaping. In fact, this situation presents our community with an opportunity to exploit best practices from across the world, whether they are related to lighting, environmental design, or infrastructure components.

We're looking forward to an open and continued dialogue on this project.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dominic Robinson", written over the printed name.

Dominic Robinson
Director, Northside UP

Enclosure

From: no-reply@dot.state.ny.us
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Subject: Contact the Project Team
Date: Tuesday, January 14, 2014 11:26:47 AM

Last name - Robinson
First name - Garrett
Affiliation -
Address 1 - 18 Gallowhill Court
Address 2 -
City - Liverpool
State - NY
Zip - 13090
Phone -

Email Address - admblitz@yahoo.com

Question or Comment - I work in the field of cardiology. As such, I understand the importance of circulation. When a major coronary artery becomes clogged, the heart muscles that it feeds become necrotic over time and die, resulting in a heart attack and sometimes the death of the patient. What you are proposing to do to route 81 is to purposely clog the main arterial into the city by dropping it to ground level and installing a great many necessary traffic lights. If this is allowed to happen, all of the revitalization efforts that the city has put forth for the downtown area will be for nothing because the majority of traffic will no longer come through the city, but around it on 481. So, if is your design to "kill" Syracuse, then by all means, continue this insanity.

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Name: Brendan Rose
 Address: 301 Wyoming St. City: Syr. State: NY Zip: 13204
 Phone: (315) 882-3561 Email: rose.brendan@gmail.com

Comments: ~~I believe that it would be irresponsible toward the residents of Syracuse to rebuild a raised highway through the city. Having a well designed boulevard will be an amazing improvement to the transportation infrastructure of the city. I think I-81 can handle the thru traffic.~~
 I believe that it would be irresponsible toward the residents of Syracuse to rebuild a raised highway through the city. Having a well designed boulevard will be an amazing improvement to the transportation infrastructure of the city. I think I-81 can handle the thru traffic.

And I say this as someone that uses I-81 a lot in my getting around the city. I would happily sacrifice the ~~ease~~ ease of driving for an ~~improved~~ improved urban core.

* Also, public art should be incorporated into the boulevard.

* Of the 5L alts., I prefer the one-way street's option.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
 New York State Department of Transportation
 333 E. Washington Street
 Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
 Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

108 Cammot Lane
Fayetteville, NY 13066
September 2, 2014

Ms. Marie Morelli, Editor
The Post-Standard
220 S. Warren St.
Syracuse, NY 13202

✓ Mr. Mark Frechette, Director
I-81 Viaduct Project
NYS Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington St.
Syracuse, NY 13202

To the Editor:

I have a wealth of personal and professional experience which I think allows me to view the issue of the I-81 Viaduct from quite a broad perspective. Specifically, I am a native and current resident of the Village of Fayetteville who enjoyed living in the City of Syracuse for nearly a decade in my young adulthood before I moved to the City of Baltimore. My professional experience was primarily in the field of urban planning (five years of service for the Syracuse-Onondaga County Planning Department, followed by 20 years of service for the Baltimore City Department of Planning). Based on that experience as well as my professional training and knowledge, I say that I-81 through Syracuse from the I-481 interchange north to the I-690 interchange should be deaccessioned as an interstate highway. The I-81 viaduct structure should be removed and should not be replaced by any form of north/south thoroughfare at the existing interstate speed.

I am convinced that I-81 should never have been built through the middle of Syracuse in the first place. The very term "interstate" indicates that the true purpose of such highways is to carry thru traffic between cities and across state lines at high speeds, not to carry local traffic within a metropolitan area like Syracuse. High-speed, high-volume thru traffic simply does not belong in a densely populated area. An interstate highway conflicts with the higher and better residential and commercial uses of valuable urban land for and by its citizens. In hindsight, we know that the construction of I-81 did severe, irreparable damage to the social fabric of Syracuse's neighborhoods, and it separated the university area from the central business district to such an extent that now a very expensive, elaborate "Connective Corridor" project has been deemed a necessary antidote. While there is obviously no way to simply undo the damage done in the past, we can avoid compounding past damage this time around, by consciously putting people first--their needs for a human-scale environment for their homes, workplaces, schools and services--instead of mere things (cars and other motor vehicles). As Mayor Minor has said, the last thing

Ms. Marie Morelli, Editor
Mr. Mark Frechette, Director
September 2, 2014
Page 2

we should do is to upgrade and widen the existing I-81 Viaduct to meet the newer, higher standards for interstate highways.

The various proposals to partly or completely bury I-81 underground seem to reflect a common and understandable desire to get rid of the I-81 Viaduct in Syracuse. The problem is that constructing a tunnel is not feasible, as transportation officials have rightly determined already. The extreme disruption and expense of a tunnel are not warranted anyway, in my view, given that high-speed thru traffic ought to be diverted around rather than carried through the middle of Syracuse. I would ask, if we the people want to get rid of the I-81 Viaduct, why not just do it? And as for a tunnel, forget about it?

At first glance, the boulevard concept appears to offer a desirable alternative to the I-81 Viaduct. "A wide, tree-lined boulevard" looks quite attractive as shown in the artist's rendering published in the Thursday, August 28, edition of *The Post-Standard* to accompany a letter advocating this option from Matt Marvel of Manlius. In this instance, however, I think appearances are deceiving. An interstate-highway-level boulevard would actually be experienced as a flood of traffic on a vast expanse of pavement, I would predict. The boulevard would present an even greater barrier between the university area and the CBD than the existing I-81 Viaduct does, because the number of intersections and crosswalks for pedestrians would have to be limited and ^{the} distance to be crossed would be daunting. Yet at the same time, drivers on ^{on a boulevard} a I-81 Boulevard would be more frustrated than they are on the existing I-81 Viaduct because ^{the} travel is interrupted by red lights and lane changes must be accomplished between intersections. I know how unsatisfactory a boulevard-style highway is from driving for years on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in Baltimore--and that boulevard was not even designated an interstate highway, since apparently it did not meet the required standards.

While I do not support the repair or replacement of the I-81 Viaduct, I do think that other highway improvements in the Syracuse area are needed, such as improving the interchanges of I-481 and I-690 in DeWitt, currently concentrated at Rte. 5/East Genesee St. I think the concept for a bypass proposed by Bob Doucette that would retain I-81 north of I-690 and south of I-481 is very promising and should be thoroughly investigated.

Very truly yours,

Marguerite A. Ross

Marguerite A. Ross, M.L.A.

Fayetteville

cc: The Hon. John A. DeFrancisco

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name: Karaline Rothwell
Address: 521 Tully St City: Syracuse State: NY Zip: 13204
Phone: (315) 2631423 Email: Karaline75@gmail.com

Comments:

I attended this presentation as a concerned community member. I-81 and what happens to it is a BIG DEAL to everyone in this community. It should make Syracuse a better place to live, call home. It should improve quality of life for all. Health-wise, noise, air quality, transportation options. I would like all modes of transportation considered. I think the options presented today still focus on vehicular transportation. I also am concerned about added congestion on West Street. As a resident of the Westside, we are working hard to

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Comments (continued from front):

Make it a better place to live in
connection with downtown.
Putting a busier highway on West
Street is not acceptable.
Additionally to enhance city living,
I discourage the thought of
closing streets downtown, like
for a tunnel, so that vehicles
may pass through. Streets grids
need to be kept open and
open more ... with public
transportation. Bike & walk
paths improved/enhanced.
Thank you for your attention.



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

Comments on Route 81 Viaduct Project - November 13, 2013

I strongly favor replacing the present viaduct with a new elevated highway ...one that is attractive and functional. Such a highway need not "divide" the City.

Replacing the viaduct with a ground level parkway would be an unmitigated disaster. Just because that was done in other cities, does not mean that it is the proper approach in Syracuse. The City has changes since the old 15th ward was pierced and you cannot put Humpty Dumpty together again.

The majority of traffic on Route 81 either gets on or off in Syracuse. Because the access to major employers ...Syracuse University, Upstate, ESF, Crouse, and the VA hospital and the most direct entry to down-town events is via Adams Street, it obvious that this is the dominant entrance to I-81. One can contemplate the traffic and gridlock that would result if there was a boulevard instead of a freeway connecting them. Once cars reach the freeway, the traffic disperses. With a thoroughfare, long lights to allow for cross traffic and pedestrian crossings, traffic would not flow and the air pollution from stopped cars would be awful.

People going to these venues would opt for alternate routes that would jam residential streets, often unimproved, that are ill suited for traffic. These alternate routes have not even been discussed. People in these neighborhood would be trapped in them and only able to leave at off hours. Reaching other neighborhoods or going out of town would be a hassle.

A boulevard would not make Syracuse a more walkable or bikeable City and crossing a boulevard would be difficult. Presently, it is *not* difficult to cross under I-81 at Adam's Street but try crossing Erie Boulevard, West Street or Adams Street west of I-81.

Yours truly,

Gloria W. Sage
1217 Jamesville Avenue
Syracuse, NY 13210

Contact the Project Team

dot.sm.webcentral

Thu 7/17/2014 10:21 AM

Retain

To:dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>;

Last name - Sage

First name - Gloria

Affiliation - OCNA

Address 1 - 1217 Jamesville Ave

Address 2 -

City - Syracuse

State - NY

Zip - 13210

Phone - 315-472-4977

Email Address - gwsage@gmail.com

Question or Comment - I strongly support a new viaduct. I feel it is the only solution that makes sense. I know that it can be beautiful. As it is, I81 is the most scenic road through Syracuse. I know gridlock and the boulevard will create it with lots of air pollution. A six lane parkway with parking on the sides, lights geared for turns and time for people to cross six lanes. You calculations of little time delays are unbelievable. Facilities have been build to be near the highway. Most traffic is at Adams street and after an event, masses of cars wait to get on I81 but once there, the traffic quickly disperses. Tunnels and dead end streets are bad. Most streets on Syracuse's south east side are hilly and are not geared for traffic. I fear that the unimproved streets in my neighborhood will receive a lot of traffic and we will be locked in our neighborhood at times. Erie Blvd is very slow with the lights (often 2 minute wait). Imagine it with parking on the sides. Adam Street, West Street, and Erie Blvd are true barriers ...try crossing them. I can cross under I81 with ease.

To conclude. We need a new, beautiful viaduct! Those that believe in a boulevard have not been to places with gridlock. A tunnel is too expensive and would ttake too long to build. Congel only looks out for Congel as long as his money is not spent.

Contact the Project Team

no-reply@dot.state.ny.us

Fri 8/29/2014 1:21 PM

Retain

To:dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>;

Last name - salomone

First name - anthony

Affiliation -

Address 1 -

Address 2 -

City -

State -

Zip - 13088

Phone -

Email Address - a.salomone@verizon.net

Question or Comment - No matter what I-81 concept is chosen, I think it is important to maintain a north/south thoroughfare at the existing interstate speed.

RECEIVED JUL 16 2014

101 Westminster Ave.
Syracuse, NY 13210
July 15, 2014

Dear Mr. Frechette:

This concerns the various options regarding what will replace the current Rt. 81 highway through the Syracuse downtown area.

Thus far, the options seem to include: 1) a tunnel, 2) a boulevard 3) replacing or repairing the existing highway and 4) more recently, a combination of 1 & 2 or 1 & 3.

NO ONE, as far as I have discovered, has offered the idea of building a **very high viaduct**...at least 40 -50 feet high AND having a boulevard below it. I have seen such viaducts elsewhere and, clearly, the advantages include BOTH retaining the highway through the city AND allowing much light to flood the streets below---thus ameliorating the dark, dingy areas below the current 81.

In addition, IF the two roads [traffic two ways] are separated...even more light would be available to the streets below.

Please include this option as you and your team work on the plan that we Syracusans will live with for the next 50 years. Thank you.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Paul R. Salomone". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Paul" and last name "Salomone" clearly legible.

Paul R. Salomone

TA 7/29

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Name: Leigh Safford

Address: 1207 Almond 2010

City: Syracuse

State: NY Zip: 13210

Phone: (315) 295-0032 Email:

Comments: Could parts of 481-be widened
to six lanes to solve
parts of this problem?

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

From: [Save81 Community](#)
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Subject: Save81.org's Formal Submission Part 1 of 4
Date: Friday, January 17, 2014 3:37:14 PM
Attachments: [Save81.Org Official Submission pt 1 of 4.pdf](#)

To Whom It May Concern:

Attached you will find Save81.org's official submission for the initial I-81 scoping comment period. Please confirm receipt of these documents.



441 Electronics Parkway
Liverpool, NY 13088

January 17, 2014

Mr. Jonathan McDade
New York Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Building
7th Floor, Room 719
Clinton Avenue and N. Pearl Street
Albany, New York 12207

Ms. Debra Nelson
NYS DOT
50 Wolf Road
Albany, New York 12232

Re: I-81 Project – Syracuse Area Corridor

Dear Mr. McDade and Ms. Nelson:

We are pleased to be given the opportunity to submit this letter to the Federal Highway Administration (“FHWA”) and the New York State Department of Transportation (“NYSDOT”) pursuant to the Federal Register Notice appearing in Volume 78, No. 165 at page 52819 on August 26, 2013 (the “NOI”) and the “Scoping Initiation Packet” in connection with the “I-81 Viaduct Project” as defined in the Scoping Initiation Packet.

At the outset, we note that as of this writing, no detailed alternatives have been developed for this complex project. NYSDOT seems to be engaged in decision making driven by an artificial timeline rather than a careful study of alternatives and potential impacts. Consequently, we are unable to provide complete comments at this time for a project which has yet to be adequately defined. We understand that the period for written comments will be kept open until January 17, 2014 and that a scoping meeting and comment period will be scheduled after alternatives have been developed. Accordingly, our present comments focus only on the project’s currently stated goals, objectives and initial ill-defined proposed alternatives. As recommended by NYSDOT on the project website, we plan to submit additional written comments on the detailed alternative solutions and environmental issues at the time of the actual scoping meeting, after FHWA and NYSDOT have responded to these initial comments and presented the alternatives to the public in sufficient detail.

We also want to note that it is our view and understanding that the materials made publically available prior to the November 13, 2013 meeting, described as a “Scoping Initiation Packet” is not intended to be and fails to serve as a scoping document for NEPA/SEQRA purposes. Accordingly, the November 13, 2013 sessions cannot function as a scoping meeting for NEPA/SEQRA purposes. A scoping document which defines detailed alternatives must still be formulated and a scoping meeting held once the alternatives are sufficiently defined.

Our comments are as follows:

1. The alternative involving de-designation of that portion of I-81 through the City of Syracuse and replacing it with an at-grade arterial or other surface level roadway (the “De-designation Option”) should be eliminated and not considered further. As set forth in the letter from Maser Consulting P.A. dated January 17, 2014, the De-designation Option fails to meet the purposes, goals and objectives which have been identified by FHWA and NYSDOT in connection with the Syracuse region I-81 corridor and fails to meet FHWA requirements, in addition to creating a host of unintended consequences.

NYSDOT’s prior evaluations were misleading and flawed. Even a cursory review by Maser shows that the De-designation Option would require an at-grade arterial to be at least 12 lanes wide. That is approximately 200 feet and is three times wider than existing Almond Street. Such an arterial would exacerbate, not eliminate, any existing actual or perceived barrier between University Hill and downtown Syracuse. Even the De-designation Option supporters would reject such an option. This obvious fact was overlooked by NYSDOT in its prior evaluations.

Moreover, the De-designation Option fails to address numerous deficiencies and problems in the existing interstate highway network which fail to meet FHWA standards. Rather than addressing them, the De-designation Option simply avoids them by removing the FHWA requirements. That is not sound transportation planning.

All of these concerns can be corrected by rejecting the De-designation Option now and not considering it further.

2. We support the non-transportation goals and objectives that have been identified to date, including improving connectivity between downtown neighborhoods, stimulating economic development, promoting bicycle and pedestrian usage, and increasing public spaces. We believe these can be achieved while at the same time retaining the interstate highway running through the City. Any one of the grade separation alternatives can be designed to accomplish both transportation and non-transportation goals. The De-designation Option cannot.
3. The I81 viaduct project, and FHWA and NYSDOT funding of same, must be about short term and long term transportation planning for the entire region. While we agree that local land-use planning should be considered to avoid or minimize unintended negative

impacts, transportation planning must remain the primary consideration. If the two cannot be accomplished together, transportation planning must prevail.

4. We believe that the costs associated with design, repair and maintenance of the de-designated stretch of I-81 (which stretches approximately 12 miles from the I-81/I-481 southern interchange to the I-81/I-481 northern interchange) would fall to the local municipalities through which it runs or to Onondaga County or some combination thereof. The De-designation Option would remove this stretch of road from FHWA oversight and funding as an interstate highway. FHWA may have no obligation to provide future funding. Who would pay? In the event the De-designation Option were adopted, a commitment must be made by FHWA and/or NYSDOT as part of the De-designation Option that all such costs would be paid by them now and into the future, and that the costs of same would not be pushed down to local governments.
5. NYSDOT has publicly stated that cost is and will be a driving factor in identifying and considering alternatives. The De-designation Option appears to be favored by NYSDOT because it is reportedly the cheapest option. Under the circumstances, and as expressed repeatedly by our elected officials and the public, the I-81 corridor improvements are an opportunity to do something “transformational” and rejuvenate the Syracuse region. Syracuse needs transformational, not cheap! Based on the preliminary costs that have been published, no alternative should be rejected based on cost. In this case, cost should not be considered as a screening factor in identifying or evaluating options. For this and other reasons, NYSDOT’s prior screening analyses must be rejected and new analyses completed.
6. NYSDOT’s presentation of materials in the prior I-81 Corridor Study and other materials prepared in connection with the I-81 Challenge have been slanted in favor of the De-Designation Option. NYSDOT has seemingly pre-judged the De-Designation Option as the preferred alternative. Analyses of the various alternatives should be re-done using an objective, balanced analysis. Additionally, FHWA should assume a more proactive role in order to assure that the integrity of the interstate system is being adequately safeguarded.
7. As this project affects the interstate highway system, FHWA requirements mandate that alternatives must be sufficiently developed to permit an engineering and operational analysis of all proposed changes to the interstate system. The corridor study does not satisfy such review requirements. FHWA guidance strongly recommends that for a complex project such as this, an engineering and operational analysis for one or more proposals be both prepared and approved by FHWA prior to expending significant time and resources on any required NEPA/SEQRA review. These requirements and recommendations should not be ignored. This analysis should be completed and FHWA approval obtained before the scoping document is prepared. To spend time and resources on an environmental review and to invite the public to comment on alternatives which have not been subject to FHWA’s required operational and engineering review is a waste of NYSDOT’s, FHWA’s and the public’s time and resources.

8. In regions such as Syracuse, the interstate highway system is the backbone of its economic health and well-being. Economic development occurs in and around it, and has for decades. An abandonment of the interstate highway system would result in urban decay and ultimately sprawl along other interstate highway corridors.

The interstate highway backbone determines where people live, where businesses locate, and where and how people travel from one point to another. The De-designation Option would remove one or more vertebra, which would significantly weaken if not break the back of Syracuse. Any further consideration of the De-designation Option must include detailed analyses of how it would affect the local economy, including impacts on municipal revenues, impacts on job creation, impacts on businesses, impacts on housing and demographic/population shifts and impacts on sprawl.

9. It is premature to commence any formal environmental impact review pursuant to NEPA or SEQRA. The alternatives being considered have not been sufficiently developed. It is impossible for the public or anyone else to identify and/or assess possible impacts under the current circumstances. Neither FHWA nor NYSDOT has described critical elements of each alternative:
 - a. What exactly is being proposed, even if only conceptually?
 - b. Where does it start? Where does it end?
 - c. How would it integrate into the existing surrounding community and road system?

The alternatives described in the meeting in November 13, 2013 and posted on the I-81 website state that the environmental impact statement process will “explore”, “investigate”, “consider” and/or “address” various factors and issues in connection with each alternative. No analysis was presented to support any of these alternatives. Neither NEPA nor SEQRA is a vehicle to answer these questions. Each is a vehicle to identify and assess and mitigate environmental impacts once the above questions, factors and issues have been answered, at least preliminarily.

Prior to proceeding with the EIS process, FHWA and/or NYSDOT must better define each alternative and then, and only then, undertake formal scoping pursuant to NEPA and SEQRA. That is the only way to provide stakeholders and the public a meaningful opportunity to participate in the environmental impact review process as required by NEPA and SEQRA.

10. Even more fundamental than the lack of sufficiently described alternatives, it appears that the scope of the purposes, goals and objectives are ever-changing. The I-81 Corridor Study cites the need to examine the entire 12-mile corridor; it then focuses in detail on the “viaduct priority area”, which excludes the ill-defined “outer segments”; the NOI focuses only on the I-81 viaduct and now, the Scoping Initiation Packet is at odds with the NOI, as it describes an area “from about Van Buren or Castle Street to about Hiawatha Boulevard”. This is classic impermissible segmentation. The varying inconsistent descriptions of the project make it obvious that it is impossible to segment

and study a piece of the project rather than the whole. The identification and consideration of impacts associated with the I-81 Corridor would undoubtedly be understated or even missed altogether by focusing the current environmental impact review on a segment of the overall corridor. This responsibility cannot be avoided by claiming it would be examined later or that rehabilitation of one or more segments is sufficient.

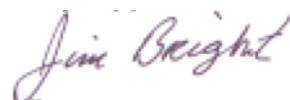
11. The entire I-81 interstate system is integrated and interrelated. Any one of these alternatives for the “viaduct” area (or whatever area it is) may make rehabilitation of another segment, or the environmental impacts associated with rehabilitation, unworkable. Accordingly, the environmental impact review needs to encompass the entire I-81 Corridor Study Area so as to not preclude such future work. To the extent FHWA and NYSDOT choose to impermissibly segment, they must clearly identify the segment to be included. They have not done so to date. They must also assure that environmental impacts associated with or otherwise affecting other segments are fully evaluated, and changes made to them as warranted. In fact, FHWA requirements mandate that the engineering and operations analysis and the required environmental review consider all changes to the interstate system, both short term and long term, and that all be analyzed together. It is not permissible for FHWA and NYSDOT to pick and choose segments of the corridor for detailed analysis; they must consider the entire integrated corridor.
12. The scope and magnitude of any environmental impact review for the De-designation Option would be much greater than alternatives that maintain grade separation.
13. All local, state and federal permits and approvals for each alternative, especially the De-designation Option, must be identified. Absent a defined project and alternatives, such identification is impossible. Therefore, it is premature for NYSDOT to invite cooperating and participating agencies to a project that hasn’t been defined. NEPA and SEQRA must progress in a logical sequence, not simultaneously and in strict compliance with the established procedures. All such agencies must be kept informed in writing as to the various stages of review and input sought and considered regarding environmental impacts and mitigating measures.

This letter should be made part of the FHWA/NYSOT NEPA and SEQRA record. We strongly believe that any objective or thoughtful consideration of the issues surrounding the De-designation Option will lead to the inescapable conclusion that it should not be considered further. If FHWA and NYSDOT determine to continue to pursue it, the critical issues raised in this letter need to be carefully and thoroughly weighed by FHWA and NYSDOT pursuant to NEPA and SEQRA. We look forward to providing additional comments, including presenting comments on the scope of environmental impacts to be examined for the specific alternatives that are ultimately formulated and made available at a later date.

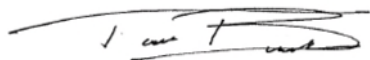
Very truly yours,



Dave Arnold
President
Cayuga Labor Council



Jim Bright
Owner
Dunk and Bright



Todd Buchko
General Manager
Wonderworks DestinyUSA



Roger Burdick
Owner
Driver's Village Auto Group, Cicero



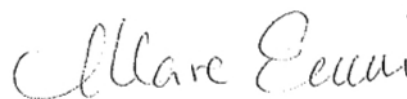
Barry Carr
Coordinator
Clean Communities of Central NY



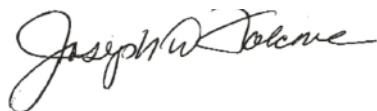
Carmen Emmi, Jr.
Owner
Homewood Suites, Liverpool, NY



Joseph Emmi
Partner
Buckley Road Development Co.



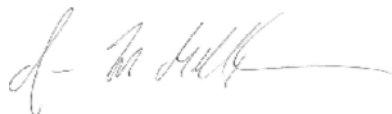
Marc Emmi
Partner
Hampton Inn Liverpool, NY



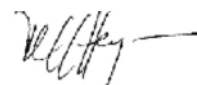
Joseph D. Falcone
Owner
Dominick Falcone Insurance



Debra L. Gallagher
Executive Director
North Area Volunteer Ambulance Corps, Inc.



Jim Gallagher
President
Advanced Hotel Management Co.



David Heymann
General Manager
Sheraton Syracuse University



Steve Hughes
Owner
Tim Hortons, Syracuse N.Y.



Phil Jakes-Johnson
Director of Sales and Marketing
Solvents and Petroleum Services, Inc.



Bruce Kenan
Partner
DestinyUSA



Minch Lewis
Former Auditor
City of Syracuse



Anthony G. Mangano
President
Syramada Hotel Corporation



Gary May
Owner
May's Fleet Sales and Service



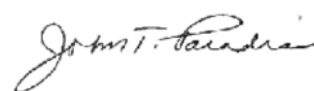
Todd M. May
Southern Wine & Spirits of Upstate N.Y., Inc



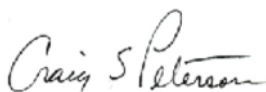
Mark Nicotra
Town Supervisor
Salina



John Sposato
President
Sposato Companies



John Paradis
President
Stadium International



Craig Peterson
Owner
Peterson Plumbing, Liverpool, N.Y.



Richard Sykes
President
RHS Holdings LLC

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Edward J. Wagner". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent "E" and a long, sweeping "W".

Edward J. Wagner
Town Supervisor
Owasco Town Board



CENTRAL and NORTHERN NEW YORK BUILDING and CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL

150 Midler Park Drive
Syracuse, NY 13206
Phone (315) 437-7397
Fax (315) 437-2951

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE CENTRAL AND NORTHERN NEW YORK BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN I-81'S INTERSTATE HIGHWAY DESIGNATION THROUGH SYRACUSE

WHEREAS, for more than 50 years, Interstate 81 has served as a backbone for the economy of the Central and Northern New York region, connecting residents, workers, and businesses; and

WHEREAS, I-81 provides vital and convenient access for thousands of area workers and their families to Downtown Syracuse, businesses, hospitals, and other key destinations; and

WHEREAS, I-81 has served a crucial role in enabling local employers to grow their businesses and create jobs; and

WHEREAS, many of the region's workers and businesses rely on I-81's current Interstate Highway designation, it is vital that a solution for I-81 does not negatively affect employment and economic growth; and

WHEREAS, although several options for dealing with the aging portions of I-81 have been discussed, I-81's current Interstate Highway designation through the City of Syracuse must be preserved, because altering this designation could harm businesses along I-81's path and potentially result in a loss of jobs for area workers; and

WHEREAS, we believe that any solution to deal with I-81's aging infrastructure must not compromise one of the most significant advantages of living, working, and doing business in the region; and

WHEREAS, we believe that I-81 decision-makers must fully and thoroughly explore a range of options for handling I-81's aging infrastructure, including a tunnel, depressed roadway, an iconic new bridge into Syracuse, a modernized elevated structure, or a different option altogether; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Central and Northern New York Building & Construction Trades Council here by rejects replacing I-81 in Downtown Syracuse with a boulevard and re-routing existing highway traffic around the City of Syracuse; and, be it further

In Affiliation with:

Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO; New York State Building Trades Council, AFL-CIO; Central New York Labor Federation, AFL-CIO

Asbestos Workers Local #30 • Boilermakers Lodge 175 • Bricklayers Local #2 • Building Laborers Locals #35, #322, #633
Carpenters Locals #747 • Electrical Workers Locals #43, #910 • Elevator Constructors Local #62 • Glaziers Local #677 • Ironworkers Locals #60, #440 • Millwrights Local
#1163 • Operating Engineers Local #545 • Painters Locals #31, #38 • Plumbers & Steamfitters Locals #73, #112, #267
Road Sprinkler Fitters Local #669 • Roofers Local #195 • Sheet Metal Workers Local #58 • Teamsters Local #317, #687

RESOLVED, that the Council memorializes its determination that Interstate 81's current Interstate Highway designation through Syracuse and Central New York must not be altered; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Council is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, to the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and to the various state legislators representing the Central and Northern New York region.

For Immediate Release: October 2, 2013

Contact: Wendy Colucci

Regional Coordinator of the Central New York Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO

315-422-3363

wendy@cnylabor.org

CENTRAL NEW YORK AREA LABOR FEDERATION ADOPTS RESOLUTION TO OPPOSE I-81 BOULEVARD PLAN

*CNY Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO Is Latest Regional Union Group To Reject
Boulevard And Urge State To Seek Other Solutions For I-81*

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — The Central New York Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO announced today that it has voted to adopt a resolution strongly opposing a plan to replace Interstate 81 with a boulevard in Downtown Syracuse and re-route I-81 traffic around the city.

“Replacing I-81 with a boulevard and diverting the highway would put jobs in jeopardy and damage the region’s economy,” said Ann Marie Taliercio, President of the Central New York Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO. “Many businesses along I-81 depend on the highway as a revenue source, which ultimately supports thousands of area jobs. In such a fragile economic environment, we need to explore I-81 solutions that protect these jobs, not put them at risk.”

The Labor Federation’s vote adopted a resolution passed in September by the Central and Northern New York Building & Construction Trades Council, AFL-CIO. The resolution calls on state transportation officials to determine a solution for dealing with the aging portions of I-81 in the region that does not alter I-81’s current Interstate Highway designation through Syracuse and Central New York.

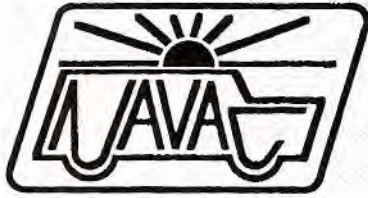
The resolution further calls on officials to thoroughly examine numerous other options for I-81, including a tunnel, depressed roadway, a new bridge into Syracuse, or a rebuilt elevated structure.

About the Central New York Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO:

The Central New York Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO represents more than 100,000 members of 200 local unions in 11 central New York counties. The mission of the Central New York Area Labor Federation is to improve the lives of working families -- to bring economic justice to the workplace and social justice to our state and the nation.

The Central New York Area Labor Federation, is a key part of the nation’s largest and strongest labor federation, the AFL-CIO, which unites 10.5 million working women and men of every race and ethnicity and from every walk of life.

###



North Area Volunteer Ambulance Corps
P.O. Box 215
North Syracuse, NY 13212-0215
315-458-7514

January 14, 2014

Mr. Jonathan McDade
New York Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Building
7th Floor, Room 719
Clinton Avenue and North Pearl Street
Albany, NY 12207

Ms. Debra Nelson
NYS DOT
50 Wolf Road
Albany, NY 12232

RE: I-81 Project, Syracuse Area Corridor

Dear Mr. McDade and Ms. Nelson:

On behalf of the North Area Volunteer Ambulance Corps, Inc. (NAVAC), I thank the Federal Highway Administration and New York State Department of Transportation for the opportunity to formally submit comments regarding the future of Interstate 81 in Central New York.

This decision is not one that should be taken lightly, as it will have a tremendous impact on the entire Central New York region for generations to come. As Executive Director of NAVAC, I represent the greater community of emergency personnel who are concerned about the proposal to replace Interstate 81 with a boulevard in Downtown Syracuse and reroute I-81 traffic around the city.

First responders know how critical every minute can be when it comes to saving lives, and I-81 allows us to swiftly answer emergency calls, reach victims, and take them to area hospitals. The state's plan to replace I-81 in Downtown Syracuse with a boulevard would impede this ability to act quickly during emergencies, and we hope officials will dismiss the idea out of hand.

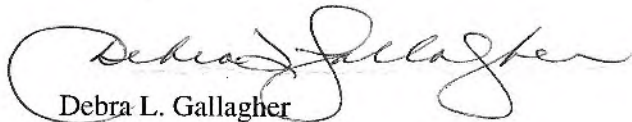
Many residents have expressed similar concerns. Replacing a high speed Interstate Highway with a six lane boulevard that intermittently stops traffic with lights and crosswalks will undoubtedly delay first responders, including police, firefighters, and paramedics. Residents fear their trusted emergency services will be ineffective if the response times are affected by inefficient traffic patterns.

Last year, federal transportation officials voiced their own concerns over this boulevard plan, warning that it could result in as much as 88 percent of the current I-81 traffic being diverted onto city streets. Such a traffic scenario is unacceptable for our region and would be a major obstacle in the path's of our area's first responders during emergency situations, undoubtedly putting residents at risk.

We strongly believe there are other proposals that could meet the goals of the New York State Department of Transportation. These include a tunnel, depressed highway, or a new bridge. It is crucial that decision makers seriously consider these options and not focus solely on a boulevard, especially given the overwhelming concerns raised by the community.

We hope the Department of Transportation and other decision makers will thoroughly consider our viewpoints when deciding the best plan for Interstate 81, and we request that these concerns be made part of the FHWA/NYS DOT NEPA and SEQRA record. NAVAC firmly believes the best solution for I-81 will maintain the highway's current function and designation as an interstate highway through Syracuse.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Debra L. Gallagher". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Debra L. Gallagher

Executive Director

North Area Volunteer Ambulance Corps, Inc.



Mr. Jonathan McDade
New York Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Building
7th Floor, Room 719
Clinton Avenue and N. Pearl Street
Albany, New York 12207

Ms. Debra Nelson
NYS DOT
50 Wolf Road
Albany, New York 12232

RE: I-81 Project, Syracuse Area Corridor

Dear Mr. McDade and Ms. Nelson:

As members of the Central New York Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, and the Central and Northern New York Building & Construction Trades Council, AFL-CIO, we thank the Federal Highway Administration and New York State Department of Transportation for allowing us the opportunity to formally submit our comments on the future of Interstate 81 in Central New York.

This is a watershed moment for the entire region, and as such, it is crucial that those directly affected have a stake in the decision making process. Our organizations, the Central New York Area Labor Federation and the Central and Northern New York Building & Construction Trades Council, represent thousands of workers throughout the area. These workers – as well as many others throughout the region – have expressed genuine concerns about the proposal to replace Interstate 81 with a boulevard in Downtown Syracuse and reroute I-81 traffic around the city.

The numerous negative effects that could result from the plan would hurt many area workers who rely on I-81's current path every day to travel to and from their jobs. These workers have come to rely on the highway for quick commutes amid their busy schedules. Some have purchased homes or chosen where they work specifically with the highway's proximity in mind.

A boulevard that stops traffic and puts more cars onto city streets – as has been proposed by the Department of Transportation -- would jeopardize this convenience for many workers and residents. Commuters would spend more time in their cars and less time at home with their families. Those living in outlying communities may need to adjust their schedules or even reconsider where they live and work if commutes become too stressful. These would be extremely difficult and stressful choices for area employees.

A boulevard would also place increased financial strains on area workers. Adding more miles to daily commutes would lead to more spending on gas. With fuel prices already elevated and likely to stay that way, area workers cannot afford those extra costs.

Moreover, these frustrations would be compounded for area residents who work multiple jobs and rely on I-81 to efficiently get them from one job to the next.

Not only would a boulevard cause headaches for area workers, it could put their jobs at risk as well. Many businesses along I-81 depend on the highway as a revenue source because it serves as a conduit for their customers to come to their stores – giving owners the ability to grow and create jobs. Rerouting I-81 would effectively cut off these businesses from a major customer base, meaning less money to retain and hire employees, many of which are our members.

Some of the workers we represent also depend on I-81 to perform their jobs and fulfill the needs of their employers. Disrupting the current traffic flow could affect how area workers get their jobs done.

In October, both the Central New York Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, and the Central and Northern New York Building & Construction Trades Council, AFL-CIO, passed resolutions strongly opposing the boulevard plan and calling on state officials to thoroughly examine other options for I-81, including a tunnel, depressed roadway, a new bridge into Syracuse or a rebuilt elevated structure. We passed these resolutions because we believe that in such a fragile economic environment, the state cannot afford an I-81 solution that puts workers at risk.

We hope the Department of Transportation and other decision-makers will thoroughly consider our viewpoints when deciding the best plan for Interstate 81. Our resolution should be made part of the FHWA/NYS DOT NEPA and SEQRA record. While we are open to many of the ideas presented, we firmly believe the best option will maintain Interstate 81's current function and designation as an interstate highway through Syracuse. If FHWA and NYSDOT determine to continue to pursue the proposed boulevard option, the critical issues raised in this letter need to be carefully and thoroughly weighed by FHWA and NYSDOT.

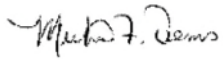
Thank you,



Ann Marie Taliercio
President
Central New York Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO.



Greg Lancette
President
Central and Northern New York Building &
Construction Trades Council, AFL-CIO.



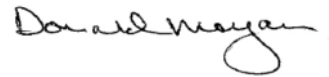
Mike Dems
IUPAT DC4
Business Manager
CNY Area Labor Federation



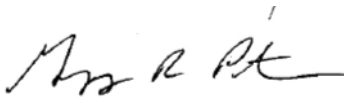
Ronald Haney
Roofers Local 195



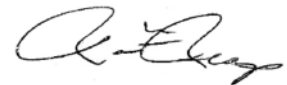
Dr. Michael Lyon
UUP



Donald Morgan
IBEW Local 43



Greg Peterson
Boilermakers Local 5



Bob Reap
Insulators Local 30



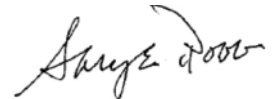
Luke Renna
BAC Local 2



Dale Stehlin
BAC Local 2



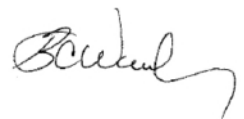
Karen Smith
CWA 1152 Retiree
Vice President CNY Area Labor Federation



Gary Robb
Ironworkers Local 60



Gabe Rosetti, III
Laborer's Local 633



Brad Ward
UA Local 267



Duane Wright
Teamsters Local 317



For Immediate Release: November 8, 2013

Contact: Mark Nicotra, (315) 313-5765, press@save81.org

NEW POLL: ONONDAGA COUNTY VOTERS OVERWHELMINGLY OPPOSE A BOULEVARD TO REPLACE I-81

Only 18% Approve of Boulevard Plan

SYRACUSE, NY – Area voters are overwhelmingly opposed to replacing Interstate 81 with a boulevard, according to a new poll commissioned by Save81.org that was released today.

When asked, “Thinking about the part of I-81 that runs through the City of Syracuse, do you think your area would be better served if I-81 was maintained in its present form or would you prefer if it was replaced with a tunnel or replaced with a six-lane boulevard,” 55 percent of voters said they prefer retaining I-81 in its current designation as a highway through Syracuse.

By contrast, only 18 percent of voters said they support rerouting I-81 and constructing a boulevard in its place. 18 percent said they are in favor of replacing the viaduct with a tunnel. And 8 percent of voters are undecided.

Once voters were briefed on the issue, they expressed particular concern that building a boulevard will cause staggering traffic congestion in Syracuse and hurt emergency response times throughout the region. An overwhelming 62 percent of respondents said increased traffic and slowed emergency response times gave them “major doubts” about the boulevard proposal.

“These poll results confirm what we have said all along – that the majority of Onondaga County and Syracuse residents are in favor of maintaining the status of I-81 as an interstate highway,” said Salina Town Supervisor and Save81.org member Mark Nicotra. “This unpopular boulevard plan should be eliminated so the community can focus on options that will work for everyone.”

Syracuse residents were as opposed to the boulevard as the rest of Onondaga County. Overall, only 19 percent of city residents favored a boulevard, compared with 18 percent in the rest of the county. In Syracuse, 48 percent supported maintaining I-81 as is; 23 percent supported a tunnel; 19 percent supported a boulevard; 8 percent were undecided; and 2 percent offered no response.

The poll, conducted from November 1-3 by The Parkside Group, surveyed 402 likely voters throughout the City of Syracuse/County of Onondaga. Live interviewers called via both landlines and cell lines. This poll has a margin of error of +/- 4.9 percentage points.

About Save81.org

Save81.org is a diverse coalition of concerned residents, elected officials, employers, union members, and community groups that have come together as officials in Albany determine how to deal with the aging portions of I-81 in our area. Save81.org opposes a plan being considered to replace I-81 in Downtown

Syracuse with a boulevard that would divert Interstate traffic away from the City and leave traffic congestion and air pollution in its place. For more information, visit Save81.org.

###

From: [Save81 Community](#)
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Subject: Save81.org"s Formal Submission Part 2 of 4
Date: Friday, January 17, 2014 3:44:41 PM
Attachments: [Save81 Formal Submission pt2.pdf](#)

To Whom It May Concern:

Attached you will find part 2 of 4 of Save81.org's official submission for the initial I-81 scoping comment period. Please confirm receipt of these documents.



Engineers
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January 16, 2014

Mr. Jonathan McDade
New York Division Administration
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Leo W. O'Brien Federal Building
7th Floor, Room 719
Clinton Avenue and N. Pearl Street
Albany, NY 12207

Ms. Debra Nelson
New York State Department of Transportation
50 Wolf Road
Albany, NY 12232

Re: Interstate 81
Scoping Session
MC Project No. 12100167A

Dear Mr. McDade and Ms. Nelson:

We are writing on behalf of Save81.org to offer the following suggestions with respect to the disposition of I-81 within the greater Syracuse Area.¹ We note that after numerous public information sessions, report preparation and technical memoranda development, the I-81 Corridor Study of this past July designated what are described as the two viable alternatives for the treatment of I-81. The first is de-designation of that portion of I-81 (from the I-81/I-481 southern interchange to the I-81/I-481 northern interchange) and replacing it, in part, with a principal urban arterial (generally referred to publicly as a "boulevard"). The second is the reconstruction of the viaduct to bring it up to current standards. Subsequent public statements by the NYSDOT suggest that additional alternatives are still under consideration.

What follows represents our professional opinion as to the approach that should be taken in any further evaluation considering the limited data that is available on the alternatives. It should be noted that while only two alternatives were described as viable, there may be other alternatives or hybrids thereof that may prove to be of equal or greater overall benefit.

At first glance, the boulevard option may appear to be an appropriate alternative. However, we disagree and believe this option should be eliminated from consideration because on its face it

¹ This letter supercedes a letter we previously prepared dated November 2013.



fails to meet the purposes, goals and objectives of the Project and will not meet Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) standards for an interstate highway.

Current New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) data indicates that the viaduct section of I-81 between E. Adams Street and Harrison Street services over 50,000 vehicles per day (vpd). In the vicinity of I-690 and south of E. Adams Street, nearly 80,000 vpd are serviced. Trucks represent 16% of these AADT volumes. Shown on Figure No. 1 are the 2010 AADT volumes for that section of the viaduct between Taylor Street to the south and I-690 to the north. As shown at the south end, some 73,424 vpd were observed with some 85,753 vpd recorded at the north end. It should be noted that the corridor in this area currently has 4-non interrupted flow lanes for traffic at the viaduct level and with 8 lanes provided at grade on Almond Street (5 northbound and 3 southbound) between E. Adams Street and Harrison Street.

The boulevard, as proposed, could not support this level of traffic activity and meet the project objectives. In fact, the boulevard would have to support not only the existing street level traffic but also as much as 88% of the traffic currently carried on the elevated viaduct. Shown on Figures No. 2 and 3 are the AM and PM Peak Hour Volumes, respectively, along Almond Street, Townsend Street and State Street and at their intersections with E. Adams Street and Harrison Street. As identified, with a boulevard scenario, Almond Street would be expected to service between 7,000 and 9,000 vehicles during the AM Peak and PM Peak Hours under interrupted flow conditions. These volumes represent historical traffic conditions only, without allowance for normal growth in future years.

Moreover, traffic impacts in the vicinity would include unacceptable operating conditions on nearby roads such as Harrison Avenue, E. Adams Street, Almond Street, Townsend Street, and State Street. To address this, significant road improvements, land acquisition and/or changing traffic patterns within the downtown area would be required. These would eliminate on-street parking, preclude bike lanes and/or disrupt existing downtown organizations, businesses and residents.

It should be noted any alternatives that retain a grade-separated operation, i.e., splitting high speed highway traffic from low speed local surface traffic would accommodate existing and future traffic levels in the most safe, efficient and least disruptive manner. As discussed in greater detail below, the selection of any one of the grade separation alternatives can be planned, designed and implemented to meet both the transportation goals and the non-transportation goals and objectives that have been identified, e.g., improving connectivity between neighborhoods without displacing them, strengthening economic development, promoting bicycle and pedestrian activity and increasing public spaces all with lesser need for land acquisition. As such, we believe that any of the grade separation alternatives is far superior to the boulevard approach.



Boulevard Option

Below is listed a number of issues related to the boulevard alternative to which consideration should be given:

- The transition from expressway to boulevard would significantly impair the integrity and functionality of the existing interstate highway/roadway network. With up to 12% of the traffic on I-81 considered as “through” traffic (per the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council), if displaced to I-481, would mean that some 88% of the existing traffic volume would be displaced to the boulevard, far in excess of the capacity it could provide.
- The boulevard alternative would fail to improve congestion, mobility and traffic safety on the existing interstate highway network. In fact, congestion on I-481 and I-690 east and west of I-81 might actually increase once the restrained capacity of the boulevard induces delays along that corridor.
- To accommodate current and projected future traffic volumes along this corridor, a grade separation (I-81 above or below Almond Street) must be retained. Replacing such with a boulevard would require 12+ lanes (at grade) for through and turning traffic movements within a significantly increased right-of-way (220± feet width) to support future volumes. The required increased right-of-way width needed would likely displace residents in the Pioneer Homes and Toomey Abbott Towers area as well as businesses and institutional facilities along Almond Street. As stated previously, in this corridor there are currently 4 lanes divided and elevated and 8 lanes at grade.
- Shown on the attached Figures No. 4 through 7 are examples of boulevard geometry required to meet such levels of activity. Please note, Queens Boulevard (Queens County, New York)/NYS Route 25 shown on Figures No. 4 and 5 supports 40,000 vpd and the Grand Concourse (Bronx County, New York) shown on Figures No. 6 and 7 supports 20,000 vpd, both substantially fewer vehicles than the contemplated boulevard would be expected to handle (over 80,000 vpd). As shown, nearly 170 feet of pavement is required to support the 40,000 vpd on Queens Boulevard. The Grand Concourse has nearly 145 feet of paved surface; some dedicated to bikeways. In each case, in excess of 180 feet is required for right of way. Shown on Figure No. 8 is the required paved area for such a boulevard. Also shown is the necessary right of way to accomplish such a design.
- In the event the boulevard were constructed with less than the required number of travel lanes, the entire local and regional roadway network would be disrupted, including the interstate highway system. Motorists would avoid the boulevard, instead using other local roads or upstream interchanges, resulting in significantly increased volumes on roads that are not designed to accommodate them. Such impacts are impracticable, if not impossible, to fully predict at this time but intuitively would be significant and adverse.



All such types of impacts would need to be identified and thoroughly examined prior to committing to a boulevard option. In fact, a key factor as part of an evaluation of a potential change to access to an interstate system is the consideration of the “area of influence.” This area is based upon operational (capacity) and safety issues. This area must be expanded sufficiently to evaluate all affected regions. This is particularly important where there exists a coordinated signal system or a local roadway network that might be impacted. In this instance, the area of influence can be far reaching and must be established to assist in making an informed decision.

The existing surface roadway network within the viaduct area south of the I-690/I-81 Interchange consists of roads of varying functions, width, on-street parking provisions, driveway points of access, pedestrian facilities, transit facilities, etc., all of which influence the capacity and operational characteristics. As always, there is a tradeoff between access and mobility. Some roads are constructed as 4-lane divided roads with raised landscaped medians with no on-street parking. Others are two-way facilities with on-street parking permitted on one or both sides. Still others are one-way, two-lane roads with limited on-street parking. Right-of-way vary as well.

Introduction of a boulevard in this area would therefore affect the carrying capacity of each roadway differently. On-street parking may need to be eliminated perhaps to such an extent as to require the construction of parking decks. One way streets may, of necessity, have to become two-way roads and certain two-way facilities may need to transition to one way, all to support the increase in surface traffic.

Depending on the extent of the increase in traffic, additional right-of-way may be required. This is particularly significant in an area that is already fully developed with the potential for requiring significant traffic improvements, changed traffic patterns and displacement of businesses and perhaps residences. So, the establishment of the area of influence is key to any successful alternative evaluations.

To gain a general understanding of the traffic impacts in the immediate vicinity, we have performed a preliminary SYNCHRO screening for the AM and PM Peak Hours along selected nearby roads to which traffic would likely be diverted. The screening was performed along Almond Street, Townsend Street, and State Street. It used established publicly available existing traffic volumes. A detailed description of the screening and methodology is attached.

The screening results are shown in Table No. 1. They show unacceptable operating conditions (for purposes of this letter, Levels of Service E or F) along the Almond Street corridor during the AM and PM peak hours in each of the scenarios evaluated and unacceptable operating conditions at Townsend Street during the AM and PM Peak Hour in one of the scenarios. Delays could be expected to increase significantly at certain locations. For example, at the Almond Street intersection with Harrison Street during the



PM Peak Hour, under Alternate 1, without improvements to Almond Street would experience delays which would produce queues extending beyond adjacent intersections. At Townsend Street and E. Adams Street, under Alternative 2, during the PM Peak Hour the delays would also result in queues extending beyond adjacent intersections.

It must be emphasized that this screening exercise, as bad as it shows the traffic would be, likely significantly underestimates the severity of the actual traffic operating problems. It assumes no growth, it has not examined all of the roads, intersections and traffic movements in the existing road network, and it has not made any accommodations for bicycle, pedestrian and/or bus route traffic. Those factors will all add vehicles and/or delay to the SYNCHRO analysis, making the projected traffic conditions even worse than shown in Table No. 1. None of these factors were included in this preliminary screening and all of which could negatively impact Levels of Service, delays, queues and travel times.

To address the unacceptable operating conditions, road improvements would be needed at virtually every intersection along Almond Street, State Street, Townsend Street, and others. Taking into account the extensive downtown Syracuse development, such improvements would require that existing on-street parking be eliminated, sidewalks and bus stops be eliminated or limited, buildings be demolished (in whole or in part) and/or existing two-way streets be re-designed as one-way streets. Any combination of the above would likely dramatically adversely affect the existing organizations, businesses and residences along and near those roads.

TABLE NO. 1

WEEKDAY PEAK AM HIGHWAY HOUR			
ALMOND STREET			
	<i>Existing</i>	<i>Alternate 1</i>	<i>Alternate 2</i>
at Harrison Street	C [31.5]	F [164.1]	D [53.3]
w/ 12 Lane Section	---	E [55.3]	C [22.8]
at E. Adams Street	D [48.2]	F [205.6]	E [62.6]
w/ 12 Lane Section	---	E [79.2]	D [45.2]
TOWNSEND STREET			
	<i>Existing</i>	<i>Alternate 1</i>	<i>Alternate 2</i>
at Harrison Street	B [12.8]	B [19.0]	C [24.1]
at E. Adams Street	C [31.3]	C [20.0]	F [218.3]
STATE STREET			
	<i>Existing</i>	<i>Alternate 1</i>	<i>Alternate 2</i>
at Harrison Street	A [8.3]	B [14.7]	B [16.5]
at E. Adams Street	A [6.6]	A [9.0]	C [20.7]

WEEKDAY PEAK PM HIGHWAY HOUR			
ALMOND STREET			
	<i>Existing</i>	<i>Alternate 1</i>	<i>Alternate 2</i>
at Harrison Street	E [69.7]	F [320.4]	F [126.9]
w/ 12 Lane Section	---	F [148.5]	D [51.8]
at E. Adams Street	C [34.0]	F [266.6]	E [65.7]
w/ 12 Lane Section	---	F [96.5]	D [35.5]
TOWNSEND STREET			
	<i>Existing</i>	<i>Alternate 1</i>	<i>Alternate 2</i>
at Harrison Street	A [9.3]	B [17.2]	C [20.8]
at E. Adams Street	C [33.9]	C [33.1]	F [319.3]
STATE STREET			
	<i>Existing</i>	<i>Alternate 1</i>	<i>Alternate 2</i>
at Harrison Street	A [8.5]	B [14.6]	B [12.8]
at E. Adams Street	B [12.3]	D [37.2]	D [44.6]



- The integrity and functioning of the I-81/I-690 interchange would be fundamentally altered. The replacement of the current high speed directionalized interchange to a “typical” low speed interchange (boulevard to interstate) cannot be readily accomplished. This treatment would require detailed investigation since it would directly impact adjacent streets and neighborhoods. In addition, the reconnection to I-81 would result in significant conflicts due to merging traffic. It is noted that various sections of the interstate system often cited as successfully being replaced by boulevard type streets throughout the country are where the boulevard-type street replaced a spur or interstate terminus. This would not be the case in this instance, where the boulevard-type street would replace an existing through-traffic carrying interstate highway segment.
- Transformation of this section of the I-81 Corridor into a street-level arterial would significantly impact the interstate network within central New York for the sake of creating a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile boulevard. The negative impacts to the interstate network through discontinuity would be far greater than the perceived local benefits that might result from conversion to a boulevard.
- Conversion to a boulevard would fail to improve connectivity in the immediate vicinity. Instead, it would increase perceived and actual barriers by enlarging the divide, inhibiting crossing of the divide by both vehicles and pedestrians, and by inhibiting movement of commerce to, from, and within the City.
- De-designation and discontinuance of I-81 would require diversion of personal and commercial vehicles around the city via existing I-481, significantly increasing travel time, fuel consumption, air pollution, and contributing to sprawl that is contrary to the New York Smart Growth Law.
- Air quality would deteriorate considerably and noise levels would increase due to idling, stopping/starting of slowed traffic along with associated increases to travel time caused by a boulevard option. Vehicular emissions from numerous closely spaced idling and slow moving vehicles on a boulevard would generate far greater particulates and other air emissions.
- The intersections of Almond and E. Adams Streets have long been an air quality non-attainment area. This is principally driven by the heavy stop and start traffic on Almond Street and the city streets that intersect with Almond Street. Slow moving and stopped/idling vehicles contribute considerably greater amounts of air contaminants than does traffic moving at highway speed. Introducing 88% of I-81 traffic into this mix would have a major detrimental impact on air contamination in this area.



- Traffic safety would deteriorate, not improve. Conflicts between vehicles and between vehicles and pedestrians/bicycles would significantly increase, resulting in increased accidents, property damage and injuries. The physical environment including road grades, alignment, lighting, pavement conditions, length of crosswalks are important factors to consider. Also important contributing factors to safety are high traffic volumes, high heavy vehicle (truck) volumes and travel speeds.
- The cost to demolish the viaduct and to construct the boulevard and all related improvements may not be funded by FHWA because such cost would no longer be facilitating or be related to the interstate highway system. If so, the costs would be borne wholly by New York State and/or the City of Syracuse. Funding and decommissioning would increase expenditures of state and local dollars.
- The costs of repair and maintenance for the non-viaduct portion of I-81 to be “de-designated” as well as the cost of increased maintenance on the street network in the vicinity of the boulevard might be borne wholly by the City (within the City) and shared by New York State and towns outside the City. These costs would likely be significant and would inevitably result in increased taxes or a significant deterioration in the repair and maintenance of the road network that would negatively affect the entire local and regional economy.



Grade Separated Alternatives

One of the key benefits of grade separation is to facilitate the movement of goods and services in an efficient way and to avoid the impacts associated with unnecessary interaction between local and through traffic. In short, the idea is to embrace mobility while at the same time reducing congestion on local roadways. With the grade separation reconstruction alternate access points to the local network can be accommodated where required or most desired. As part of a replacement program, the grade separated alternative can introduce transition points (ramps) between the elevated section and surface street in a way to enhance pedestrian/transit/bicycle opportunities. Well planned and designed grade separations can accomplish what the boulevard alternative suggests vis-à-vis pedestrian/bicycle/transit treatments however, the grade separation alternatives most importantly reduce potential conflicts between vehicular traffic and pedestrian/bicycles that could exist under the boulevard alternate by simply maintaining the separation of nearly 60,000 vehicles a day from the local street network. Furthermore, the grade separation alternatives reduce delay, travel times, air pollution, noise, etc., all part of the purpose for their development in the first place.

Below we've listed some general items that need to be addressed/considered:

- The existing substandard interstate highway design features have yet to be identified
- The “area of influence” needs to be established for each alternative.
- Other existing interstate highway “deficiencies”; such as security, mobility, operation, safety, capacity, etc. need to be identified.
- Certain alternatives have apparently been eliminated or labeled as being disfavored even though they clearly meet the purposes, goals and objectives of the Project. All alternatives should be revisited and subjected to a thoughtful balanced evaluation.
- None of the build alternatives identified to date have been sufficiently defined or developed to permit meaningful environmental impact review. More definition of each alternative is needed, including establishment and objective application of screening criteria. All alternatives that generally follow the existing I-81 viaduct corridor must be fairly and reasonably evaluated in light of the purposes, goals and objectives of the Project. Review criteria also need to be identified and fairly applied. This requires that a bridge, tunnel, depressed highway and other yet-to-be-identified options be evaluated as part of the EIS process.
- All local, state and federal permits and approvals need to be identified for each alternative to be analyzed.



Mr. Jonathan McDade and Ms. Debra Nelson

MC Project No. 12100167A

January 16, 2014

Page 10 of 10

To the extent a boulevard option is considered, each of the substantive environmental impacts identified in Schedule A (attached) must be identified/evaluated within the entire regional area to be affected, which is identified on Figure No. 9. The scope and magnitude of impacts and geographic area and population affected would necessarily be significantly greater. The impacts of the boulevard option would be that far-reaching given the fundamental restructuring of and disruption to the entire existing highway system that would inevitably result in major changes to commuter patterns, population centers and the local and regional economy. Such scope and magnitude must be determined prior to commencement of environmental impact review.

To the extent the options retaining the grade separation are considered, each of the substantive environmental impacts identified in Schedule B must be identified/evaluated within the entire area to be affected. It is readily apparent that the scope and magnitude of impacts would be far less across the board than those of the boulevard option.

We trust the Department will give thoughtful consideration to these suggestions.

Very truly yours,
MASER CONSULTING P.A.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'A. Peter Russillo', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

A. Peter Russillo, P.E., PTOE
Sr. Project Manager

Maser Consulting professionals provide a full range of services to assist municipalities, authorities, counties and state agencies. The firm has provided municipal engineering and planning services to numerous municipalities and counties in the capacity of Engineer-of-Record, Planner-of-Record, Planning/Zoning Board Engineer and Planner, Conflict Engineer, Consulting Engineer and Planner, Utilities Authority Engineer, Geographic Information System Professional, Environmental, Traffic and Survey Consultants.

APR/jr
Enclosures



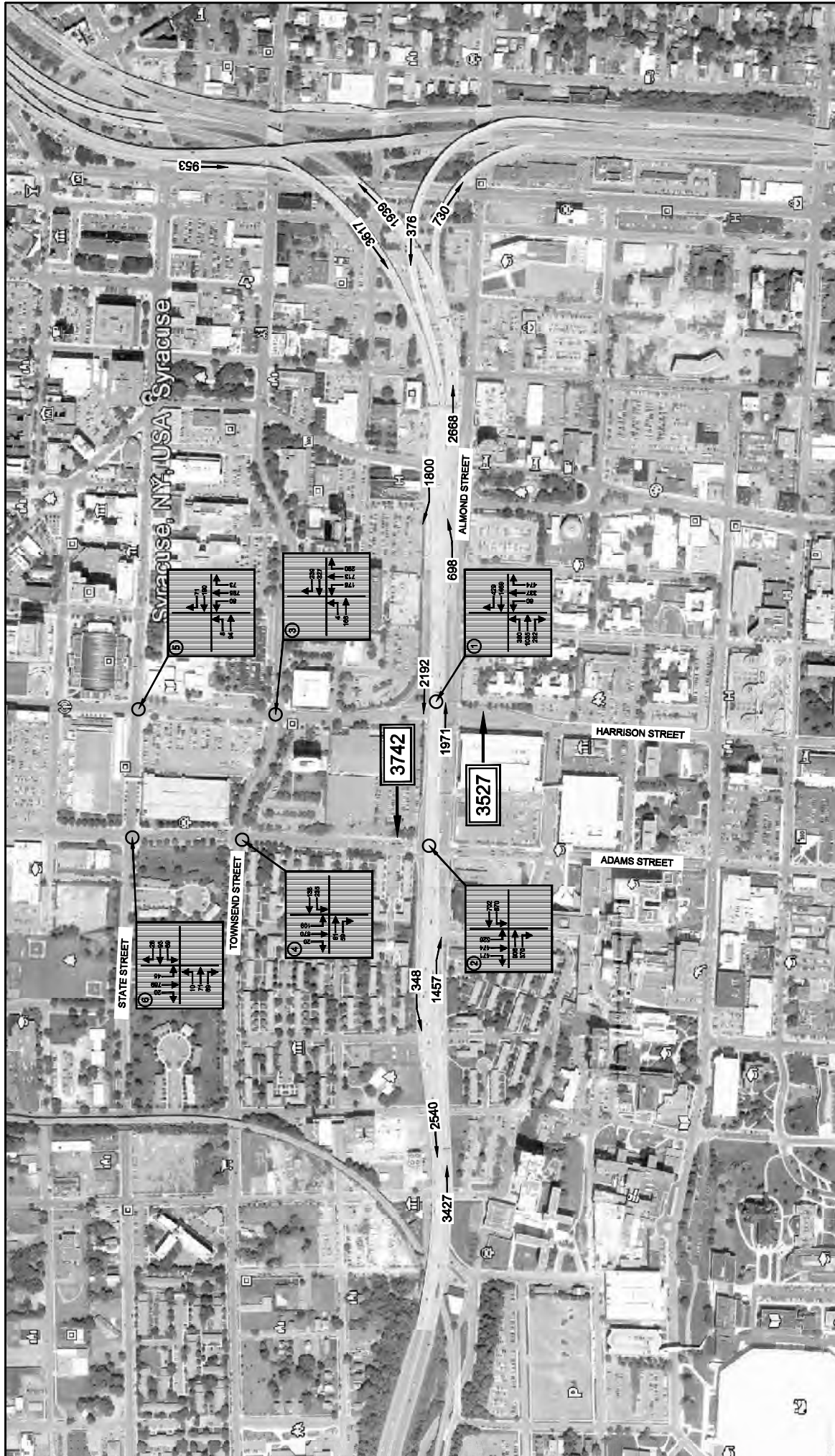
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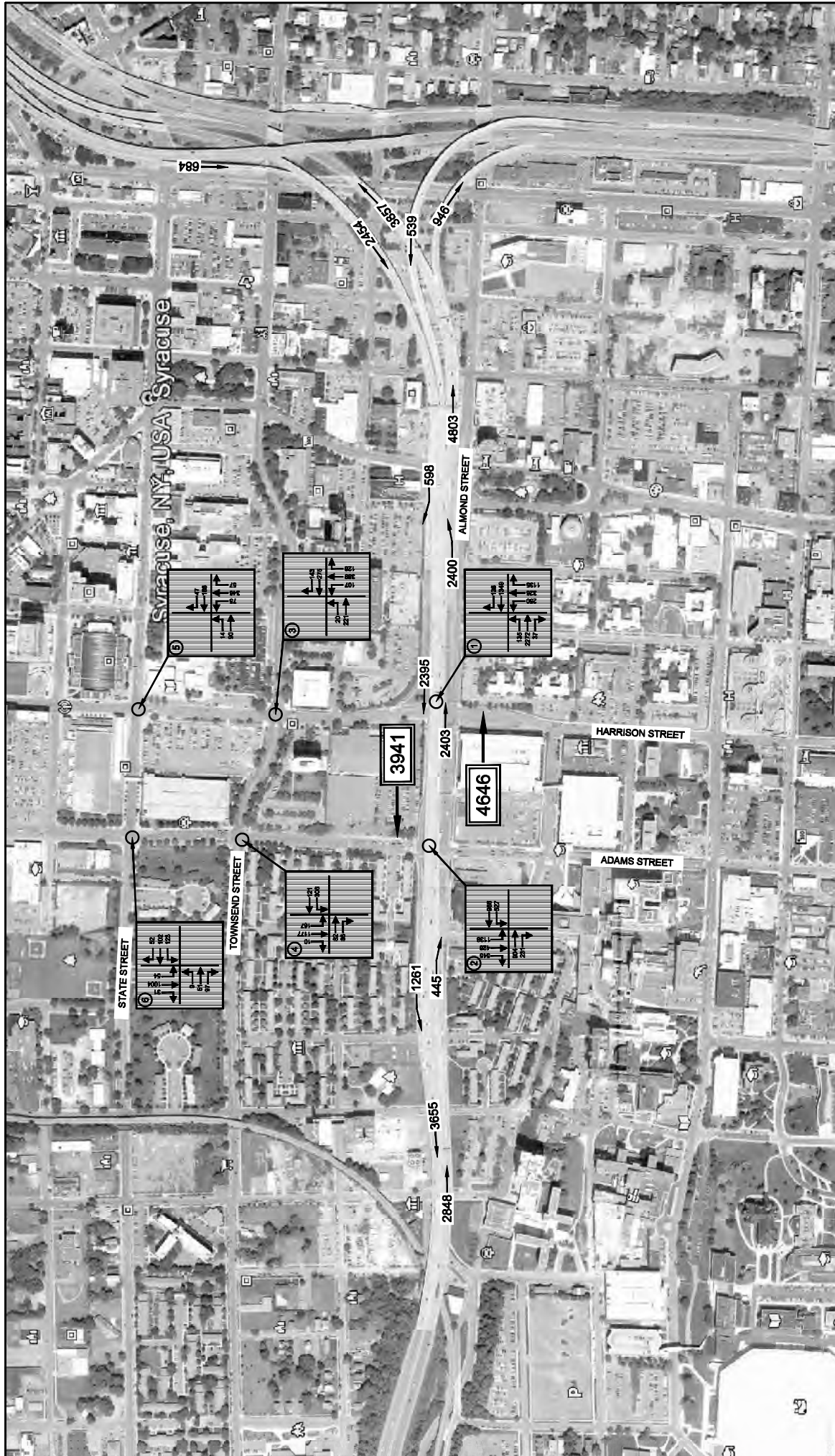
FIGURES



 MASER Consulting, Planning & Environmental Engineers Engineers • Surveyors • Landscape Architects State of N.Y. Certificate of Authorization: 0006671	WESTCHESTER OFFICE 11 Broadhurst Hawthorne, NY 10532 Phone: 914.347.7500 Fax: 914.347.7266 email: solutions @ maserconsulting.com	 PLAN NORTH	DAILY TRAFFIC VOLUMES EXPRESSED IN VEHICLES PER DAY (VPD) CITY OF SYRACUSE, ONONDAGA COUNTY, NEW YORK	JOB NUMBER: 12100167A SCALE: 1" = 400'	DATE: 1/8/2014 FIGURE NUMBER: 1
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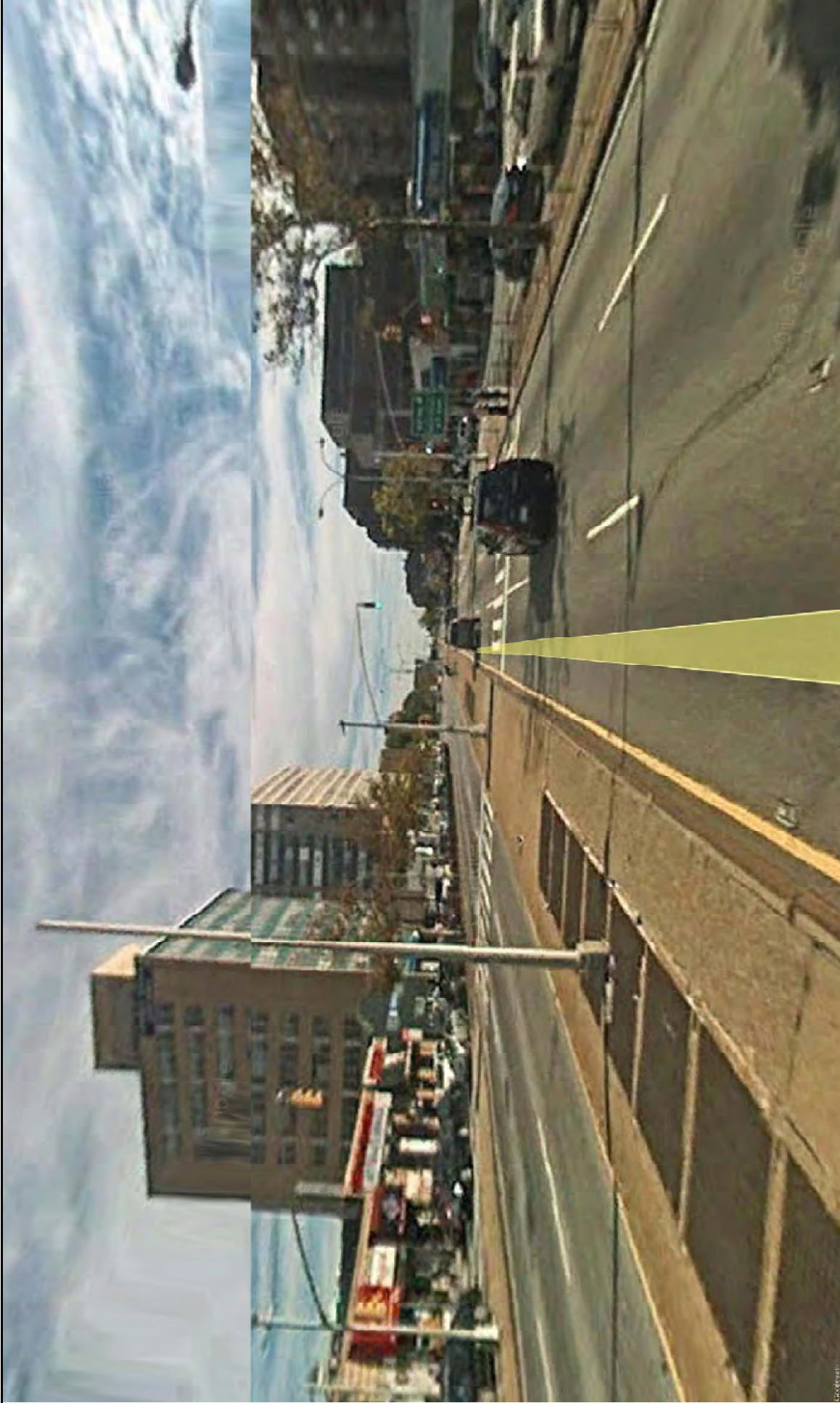
JOB NUMBER: 12100167A DATE: 1/8/2014	EXISTING TRAFFIC VOLUMES AM PEAK HOUR CITY OF SYRACUSE, ONONDAGA COUNTY, NEW YORK
SCALE: 1" = 400' FIGURE NUMBER: 2	PLAN NORTH



JOB NUMBER: 12100167A DATE: 1/8/2014	EXISTING TRAFFIC VOLUMES PM PEAK HOUR CITY OF SYRACUSE, ONONDAGA COUNTY, NEW YORK
SCALE: 1" = 400'	FIGURE NUMBER: 3



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		 PLAN NORTH		SCALE: 1"=80'	FIGURE NUMBER: 4



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PLAN NORTH

STREET VIEW
QUEENS BOULEVARD, QUEENS, NEW YORK

JOB NUMBER:
12100167A

DATE:
1/8/2014

SCALE:
N.T.S.

FIGURE NUMBER:
5



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		SCALE: 1"=70'	FIGURE NUMBER: 6		



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PLAN NORTH

STREET VIEW
GRAND CONCOURSE, BRONX, NEW YORK

JOB NUMBER:
12100167A

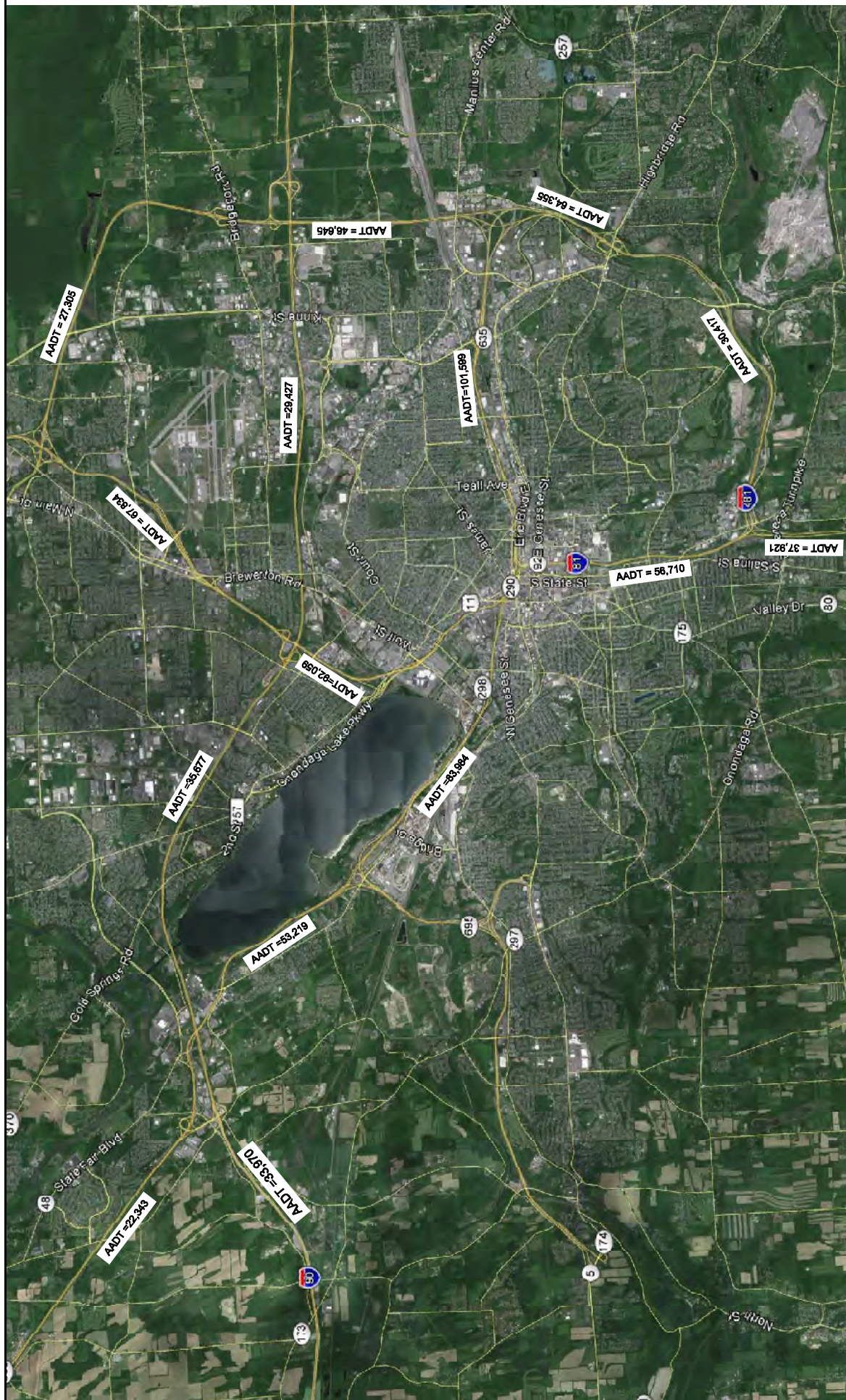
DATE:
1/8/2014

SCALE:
N.T.S.

FIGURE NUMBER:
7



 Consulting, Mapping & Environmental Engineers Engineers • Surveyors • Landscape Architects State of N.Y. Certificate of Authorization: 0006671	WESTCHESTER OFFICE 11 Broadhurst Hawthorne, NY 10532 Phone: 914.347.7500 Fax: 914.347.7266 email: solutions @ maserconsulting.com	 PLAN NORTH	REQUIRED PAVEMENT AREA BOULEVARD ALTERNATIVE CITY OF SYRACUSE, ONONDAGA COUNTY, NEW YORK	JOB NUMBER: 12100167A	DATE: 1/8/2014
			SCALE: 1" = 400'		
			FIGURE NUMBER: 8		



WESTCHESTER OFFICE 11 Broadhurst Hawthorne, NY 10632 Phone: 914.347.7500 Fax: 914.347.7266 email: solutions @ maserconsulting.com	AREA MAP AADT EXPRESSED IN VEHICLES PER DAY (VPD) CITY OF SYRACUSE, ONONDAGA COUNTY, NEW YORK	PLAN NORTH	MASER Consulting, Municipal & Environmental Engineers Planners • Surveyors • Landscape Architects State of N.Y. Certificate of Authorization: 0006671
JOB NUMBER: 12100167A	DATE: 1/8/2014	SCALE: N.T.S.	FIGURE NUMBER: 9



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DESCRIPTION OF THE SCREENING AND METHODOLOGY



We have performed a preliminary SYNCHRO analysis for the AM and PM Peak Hours using record traffic volume data, i.e., without consideration of future growth. This examination was undertaken to assist in understanding the potential magnitude of impacts that would be associated with the contemplated elimination of the viaduct and replacement with a boulevard. The analyses were completed under three conditions:

- Existing Geometric Conditions
- Alternate 1
100% Diverted Traffic on Almond Street w/ and w/o added lanes on Almond St.
- Alternate 2
30% Diverted Traffic on Almond Street w/ and w/o added lanes on Almond St.
35% Diverted Traffic on Townsend Street w/ and w/o added lanes on Almond St.
35% Diverted Traffic on State Street w/ and w/o added lanes on Almond St.

The terminology used in identifying traffic flow conditions is Level of Service. A Level of Service “A” represents the best condition with little or no delay and a Level of Service “F” represents the worst where volume exceeds capacity. A Level of Service “C” is generally used as a design standard. In order to identify an intersection’s Level of Service, the average number of vehicle delay (in seconds) is computed. [Additional information concerning signalized intersection Levels of Service can be found as an attachment.]

The results of these analyses are shown on the Table No. 1 for the overall intersection operation. Six intersections were examined:

1. Almond Street/Harrison Street
2. Almond Street/E. Adams Street
3. Townsend Street/Harrison Street
4. Townsend Street/ E. Adams Street
5. State Street/ Harrison Street
6. State Street/ E. Adams Street

In considering the contemplated removal of the viaduct and development of a boulevard for Alternate 1, we've assumed all viaduct traffic to divert to Almond Street. This equates to an additional 1,971 vehicles northbound and an additional 2,192 vehicles southbound during the AM Peak Hour and 2,403 vehicles northbound and 2,395 vehicles southbound during the PM Peak Hour. We've placed this traffic on through movements only as diverted traffic is "through" traffic only. The traffic that has this area as its origin or destination are part of the surface volume already.

The analyses were rerun assuming the addition of two (2) through lanes in each of the northbound and southbound directions on Almond Street to handle additional through traffic. This is the maximum extent of widening that could occur without the need for obtaining additional right of way for the road itself. However, this does not include the lanes necessary or desirable for bike lanes/pedestrian walkways/bus turnouts, etc.

Simply adding lanes to Almond Street would not result in improved Levels of Service. Traffic would of necessity migrate to adjacent north/south roadways predominately, Townsend Street and State Street.

Alternate 2 considers this migration assuming 30% of the viaduct traffic would remain on Almond Street, 35% would move to Townsend Street and 35% would shift to State Street.

Clearly, a review of the Table No. 1 indicates that even with extensive improvements to Almond Street in the form of additional through lanes and with the diversion of traffic to adjacent north/south roads, insufficient capacity exists to support elimination of the viaduct to service through traffic with many locations operating at a Level of Service "E" and/or "F" during one or both peak hours. This analysis has focused on the purely northbound and southbound movements without consideration of the improvements that would be required to convey diverted traffic to the adjacent parallel roadways – a further complication, which if appropriately considered in design analysis, would undoubtedly require additional land acquisition and disruption of existing homes and/or businesses.



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LEVELS OF SERVICE STANDARDS

LEVEL OF SERVICE FOR SIGNALIZED INTERSECTIONS

Level of Service (LOS) can be characterized for the entire intersection, each intersection approach, and each lane group. Control delay alone is used to characterize LOS for the entire intersection or an approach. Control delay and volume-to-capacity (v/c) ratio are used to characterize LOS for a lane group. Delay quantifies the increase in travel time due to traffic signal control. It is also a measure of driver discomfort and fuel consumption. The volume-to-capacity ratio quantifies the degree to which a phase's capacity is utilized by a lane group.

LOS A describes operations with a control delay of 10 s/veh or less and a volume-to-capacity ratio no greater than 1.0. This level is typically assigned when the volume-to-capacity ratio is low and either progression is exceptionally favorable or the cycle length is very short. If it is due to favorable progression, most vehicles arrive during the green indication and travel through the intersection without stopping.

LOS B describes operations with control delay between 10 and 20 s/veh and a volume-to-capacity ratio no greater than 1.0. This level is typically assigned when the volume-to-capacity ratio is low and either progression is highly favorable or the cycle length is short. More vehicles stop than with LOS A.

LOS C describes operations with control delay between 20 and 35 s/veh and a volume-to-capacity ratio no greater than 1.0. This level is typically assigned when progression is favorable or the cycle length is moderate.

LOS D describes operations with control delay between 35 and 55 s/veh and a volume-to-capacity ratio no greater than 1.0. This level is typically assigned when the volume-to-capacity ratio is high and either progression is ineffective or the cycle length is long.

LOS E describes operations with control delay between 55 and 80 s/veh and a volume-to-capacity ratio no greater than 1.0. This level is typically assigned when the volume-to-capacity ratio is high, progression is unfavorable, and the cycle length is long.

LOS F describes operations with control delay exceeding 80 s/veh or a volume-to-capacity ratio greater than 1.0. This level is typically assigned when the volume-to-capacity ratio is very high, progression is very poor, and the cycle length is long.

A lane group can incur a delay less than 80 s/veh when the volume-to-capacity ratio exceeds 1.0. This condition typically occurs when the cycle length is short, the signal progression is favorable, or both. As a result, both the delay and volume-to-capacity ratio are considered when lane group LOS is established. A ratio of 1.0 or more indicates that cycle capacity is fully utilized and represents failure from a capacity perspective (just as delay in excess of 80 s/veh represents failure from a delay perspective).

The Level of Service Criteria for signalized intersections are given in Exhibit 18-4 from the *2010 Highway Capacity Manual* published by the Transportation Research Board.

Exhibit 18-4

Control Delay (s/veh)	LOS by Volume-to-Capacity Ratio	
	v/c ≤ 1.0	v/c > 1.0
≤ 0	A	F
>10-20	B	F
>20-35	C	F
>35-55	D	F
>55-80	E	F
>80	F	F

For approach-based and intersection wide assessments, LOS is defined solely by control delay.



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SCHEDULE A

“Boulevard Option” Impacts

SCHEDULE A
“Boulevard Option” Impacts

1. Describe the “Boulevard Option”
 - a. Identify the portion of I-81 to be de-designated
 - b. Identify who will take over design/repair/maintenance responsibility of the de-designated road
 - c. Identify who will fund demolition of the roadway/viaduct along the de-designated stretch of road
 - d. Identify the source of funds for demolition
 - e. Identify the design parameters of the boulevard, including:
 - i. Number of through and turn lanes in each direction, including shoulders
 - ii. Width of travel lanes
 - iii. Width of shoulders
 - iv. Design Level of Service of Arterials and Intersections
 - v. Bike lane/pedestrian walkway features
 1. Location
 2. Width
 3. Number
 4. Integration with the road
 5. Use of fencing
 - vi. Number of intersections planned and at what cross streets
 - vii. Improvements proposed at the cross streets
 - viii. Traffic signal design and operation including pedestrian signals
 - ix. Identify added rights-of-way needed on each/both sides to accommodate the new boulevard
 - x. Identify the parcels and uses to be affected
2. Traffic
 - a. Identify improvements needed on other streets and at other intersections resulting from re-routed traffic/modified traffic patterns, including
 - i. Traffic signals and other traffic control measures
 - ii. Modification to sidewalks
 - iii. Added travel/turn lanes
 - iv. Added rights-of-way to be required
 - v. Lands and uses to be affected
 - vi. Identify who will fund changes

- b. Identify design alternatives to connect the boulevard to I-690 including
 - i. Traffic signals and other traffic control measures
 - ii. Guide signs, ground mounted and overhead structures
 - iii. Added travel lanes/turn lanes/ramps
 - iv. Added rights-of-way to be required
 - v. Lands and uses to be affected
 - vi. Identify who will fund changes
 - c. Identify all improvements needed to existing I-481 mainline and the existing I-481 interchanges to accommodate the new designation as I-81 and the new/re-routed traffic in both directions, including
 - i. Traffic signals and other traffic control measures
 - ii. Added travel lanes/turn lanes/ramps
 - iii. Added rights-of-way to be required
 - iv. Lands and uses to be affected
 - v. Identify new interchanges proposed or those to be eliminated or modified
 - vi. Identify who will fund changes
 - d. Identify all improvements needed to the non-viaduct (e.g. non-boulevard) portion of existing I-81 to accommodate the de-designation and new/re-routed traffic in both directions, including
 - i. Traffic signals and other traffic control measures
 - ii. Added travel lanes/turn lanes/ramps
 - iii. Added rights-of-way to be required
 - iv. Lands and uses to be affected
 - v. Identify new interchanges proposed or those to be eliminated or modified
 - vi. Identify who will fund changes
 - e. Establish Existing, Design Year No-Build and Design Year Build traffic volumes and geometrics for all facilities influenced by the change.
 - f. Identify all intersections and interchanges that will experience increased or decreased traffic volumes as a result of the “boulevard”, including anticipated mainline and intersection Levels of Service weave/merge/diverge analysis of all ramp and ramp junctions. If certain interchanges/intersections are not included provide the rational for such exclusion.
 - g. Identify improvements to maintain or improve Levels of Service at each location throughout the useful life of the improvement.
3. Traffic Safety
- a. Establish base line accident rates for all facilities under evaluation on a per million vehicle mile or per million vehicle entry basis. Extrapolate rates for expected change in geometry/traffic volumes.

- b. Pedestrian/bike integration/accommodation
 - c. Multi-modal/mass transit implications, i.e., new routing, eliminated routes
- 4. Integrity of existing interstate highway system
 - a. Identify/assess impacts on operations at all existing northbound and southbound I-81 interchanges with I-690, I-90, I-481 and with local roads.
 - b. Identify effects on overall vehicle miles travelled as a result of the reconfigured traffic system , including but not limited to regional and interstate vehicular travel. This should be in the form of potential increases in travel time, increased fuel consumption and lost productivity.
 - c. Identify overall effects on movement of goods and services
 - i. Locally
 - ii. Regionally
 - iii. Interstate
- 5. Air Quality
 - a. Identify/assess air quality impacts – should be co-terminous with the traffic impact/LOS studies.
 - b. Impacts on climate change/global warming
 - c. Impacts from increased vehicle idling time/stop/starts
- 6. Emergency Services
 - a. Identify/assess impacts to response times to the hospital from the north, south and west by ambulances and other emergency vehicles
 - b. Identify/assess impacts on recovery/survival of victims as a result of increased response times
 - c. Identify/assess impacts on existing fire department stations' response times within their covered areas where the established routes are affected by the Project
 - d. Identify/assess impacts of increased traffic congestion along the “boulevard” on fire department response times and assess alternate emergency vehicle travel routes to avoid traffic congestion along the boulevard
 - e. Identify/assess impacts to law enforcement response times as a result of increased traffic congestion along the boulevard and assess alternate law enforcement travel routes to avoid congestion along the boulevard
- 7. Energy and Climate Change
- 8. Community Character
 - a. Identify/assess impacts of “boulevard” on downtown Syracuse
 - i. Displaced residents/businesses in order to acquire sufficient right-of-way width and to build the required boulevard, including Environmental Justice and identify relocation alternatives

- ii. On the overall downtown roadway network resulting from increased traffic/degraded Level of Service (LOS) on City streets, including displaced residents/businesses to accommodate improvements and other changes to the roadway and pedestrian walkway network
 - iii. Access to significant civic facilities
 - 1. Hospitals – potential delays to emergency response – particularly during inclement weather (ice/snow)
 - 2. Hancock International Airport
 - 3. SU
 - 4. Carrier Dome
 - 5. Train Station
 - 6. NYS Regional Market
 - 7. Destiny USA
 - 8. NYS Fairgrounds
 - 9. War Memorial
 - iv. Increased City costs to improve, repair and maintain the downtown roadway network – diversion of trucks onto city streets may result in more frequent need for repair/reconstruction also potential for truck/pedestrian interaction
 - v. Local economic development plans and existing patterns of development
 - vi. Decreased connectivity between downtown and neighboring communities
 - vii. Connective corridor – will one exist without I-81?
 - viii. Demand for downtown office space/residences
- b. Identify/assess impacts of de-designating a 11+ mile stretch of existing I-81
- i. Conversion of I-481 to I-81
 - 1. Increased development pressures along I-481 corridor
 - 2. Potential for SPRAWL
 - 3. Contrary to Smart Growth principles
 - 4. Effect on character of existing local governments through which I-481 (which would become I-81) traverses
 - 5. Availability/adequacy of existing infrastructure to accommodate inevitable growth/development pressures and traffic volumes
 - 6. NYS and local costs to repair and maintain the de-designated stretch of I-81
 - 7. Identify/assess the adequacy of recurring funding sources to do so.
 - 8. Identify/assess impacts to commuting/travel patterns/traffic safety if those standards are reduced in any way.

ii. Land Use/Local Revenues

1. Impacts to businesses and other land uses along this stretch of road that rely on vehicular traffic, especially interstate or regional.
 - a. Evaluate the likelihood of them closing or relocating
 - b. If so, what is the impact on local governments resulting from lost tax revenues? This applies to the following local governments:
 - i. City
 - ii. County
 - iii. Salina
2. Changes to Commuting Patterns Without sufficient capacity traffic will divert to other interchange points near and far that may require additional improvement currently unforeseen. A Regional Network Evaluation is required.
3. Potential for population shifts
4. Consistency/Compliance with NYS Smart Growth Policies/Principles

9. Impacts to Local/Regional Economies

10. Land Use and Zoning

- a. Identify/assess impacts to lands located along the “boulevard”
- b. Identify/assess impacts to lands located along the remaining stretch of de-designated I-81
- c. Identify/assess impacts to municipalities located along or whose residents commute on or regularly use the remaining stretch of de-designated I-81
- d. Identify/assess impacts to land uses and other municipalities that may be affected by changed regional and interstate travel patterns
- e. Identify/assess impacts to lands and municipalities located along I-481 and those which will otherwise be affected by re-designation of I-481 to I-81

11. Noise and Vibration

12. Visual Resources

13. Historic and Cultural Resources

14. Construction, Maintenance and Protection of Traffic



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SCHEDULE B

"Maintain Grade Separation" Impacts

SCHEDULE B
“Maintain Grade Separation” Impacts

1. Describe the “Grade Separation” Options
 - a. Describe the options
 - i. Maintain the I-81 interstate highway designation along or very near the existing I-81;
 - ii. Maintain grade separation
 - a. Bridge(s) (perhaps further elevated iconic structure)
 - b. Tunnel
 - c. Depressed Roadway
 - b. Establish screening criteria/parameters
 - i. Identify the changes needed to upgrade to meet current interstate highway design/operational standards
 - ii. Establish screening criteria for options to permit objective assessment of each
 - c. Identify the source of funds for same
 - d. Identify the parameters for design of the grade separation for each option considered, including:
 - i. Number of travel lanes in each direction, including shoulders
 - ii. Width of lanes
 - iii. Width of shoulders
 - iv. Access control
 - v. Visual enhancement
 - vi. Bike lane/pedestrian walkway features
 1. Location
 2. Width
 3. Number
 4. Integration with the road, elevate above Almond Street
 - vii. Number of intersections planned and at what cross streets
 - viii. Improvements proposed at the cross streets
 - ix. Traffic signal design and operation
 - x. Identify added rights-of-way needed on each/both sides to accommodate the new grade separation design and ramping
 - xi. Identify the parcel and uses to be affected
2. Traffic
 - a. Identify improvements needed on other streets and at other intersections resulting from re-routed traffic/changed traffic patterns, including

- i. Traffic signals and other traffic control measures
 - ii. Added travel and turn lanes
 - iii. Added rights-of-way to be required
 - iv. Lands and uses to be affected
 - b. Identify design to connect the grade separation road to I-690 including
 - i. Ramps
 - ii. Traffic signals and other traffic control measures
 - iii. Added travel lanes
 - iv. Added rights-of-way to be required
 - v. Lands and uses to be affected
 - c. Establish Existing, Design Year No-Build and Design Year Build traffic volumes and geometrics
- 3. Traffic Safety
 - a. Establish base line accident rates for all facilities under evaluation on a per million vehicle mile or per million vehicle entry basis. Extrapolate rate for expected change in geometry/traffic volumes.
 - b. Pedestrian/bike integration/accommodation, perhaps use of sidewalk bridges elevator/escalators
 - c. Multi-modal/mass transit
- 4. Air Quality
 - a. Identify/assess air quality impacts – should be co-terminus with the traffic impact/LOS studies
 - b. Impacts on climate change/global warming
 - c. Impacts from increased vehicle idling time/stop/starts
- 5. Energy and Climate Change
- 6. Community Character
 - a. Identify/assess impacts of “Grade Separation” option on downtown Syracuse
 - i. Displaced residents/businesses in order to acquire sufficient right-of-way width and to build the required improvement, including Environmental Justice and identify relocation alternatives
 - ii. Local economic development plans and existing patterns of development
 - iii. Decreased connectivity between downtown and neighboring communities
 - iv. Connective corridor – will one exist without I-81?
 - v. Demand for downtown office space/residences
- 7. Impacts to Local/Regional Economies
- 8. Land Use and Zoning
 - a. Identify/assess impacts to lands located along the “Grade Separation” option



- b. Identify/assess impacts to land uses and other municipalities that may be affected by changed regional and interstate travel patterns
- 9. Noise and Vibration
- 10. Visual Resources
- 11. Historic and Cultural Resources
- 12. Construction, Maintenance and Protection of Traffic

From: [Save81 Community](#)
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Subject: Save81.org"s Formal Submission Part 3 of 4
Date: Friday, January 17, 2014 3:47:39 PM
Attachments: [Town Resolutions OFFICIAL Save81 pt 3.pdf](#)

To Whom It May Concern:

Attached you will find part 3 of 4 of Save81.org's official submission for the initial I-81 scoping comment period. Please confirm receipt of these documents.



441 Electronics Parkway
Liverpool, NY 13088

January 17, 2014

Mr. Jonathan McDade
New York Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Building
7th Floor, Room 719
Clinton Avenue and N. Pearl Street
Albany, New York 12207

Ms. Debra Nelson
NYS DOT
50 Wolf Road
Albany, New York 12232

Re: I-81 Project – Syracuse Area Corridor

Dear Mr. McDade and Ms. Nelson:

We thank the Federal Highway Administration and New York State Department of Transportation for allowing us the opportunity to formally submit these materials for consideration as part of the environmental review process for the Interstate 81 project in Central New York.

The following is a compilation of all Central New York localities' resolutions rejecting the state's proposed plan to replace Interstate 81 with a six-lane boulevard through the city of Syracuse. While these resolutions were passed in numerous municipalities, they share similar concerns about the negative effects a boulevard would have on the entire Central New York region. These resolutions call on state officials to consider choosing other plans that maintain I-81's current function and designation as an interstate highway through Syracuse.

The negative impacts highlighted include declined economic growth, increased traffic congestion, longer and more stressful commutes, and compromised public safety.

Each locality presented concerns unique to their area. The following is a summary of these localities and their respective issues:

City of Auburn: The Auburn City Council's resolution expressed concern over increased truck traffic that would result from re-routing I-81. More commercial trucks passing through would increase the number of motor vehicle accidents while stressing infrastructure.

Village of Aurora: The Village of Aurora requested that DOT carefully consider the negative consequences a boulevard plan and a rerouting of traffic away from Syracuse would bring to surrounding small outlying communities like Aurora. Increased commercial and truck traffic traveling through Aurora on State Route 90 would cause safety issues while decreasing the quality of life for town residents.

Cayuga County: The Cayuga County Legislature's resolution expressed concern for the future of the greater Central New York region. Re-routing I-81 would divert commercial traffic to the smaller cities and towns, stressing infrastructure and adversely affecting residents' quality of life.

Town of DeWitt: The DeWitt Town Board's resolution noted the threat to economic growth posed by replacing I-81 with a boulevard. Town leaders are also worried about increased traffic congestion that diverting I-81 would bring to DeWitt's already overwhelmed streets. The overuse of DeWitt's local roads would require more infrastructure funding, straining the town's budget.

Town of Fleming: The Fleming Town Board noted the negative effects of increased commercial traffic that would result from re-routing I-81. Fleming leaders highlighted the consequences on residents' quality of life, including noise, pollution, and commuting hassles.

Town of Geddes: The Geddes Town Board emphasized the harm a boulevard would have on the regional economy. Geddes leaders expressed concern that re-routing I-81 would threaten local jobs as it would deter business from the commercial built around the interstate and its off-ramps.

Town of Moravia: The Town Board of Moravia cited traffic concerns in their resolutions, specifically trucks re-routed from I-81 onto their local State Route 38A. A rise in the number of trucks travelling on this local road would endanger Moravia residents who rely on the road for daily commutes to work, school, and other important places.

Onondaga County: The Onondaga County Legislature expressed concern over the threat a boulevard would have on area's accessibility. The easy access to places of employment, medical services, schools, and other destinations within the greater Central New York region would cease to exist if I-81 is replaced by a boulevard in Downtown Syracuse.

Town of Salina: The Salina Town Board highlighted Moody's Investors Service's prediction for Salina's economic growth given its proximity to Syracuse and its position at the "Crossroads of New York." The traffic flow through I-81 has provided, in the words of the Town Board, "economic lifeblood" to the community, and cutting this artery would risk an already fragile economy. The Board expressed its support for any plan that maintains I-81's current route and allows for the greatest opportunity for economic growth in the Central New York region. Salina officials believe that replacing the elevated highway in Syracuse with a boulevard and re-routing I-81 traffic around the city would hinder economic development in Central New York.

Town of Skaneateles: The Skaneateles Town Board cited the negative impacts truck traffic would have on the local environment in addition to public safety and residents' quality of life. An influx of truck traffic through the Finger Lakes area has concerned Skaneateles residents and leaders for years, and town officials believe that constructing a boulevard in Downtown Syracuse that diverts I-81 traffic away from the city will push more truck traffic from I-81 to smaller routes along the Finger Lakes.

Town of Sennett: The Sennett Town Board highlighted the threats posed by the potential increased commercial traffic congestion and the potential threats to economic development, quality of life, public safety and the environment.

These resolutions represent the overwhelming opposition throughout the region to the state's proposed boulevard plan. We hope the Department of Transportation will thoroughly evaluate these when determining the future of Interstate 81 in Central New York. These resolutions should be made part of the FHWA/NYS DOT NEPA and SEQRA record.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Anthony G. Mangano". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Anthony" being more prominent and the last name "Mangano" following in a similar style.

Anthony G. Mangano
President
Syracuse Hotel Corporation

COUNCIL RESOLUTION #95 of 2013

**MEMORIALIZING THE NEW YORK STATE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION REGARDING
THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT
OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE**

By Councilor

Camardo

August 15, 2013

WHEREAS, the New York State Department of Transportation is considering the possibility of significant changes to Interstate 81 through the city of Syracuse which could potentially alter the flow of heavy commercial traffic and truck traffic flow through the city of Auburn; and

WHEREAS, the alteration of the commercial traffic and increased truck traffic could pose negative effects to smaller outlying communities, including the city of Auburn; and

WHEREAS, the City of Auburn does understand that Interstate 81 is an important route for the State of New York, however, the Department of Transportation must recognize that any significant change which increases commercial and truck traffic through the city of Auburn could create safety issues and affect the quality of life for its residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Auburn City Council does request that the New York State Department of Transportation seek a solution to the redesign of Interstate 81 that will not pose negative effects to smaller outlying communities, particularly the city of Auburn, and that the Interstate 81 function and designation as an interstate highway must not be removed or impaired; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the City of Auburn is directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and the Cayuga County Legislature.

Seconded by Councilor

Ruzicka

	AYES	NOES
Councilor Graney	✓	
Councilor Camardo	✓	
Councilor Smith	✓	
Councilor Ruzicka	✓	
Mayor Quill	✓	

CARRIED AND ADOPTED

RESOLUTION #13-34 OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF AURORA, COUNTY OF CAYUGA, REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, any decision reached by the New York State Department of Transportation should satisfy function, safety, and efficiency of transportation concerns for citizens as well as for commercial use; and

WHEREAS, the resulting solution should minimize unintended consequences,

IT IS THEREFORE

RESOLVED, the unintended consequences of creating any significant changes to Route 81 including, creating a boulevard, would alter the flow of heavy commercial traffic and potentially increase truck traffic flow through the Village of Aurora, State Rt. 90 thereby decreasing the quality of life and increasing danger to human life and property for Aurora residents, as well as danger of pollution to adjacent Cayuga Lake; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Village of Aurora Board of Trustees requests that the New York State Department of Transportation seek a solution to the Route 81 redesign that does not pose negative effects to smaller outlying communities; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an Interstate Highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Village Clerk of the Village of Aurora is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council and the Cayuga County Legislature.

Dated: June 19, 2013

FIRST: Ominsky

SECOND: Taylor

AYES: Bennett, Murphy, Ominsky, Taylor, and Van Orman

NAYS: None

Carried unanimously

Ann Balloni

Village Clerk

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE CAYUGA COUNTY LEGISLATURE REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE

By: Cayuga County Legislature

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, it is the sense of the Cayuga County Legislature that any decision reached by the New York State Department of Transportation should satisfy function first including safety, efficiency of transportation for personal and commercial use and provide and minimize unintended consequences; NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that it is the opinion of the Cayuga County Legislature that the unintended consequences of creating any significant changes to Route 81 including, creating a boulevard, could potentially alter the flow of heavy commercial traffic and increase unwanted truck traffic flow on County roads thereby causing safety issues and decreasing the quality of life for Cayuga County residents; and be it further

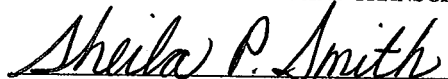
RESOLVED, that the Cayuga County Legislature requests that the New York State Department of Transportation seek a solution to the Route 81 redesign that does not pose negative effects to Cayuga County; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an Interstate Highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Cayuga County Legislature is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation and the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council.

I HEREBY CERTIFY, THAT I HAVE COMPARED THE FOREGOING COPY OF A RESOLUTION DULY PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF CAYUGA COUNTY AT A MEETING HELD ON THE 25th DAY OF JUNE 2013 WITH THE ORIGINAL RESOLUTION, AND THAT THE SAME IS A TRUE AND CORRECT COPY AND TRANSCRIPT THEREOF, AND THE WHOLE THEREOF.

6-26-13 9:A5AM


CLERK, CAYUGA COUNTY LEGISLATURE

June 10, 2013

Resolution

**MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF DeWITT,
COUNTY OF ONONDAGA, REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING
ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE**

WHEREAS, for the last 50 years, Interstate 81 has served as a vital backbone for the economy of the Central New York, connecting commuters, businesses, tourists, visitors, and through-travelers alike; and

WHEREAS, among its important functions, Interstate 81 provides vital links with access to downtown Syracuse, all of our hospitals, Syracuse University, Destiny USA, present and future businesses and residents along 81 corridor, to business and residents within the Town of DeWitt; and

WHEREAS, Moody's Investors Service has assigned a Aa3 rating to a recent Town of DeWitt Public Improvement (Serial) Bond with the expectation of the stable tax base of approximately \$2.9 billion continuing to experience modest growth given it's close proximity to the City of Syracuse (G.O. rated A1, negative). Acting as a transfer point between the New York State Thruway, Route 481 and Interstate 81, the town has a significant commercial presence (39% of tax base) consisting of hotels, shopping centers, office buildings, manufacturing facilities, and restaurants geared in part toward travelers across these thoroughfares; and

WHEREAS, turning Interstate 81 to Route 481 leaves no alternative north-south Route for national defense, national disaster, and general maintenance and repairs; and

WHEREAS, although there are a variety of ways to deal with I-81's aging infrastructure, the existing "Interstate" function and designation must be preserved, because any solution which would remove I-81's vital function from its present alignment would irreparably harm the regional economy and corresponding employment dependent upon the highway network in addition to negatively impacting DeWitt's neighborhoods and its residents quality of life; and

WHEREAS, redirecting I-81 traffic to Route 481, transfers what the City of Syracuse sees as a problem to DeWitt; and

WHEREAS, DeWitt forms the eastern border of Syracuse and its neighborhoods already suffer the consequences of commuter traffic to and from the City of Syracuse, along local Routes 173, 5, 290, 298, in addition to the Interstate Highways including the Thruway and Routes 690 and 481. Consequently, moving Interstate 81 to Route 481 will only exacerbate local and pass-through traffic leaving a heavy toll on already taxed DeWitt resources. Namely, increasing the wear and tear on DeWitt's local roads and infrastructure that are already insufficient and underfunded; and

WHEREAS, increased traffic causes increased noise, dust, toxic emissions and atmospheric deposition of pollutants on land and water, business, homes, and schools; and

WHEREAS, redirecting Interstate 81 to Route 481 is not smart environmental policy because the distance traveled for through traffic and further stop and go intercity commuting traffic is increased. This is polluting, inefficient, requires the use of greater amounts of petroleum based fuels, hurts the regional economy, and is detrimental to social welfare and the environment; and

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for the next 100 years; and

WHEREAS, it is the consensus of the DeWitt Town Board that any decision reached by the NYS DOT should satisfy function first, and should be closely tailored to satisfy that function; and

WHEREAS, we support smart growth and the creation of a new and welcoming entrance to Syracuse, and the integration of the hospitals and university areas with the rest of downtown, we believe it must not be accomplished by compromising one of the most significant advantages of living, working, doing business and visiting Onondaga County;

WHEREAS, DeWitt supports a balanced, comprehensive approach, a regional transportation plan is necessary to ensure smart choices are made, a plan that can provide environmental, social and economic benefits to all of Central New York, one that promotes alternative and mass transit options including alternate fuels, electric vehicles, and a light rail system; for out suburban communities are in dire need of a traffic diet as well; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the DeWitt Town Board memorializes its determination that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an interstate highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Supervisor of the Town of DeWitt is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, to the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and to the various legislative members representing Onondaga County at the state level.

RESOLUTION MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF FLEMING, COUNTY OF CAYUGA, REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, it is the sense of the Fleming Town Board that any decision reached by the New York State Department of Transportation should satisfy function first including safety, efficiency of transportation for personal and commercial use and provide and minimize unintended consequences.

IT IS THEREFORE

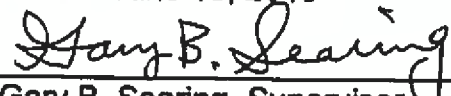
RESOLVED, that it is the opinion of the Fleming Town Board that the unintended consequences of creating any significant changes to Route 81 including, creating a boulevard, could potentially alter the flow of heavy commercial traffic and increase truck traffic flow through the Town of Fleming, State Rt. 38 and thereby causing safety issues and decreasing the quality of life for Fleming residents; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Fleming Town Board requests that the New York State Department of Transportation seek a solution to the Route 81 redesign that does not pose negative effects to smaller outlying communities; and, be it further

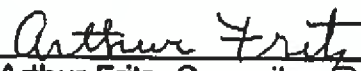
RESOLVED, that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an Interstate Highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk of the Town of Fleming is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council and the Cayuga County Legislature.

Dated: June 10, 2013


Gary B. Searing, Supervisor

Ronald LaVarnway, Councilman


Arthur Fritz, Councilman


Ellen DelloStritto, Councilwoman


Gerald Dudek, Councilman

TOWN OF GEDDES
Joseph L Ranieri
1000 Woods Road
Solvay, NY 13209

Geddes Town Board Meeting – July 9, 2013

Members Present:

Supervisor Falcone
Councilor Albrigo
Councilor Czaplicki
Councilor Fassinger - Excused
Councilor Krupa - Excused
Councilor Murphy
Councilor Valenti

Resolution # 107

Authorize Supervisor to Send Letter of Support for I – 81 Corridor Project

Motion: Councilor Murphy Second: Councilor Valenti

Authorization for the Supervisor to send a letter of support for the I-81 Corridor project.

**MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF GEDDES,
COUNTY OF ONONDAGA, REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING
ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE**

WHEREAS, for the last 50 years, Interstate 81 has served as a vital backbone for the economy of Central New York, connecting commuters, businesses, tourists, visitors, and through-travelers alike; and

WHEREAS, among its important functions, Interstate 81 provides vital links with access to downtown Syracuse, all of our hospitals, Syracuse University, Destiny USA, present and future businesses and residents along 81 corridor, to business and residents within the Town of Geddes; and

WHEREAS, turning Interstate 81 to Route 481 leaves no alternative north-south Route for national defense, national disaster, and general maintenance and repairs; and

WHEREAS, although there are a variety of ways to deal with I-81's aging infrastructure, the existing "Interstate" function and designation must be preserved, because any solution which would remove I-81's vital function from its present alignment would irreparably harm the regional economy and corresponding employment dependent upon the highway network in addition to negatively impacting Geddes' neighborhoods and its residents quality of life; and

WHEREAS, redirecting I-81 traffic to Route 481, transfers what the City of Syracuse sees as a problem to Geddes; and

WHEREAS, Geddes forms a border of Syracuse and its neighborhoods already suffer the consequences of commuter traffic to and from the City of Syracuse; and

WHEREAS, increased traffic causes increased noise, dust, toxic emissions and atmospheric deposition of pollutants on land and water, business, homes, and schools; and

WHEREAS, redirecting Interstate 81 to Route 481 is not smart environmental policy because the distance traveled for through traffic and further stop and go intercity commuting traffic is increased. This is polluting, inefficient, requires the use of greater amounts of petroleum based

fuels, hurts the regional economy, and is detrimental to social welfare and the environment; and

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for the next 100 years; and

WHEREAS, it is the consensus of the Geddes Town Board that any decision reached by the NYS DOT should satisfy function first, and should be closely tailored to satisfy that function; and

WHEREAS, we support smart growth and the creation of a new and welcoming entrance to Syracuse, and the integration of the hospitals and university areas with the rest of downtown, we believe it must not be accomplished by compromising one of the most significant advantages of living, working, doing business and visiting Onondaga County;

WHEREAS, Geddes supports a balanced, comprehensive approach, a regional transportation plan is necessary to ensure smart choices are made, a plan that can provide environmental, social and economic benefits to all of Central New York, one that promotes alternative and mass transit options including alternate fuels, electric vehicles, and a light rail system; for out suburban communities are in dire need of a traffic diet as well; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Geddes Town Board memorializes its determination that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an interstate highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Supervisor of the Town of Geddes is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, to the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and to the various legislative members representing Onondaga County at the state level.

A Roll Call Vote was taken. Supervisor Falcone, Councilors Valenti and Murphy voted yes. Councilors Albrigo and Czaplicki voted no.

Ayes - 3 Nays - 2 Carried

**STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF ONONDAGA
TOWN OF GEDDES**

I, the undersigned, Clerk of the Town of Geddes, Onondaga County, New York, does hereby certify: that the enclosed is a true copy of the original resolution passed at a meeting of the Geddes Town Board on July 9, 2013.

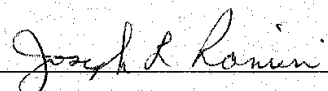
IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have set my hand and affixed the seal of said Town this 11th day of July, 2013.

S

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A

L



JOSEPH L RANIERI

TOWN OF MORAVIA

139 Main Street P.O. Box 1146 Moravia, New York 13118
Telephone (315) 497-1972

Gary Hatfield, Supervisor
Moravia, New York 13118

AUSTIN G. WEAVER, Councilman
DAVID H. DINGER, Councilman
CAROL C. WOOD, Town Clerk/Tax Collector

TERRANCE L. BAXTER, Councilman
STEVEN R. HARGETT, Councilman
STEPHEN H. MULVANEY, Highway Superintendent

RECEIVED
JUL 29 2013
TOWN OF OWASCO

RESOLUTION 1-2013

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF MORAVIA, COUNTY OF CAYUGA, REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, it is sense of the Moravia Town Board that any decision reached by the New York State Department of Transportation should satisfy function first including safety, efficiency of transportation for personal and commercial use and provide and minimize unintended consequences,

IT IS THEREFORE

RESOLVED, that it is the opinion of the Moravia Town Board that the unintended consequence of creating any significant changes to Route 81 including, creating a boulevard, could potentially alter the flow of heavy commercial traffic and increase truck traffic flow through the Town of Moravia, State Rt. 38A and thereby causing safety issues and decreasing the quality of life for Moravia residents; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Moravia Town Board requests that the New York State Department of Transportation seek a solution to the Route 81 redesign that does not pose negative effects to smaller outlying communities; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an Interstate Highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk of the Town of Moravia is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council and the Cayuga County Legislature.

Motion by Councilman Hargett, Seconded by Councilman Baxter

Roll call vote: Councilman Weaver—Yes
Councilman Dinger—Yes
Supervisor Hatfield—Yes

Councilman Hargett—Yes
Councilman Baxter—Yes

May 7, 2013

Motion Made By Mrs. Rapp

RESOLUTION NO. _____

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THIS LEGISLATURE REGARDING THE NEED TO
MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE

WHEREAS, for the last 50 years, Interstate Route 81 has served as a vital backbone for the economy of the Central New York region, connecting commuters, businesses, tourists, other visitors, and through-travelers alike; and

WHEREAS, among its important functions, I-81 provides vital access to downtown Syracuse, all of our hospitals, Syracuse University, Destiny USA and all of the residents and businesses clustered along its route; and

WHEREAS, although there are a variety of ways to deal with I-81's aging infrastructure, the existing "Interstate" function and designation must be preserved, because any solution which would remove I-81's vital function from its present alignment would irreparably cripple the regional economy and corresponding employment that has grown up around the highway network; and

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for the next 100 years; and

WHEREAS, quality of life is important to residents of Onondaga County, and few, if any, major cities offer the range of opportunities for our citizens and allow them the convenience to access those assets in 20 minutes or less; and

WHEREAS, the freedom to commute between work, home and leisure activities without fighting the gridlock of traffic is a major advantage to living in Central New York, and it is illogical and contrary to the best interests of our citizens to compromise one of our finest assets; and

WHEREAS, we have spent decades promoting Greater Syracuse as a destination for sports, medicine, the arts, education, recreation, shopping and commerce, and denigrating easy access to those destinations now would be unthinkable and counter-productive; and

WHEREAS, citizens require easy and quick access to emergency medical services; first-responders require expeditious routes for the public's safety and well-being, businesses need efficient routes for commercial transport and convenient access to customers; and

WHEREAS, many of our communities and businesses have grown-up because of I-81's function and alignment, it is imperative that we do not create new problems in an attempt to solve an existing problem, further, it is critical that the selected solution does not burden the taxpayers with unintended and costly consequences; and

WHEREAS, in 1947, when the decision was made to build I-81 through Syracuse it was concluded, "Syracuse is a city on the rise. The gridlock of traffic that now congests its' core is a major factor in restricting future growth", and it is important that we learn from the past and not repeat our mistakes; and

WHEREAS, I-81 and the New York Thruway are the economic lifeblood of our community, and cutting off one of our major arteries now would jeopardize an already fragile business climate; and

WHEREAS, it is the sense of this Legislature that any decision reached by the NYS DOT should satisfy function first, as form can and will naturally follow, and should be closely tailored to satisfy that function; and

WHEREAS, we support the creation of a new and welcoming entrance to Syracuse, and the integration of the hospitals and university areas with the rest of downtown, we believe it must not be accomplished by compromising one the most significant advantages of living, working, doing business and visiting Onondaga County; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Onondaga County Legislature hereby rejects the concept of replacing I-81 with a boulevard that halts traffic flow with a series of traffic lights; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that this Legislature memorializes its determination that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an interstate highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Clerk of this Legislature is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, to the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and to the various legislative members representing Onondaga County at the state level.

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF SALINA, COUNTY OF ONONDAGA, REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE

WHEREAS, for the last 50 years, Interstate 81 has served as a vital backbone for the economy of the Town of Salina, connecting commuters, businesses, tourists, visitors, and through-travelers alike; and

WHEREAS, among its important functions, Interstate 81 provides vital access to downtown Syracuse, all of our hospitals, Syracuse University, Destiny USA, present and future businesses in the Town of Salina and all of the residents clustered along its route; and

WHEREAS, Moody's Investors Service has assigned a Aa3 rating to a recent Town of Salina Public Improvement (Serial) Bond with the expectation of the stable tax base of \$1.6 billion continuing to experience modest growth given it's close proximity to the City of Syracuse (G.O. rated A1, negative). Acting as a transfer point between the New York State Thruway and Interstate 81, the town has a significant commercial presence (39% of tax base) consisting of hotels, gas stations, and restaurants geared in part toward travelers across these thoroughfares; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Salina sits at the "*Crossroads of New York*," where Interstate 81 and the New York State Thruway flows through Salina providing the economic lifeblood of our community. To willfully cut off one of Salina's major arteries would put at risk an already fragile economy; and

WHEREAS, although there are a variety of ways to deal with I-81's aging infrastructure, the existing "Interstate" function and designation must be preserved. We therefore support any solution which, while maintaining the I81 designation as it is routed today, affords the greatest opportunity for economic growth in Central New York which in turn will procreate new business, expansion, and ultimately employment in our Community.

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for the next 100 years; and

WHEREAS, it is the sense of the Salina Town Board that any decision reached by the NYS DOT should satisfy function first, and should be closely tailored to satisfy that function; and

WHEREAS, we support the creation of a new and welcoming entrance to Syracuse, and the integration of the hospitals and university areas with the rest of downtown, we believe it must not be accomplished by compromising one of the most significant advantages of living, working, doing business and visiting Onondaga County; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Salina Town Board memorializes its determination that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an interstate highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

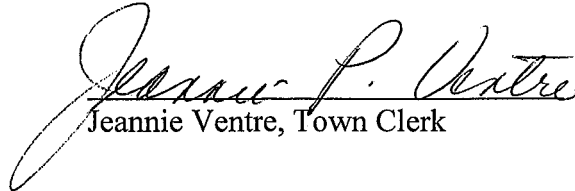
RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Town of Salina is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, to the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and to the various legislative members representing Onondaga County at the state level.

Mark A. Nicotra, Supervisor
Colleen A. Gunnip, Councilor
V. James Magnarelli, Councilor
Gerald Ciciarelli,
Michael J. Del Vecchio Jr., Councilor

Yes
Yes
Yes
Yes
Yes

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and have hereunto affixed the seal of the Town of Salina this 10th day of June, 2013.

[SEAL]


Jeannie Ventre, Town Clerk

**Town Board Meeting
May 16, 2013
7:00 p.m.**

Present: Deputy Supervisor Greenfield, Councilor Murray, Councilor McGlynn, Councilor Keyes.
Absent: Supervisor Roney, Attorney Sardino.

Also Present: Sue Murphy, Jessica Soule (Skaneateles Journal), Joe Genco (Skaneateles Press).
Charlie Major, Andy Ramsgard,

Department Reports

▪**Highway:** Deputy Supervisor Greenfield reported for Jim Card that they were doing routine spring operations.

▪**Parks:** Sue Murphy reported that last Saturday was the first day for PlayDay registration. Registration would also be held at Austin Pavilion this Saturday, May 18th and after that registration will be taken at Town Hall. She has had inquiries about renting the Austin Pavilion for different events. They are busy mowing grass and maintaining the baseball fields.

▪**Outreach, Conservation, Historian, Cemeteries:** Councilor Murray said that she is still looking for a speaker for the Memorial Day service at Mottville and Shepard Settlement Cemeteries.

▪**Codes:** Deputy Supervisor Greenfield reported for Debbie Williams that the Sign Ordinance Committee is still meeting regularly to update the ordinance.

Resolution #13-80

Abstract #13-10: Councilor Murray made a motion to authorize the payment of vouchers # 13-0586 to #13-0665 from the following funds:

General Fund:	\$ 57,256.82	Part Town:	\$ 1,819.57
Highway:	\$ 5,167.19	Highway P/T:	\$ 7,381.37
Water:	\$ 39,351.18	Sewer:	\$ 1,048.17
Sewer #6:	\$ 593.48	T & A:	\$ 1,952.55
Water #5:	\$ 50.63		

Total: \$114,620.96

Seconded by Councilor Keyes.

Councilor Keyes	Yes
Councilor McGlynn	Yes
Councilor Murray	Yes
Deputy Supervisor Greenfield	Yes
Supervisor Roney	Absent

Carried 4-0

Resolution #13-81

7:15 p.m. Public Hearing – Introductory Local Law 2013-A: Deputy Supervisor Greenfield noted receipt of the Affidavit of posting dated May 3, 2013 and publication dated May 8, 2013 and asked if anyone wished to have the notice read. With no one making that request Deputy Supervisor Greenfield said that this public hearing is to consider authorizing the Town of

Skaneateles to adopt a Local Law to amend Section 3 of the Public Officers Law of the State of New York to provide that a Town Constable of the Town of Skaneateles need not be an elector of the Town of Skaneateles so long as such person is a resident of the County of Onondaga and the State of New York, or of any adjacent or abutting County.

On a motion of Councilor McGlynn, seconded by Councilor Murray and with unanimous (4-0) affirmation of the Town Board the public hearing was opened.

Deputy Supervisor Greenfield asked if anyone wished to comment in favor, in opposition or had any comment on the proposed Local Law. No one came forward.

On a motion of Councilor McGlynn, seconded by Councilor Keyes and with unanimous (4-0) affirmation of the Town Board the public hearing was closed.

Councilor McGlynn made a motion to adopt Local Law 2013-A to be known as Local Law 1 of 2013 "A Local Law Relative to the Residency Requirement of Constables for the Town of Skaneateles." Seconded by Councilor Murray.

Councilor Keyes	Yes
Councilor McGlynn	Yes
Councilor Murray	Yes
Deputy Supervisor Greenfield	Yes
Supervisor Roney	Absent

Carried 4-0

Resolution #13-82

Authorization to Hire Lifeguards and PlayDay Counselors: On the motion of Councilor McGlynn, seconded by Councilor Murray and with unanimous (4-0) affirmation of the Town Board the following Lifeguards and Counselors for PlayDay are authorized to be hired for the 2013 season:

Lifeguards - 2013

Keri Steves
Amanda Steves
James Carro
Katie Ganley
Dana Ganley
Allison Moran
John O'Sullivan
Michael Raymond
Matt Gasperek
Elise Tarolli
John Dawley

Counselors for Playday – 2013

Zach Ross
Caryn Crary
Samantha Lindgren
Julia Judge

Shaun McConnaghy
Matt Carvalho
Erin Herr
Claudia Morris
Katy Delaney
Conor Herr
Mark Hogan

Jordan Road Railroad Bridge: Charlie Major said he was here to discuss the recent decision to allow the County DOT to remove the railroad bridge next to the Jordan Road Bridge in Skaneateles Falls. He said he is objecting to the removal because it is town property that was acquired for a specific purpose by the Town. The bridge was previously used for a railroad crossing. The tracks leading up to it start in the Village and go to the Elbridge Town Line. When the tracks were removed the intent was for a future nature trail. He said that the current County bridge is approximately three feet on the railroad property now owned by the Town. The County wanted to remove another bridge several years ago when Bill Pavlus was the Supervisor near Visions Drive, and they were refused permission. He said the Town went through a lot to acquire this property for future use as a walkway along Jordan Road. He said that there are currently three bridges that are the same age as the one being considered to be removed that are now in use on the Charlie Major Nature Trail. Those bridges had new tops put on by the Town's Highway Department and are still in use today. He said there is nothing structurally wrong with this bridge that would prevent the same use. He suggested looking into the beautification of the northern entrance to the Town just as the Town did with the western gateway. Charlie Major suggested that a new waterline was added several years ago along Jordan Road and because we owned the property where the railroad tracks were the waterline could be put in without tearing up Jordan Road. This saved a lot of money. He asked the Board just to say no to the County.

The Town Board agreed to table their decision on this until they had an opportunity to discuss this with Onondaga County and Jim Card.

Western Gateway Final Landscaping and Beautification: Councilor Murray said that she needs to discuss the landscaping with Jim Card after he returns from out of town. She would like to get together with the Garden Club so that when people call with donations she is able to take care of their requests.

Resolution #13-83

Route 81 Resolution: Deputy Supervisor Greenfield read the proposed resolution regarding the need to maintain the existing alignment of Interstate 81 through Syracuse.

Councilor Keyes made a motion that it is the sense of the Skaneateles Town Board that any decision reached by the NYS Department of Transportation should satisfy function first, as form can and will naturally follow, and should be closely tailored to satisfy that function; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, that it is the opinion of the Skaneateles Town Board that unintended consequences will arise from creating any significant changes to the configuration of I-81, particularly creating a boulevard that halts traffic flow with a series of traffic lights, and will likely alter the flow of heavy commercial traffic and increase truck traffic through the Town of

Skaneateles via State Routes 41, 41A and 20 compromising the safety and well-being of its residents and negatively impacting their quality of life; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Town Board rejects the concept of replacing I-81 with a boulevard that halts traffic flow with a series of traffic lights; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that this Town Board requests that the NYS Department of Transportation seek a solution to the I-81 redesign that will not impose negative effects to smaller, outlying communities that have not developed in a manner to handle increased commercial traffic; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Town Board memorializes its determination that the exiting I-81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an interstate highway must not be removed or impaired; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk of the Town of Skaneateles is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, to the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and to legislative officials at the County, State and Federal levels who represent the Town of Skaneateles or hold leadership positions.

Seconded by Councilor Murray.

Councilor Keyes	Yes
Councilor McGlynn	Yes
Councilor Murray	Yes
Deputy Supervisor Greenfield	Yes
Supervisor Roney	Absent

Carried 4-0

Resolution #13-84

Authorization to Sell E-Z Passes – Town Clerk’s Office: Janet Aaron reported that Regina Bulman, Sales Manager for NYS Thruway Authority E-Z Pass was at the NYS Town Clerks Conference providing information that will now allow Town Clerks to sell E-Z Passes in their office. Basically the Town would be approved as a vendor and once approved would be required to purchase a minimum of 1 box of 25 tags at \$525. The cost to the Town per tag would be \$21 and the Town would sell them for \$25. It provides some revenue to the Town but more importantly provides another service to our residents. She said that Attorney Sardino reviewed the vendor application and resolution. She requested that the Town Board consider authorizing the Town Clerk’s Office to sell the EZ Pass tags.

Councilor McGlynn made a motion to authorize the Town Clerk to submit the application to the NYS Thruway Authority to sell EZ Passes and to authorize the expenditure of \$525 to purchase the passes, once approved. Seconded by Councilor Murray.

Councilor Keyes	Yes
Councilor McGlynn	Yes
Councilor Murray	Yes

Deputy Supervisor Greenfield	Yes
Supervisor Roney	Absent

Carried 4-0

Resolution #13-85

Surplus Equipment: Deputy Supervisor Greenfield reported that the surplus equipment that was returned from the Community Center is now being advertised for sale. Interested parties can view the equipment at the Austin Pavilion between 8 a.m. and noon on May 31, 2013 and June 1, 2013. All bids must be received at the Town Hall on or before 10 a.m. on June 4th.

Resolution #13-86

Minutes of 4/18/13: On a motion of Deputy Supervisor Greenfield the minutes of April 18, 2013 were accepted as presented. Seconded by Councilor Murray.

Councilor Keyes	Yes
Councilor McGlynn	Yes
Councilor Murray	Yes
Deputy Supervisor Greenfield	Yes
Supervisor Roney	Absent

Carried 4-0

Resolution #13-87

Ice Rental - Austin Pavilion: Councilor McGlynn reported that he and Supervisor Roney met with Youth Hockey representatives to discuss the next season use of the ice arena at Austin Pavilion. Last year the ice arena startup date was October 1st. The early date is a challenge both for the staff that has to maintain the ice with daily scraping to remove ice formations from humidity and extra moisture due to unpredictable warm October weather, to the increased utility cost maintaining the ice temperature in what is considered basically an outdoor rink. Davis Mechanical who maintain the chillers recommends not starting up until Thanksgiving. Councilor McGlynn said that the Town realizes that this would be impossible because of the demand for ice early in the season. Therefore, he is recommending a startup date of October 16, 2013 and said that this is also acceptable to Youth Hockey.

Councilor McGlynn said that the Town Board also has to consider the hourly ice rates that were also discussed with Youth Hockey. They realize that the increased costs of starting up early require an increase in the hourly rate. Last year the Town charged contracted residents \$80 per hour. He said last year the Town lost \$1,800 on the operation of the Arena. Councilor Keyes said that it would be nice to at least break even.

Deputy Supervisor Greenfield made a motion to authorize that the ice arena startup date at Austin Pavilion will be October 16, 2013. Seconded by Councilor McGlynn.

Councilor Keyes	Yes
Councilor McGlynn	Yes
Councilor Murray	Yes
Deputy Supervisor Greenfield	Yes

Supervisor Roney

Absent

Carried 4-0

Resolution #13-88

Councilor McGlynn made a motion to set the hourly contracted ice time for residents at \$95 per hour beginning October 16, 2013 and \$110 per hour for nonresident contracted ice time. Seconded by Councilor Keyes.

Councilor Keyes

Yes

Councilor McGlynn

Yes

Councilor Murray

Yes

Deputy Supervisor Greenfield

Yes

Supervisor Roney

Absent

Carried 4-0

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Janet L. Aaron". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Janet" being more prominent than the last name "Aaron".

Janet L. Aaron
Town Clerk

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF SENNETT, COUNTY OF CAYUGA, REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, it is the sense of the Sennett Town Board that any decision reached by the New York State Department of Transportation should satisfy function first including safety, efficiency of transportation for personal and commercial use and provide and minimize unintended consequences.

IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED, that it is the opinion of the Sennett Town Board that the unintended consequences of creating any significant changes to Route 81 including, creating a boulevard, could potentially alter the flow of heavy commercial traffic and increase truck traffic flow through the Town of Sennett, State Rt. 20 and thereby causing safety issues and decreasing the quality of life for Sennett residents; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Sennett Town Board Requests that the New York State Department of Transportation seek a solution to the Route 81 redesign that does not pose negative effects to smaller outlying communities; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an Interstate Highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk of the Town of Sennett is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council and the Cayuga County Legislature.

Roll call vote: Councilman Eades yes, Councilman O'Connell yes, Councilman Gage yes, Councilman Adrian yes, and Supervisor Herrick yes. Carried.

From: [Save81 Community](#)
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Subject: Save81.org"s Formal Submission Part 4 of 4
Date: Friday, January 17, 2014 3:48:49 PM
Attachments: [MFA Save81.org pt 4.pdf](#)

To Whom It May Concern:

Attached you will find part 4 of 4 of Save81.org's official submission for the initial I-81 scoping comment period. Please confirm receipt of these documents.



Economic Impacts of Proposed Replacement of I-81 through Central Syracuse with a Boulevard

January 17, 2014

Summary

This preliminary assessment has been prepared to evaluate the long-term macro-economic effects expected to result from the de-designation of a portion of I-81 through the City of Syracuse and replacing it with a boulevard or similar at-grade roadway (the “Boulevard Option”). The report prepared by Maser Consulting P.A. dated January 16, 2014 should be referred to for an evaluation of the traffic consequences of the Boulevard Option.

As discussed in greater detail below, the Boulevard Option would:

- 1) Induce sprawl, violating “green” and “smart growth” principles by encouraging the relocation of existing development to undeveloped areas and by encouraging the abandonment of existing developed areas; and
- 2) Result in a loss of almost 10% (7,114) of the existing full-time jobs in the existing I-81 corridor.

Economic Impact of Induced Sprawl

Rather than removing an urban barrier, the removal of I-81 and replacement with an at grade boulevard would impede local and regional connections, resulting in urban decay in the central areas serviced by current I-81 and induced sprawl along the I-481 corridor. Until this option is eliminated from consideration, economic stagnation will loom in the downtown area and areas south and north along the I-81 corridor, as businesses wait to see if the value of their properties will be damaged or destroyed.

The Boulevard Option would substantially impede vehicular movement into and through Syracuse. Connectivity would be adversely affected in that access into and out of the central area and between peripheral areas would be restricted. Vehicular and pedestrian movements within Syracuse would be restricted by widened and congested surface streets. These traffic consequences are detailed further in the above referenced Maser Consulting report.

The removal of I-81 would sever northern and southern portions of the city from each other and from the city center, destroying the connectivity that Syracuse residents and businesses



Market & Feasibility Advisors

currently enjoy. The loss of the current I-81/I-690 interchange would further segment each quadrant of the community. Consequently, new travel patterns would emerge as individuals seek a continuous trip to avoid the frequent stops and congestion created by the boulevard.

Under this scenario, north – south vehicular travel would shift to other unimpeded routes, principally to current I-481 and new suburban interstate interchanges, resulting in greater vehicle miles travelled and sprawl. Businesses in the northern and southern areas would suffer as their markets shrink. Employment and tax generation would likely be impacted. Ultimately, businesses and residents would choose to relocate along the current I-481 corridor to regain the connectivity they currently enjoy, inducing substantial sprawl outside of the city and decay within its core. This sprawl would tax the infrastructure of suburban communities that were never intended to serve as commercial hubs. Communities that host these interchanges might not necessarily receive a net benefit. As businesses and services exit the central area, creating the need for expansion of infrastructure and roads, water and sewer, schools and amenities in suburban communities, the well-documented cost of growth would likely result in changing conditions where taxpayers in suburban Syracuse communities would be unexpectedly impacted. Growth might also result around the I-690 and I-90 interchange to the west and the current I-81/I-481 interchange to the north.

It is ironic that those touting the Boulevard Option champion it as a “green” and “New-Urbanist” concept when in reality it is the opposite. Severing the northern and southern communities from the rest of the metropolitan area would result in longer drives, suburban relocation, and the loss in value of existing infrastructure and residential patterns leading to decreased property values, decreased property tax collection and dislocation of existing businesses and facilities.

By way of example, demand would be created for new hotel rooms in the area of the current I-690/I-481 interchange merely because the location of the through-interstate had been relocated. This would be sprawl without actual growth, which would result in the waste and decline of current businesses, residential and hotel properties around I-81.

The fleeing of hotels from the I-81/downtown area would also negatively impact convention business, as this business relies on its proximate hotel inventory in room count and variety by market segment. Conventions are a critical part of a city’s tourism economic impact. Each convention attendee spends hundreds of dollars in the host community beyond hotels during their visits. Syracuse already faces challenges in this business. New limitations in room count and variety by market segment would severely damage convention viability.

The Boulevard Option would place pressure on Hancock International Airport and the Intermodal Transportation Center because both would be incongruously removed from the Interstate highway system to and through the community.



Market & Feasibility Advisors

Were the Boulevard Option to be constructed, the current I-481 corridor would eventually become the new center of commerce, as it effectively became a bypass highway. Time and again bypass roads with similar configurations have been shown to draw community growth away from central areas resulting in sprawl and less efficient deployment of community assets.

Removal of the Boulevard Option from consideration now is critical, because in the meantime, no substantial investment along either the current I-81 or I-481 corridors will occur because of the far-reaching and dramatic effects that such a decision would have. At any time this would be damaging but is especially so at this time as the national economy continues to emerge from recession and the credit supporting investment in these corridors will simply go elsewhere. This economic stagnation will loom for as long as the Boulevard Option remains on the table. Early elimination of this option would minimize the damage caused by such stagnation.

Corridor Employment Impact

The greatest and most valuable concentration of employment in the Syracuse area lies within one mile of I-81 between the northern and southern I-481 interchanges. While only 17 percent of the region's population lives in this area, 30 percent of the jobs are located here. The core Downtown and Hill area contains 44% of the employment in the corridor. The efficient movement of people into and out of this corridor and, more specifically, the core Downtown and Hill areas, is critical to the functioning of the City.

Substantial portions of the industries which drive the local and regional economy are located in this corridor, including:

- 39% of the finance, insurance and real estate industry employment – professionals who often travel throughout the region during their workday;
- 50% of the health services employment, which requires unimpeded inbound and outbound connectivity at all times;
- 59% of utility employment, which requires unimpeded connectivity, especially in inclement conditions;
- 38% of communications employment, which requires unimpeded inbound and outbound connectivity, especially in inclement conditions;
- 34% of transportation industry employment, which requires unimpeded inbound and outbound connectivity;
- 35% of government employment, inclusive of police, fire and other first responders;
- 56% of legal services employment;



Market & Feasibility Advisors

- 27% of entertainment employment, which rely on regional connectivity;
- 20% of retail employment, which rely on high traffic flows and easy access for business;
- 16% of hotels and lodging employment – which rely on tourism traffic;
- 17% of construction employment and
- 21% of wholesale trade.

In fact, most of these businesses, and therefore the employment, is located in this corridor for the very reason that it has unparalleled connections throughout the region.

The severing of I-81 would result in unacceptable traffic conditions in the Downtown and the Hill areas while at the same time channeling Interstate highway traffic away from the city core. The above industries are dependent on existing I-81 to effectively connect the north-side, south-side and downtown to the entire region. Were this connectivity lost, the value of locating a business in and investing in the corridor would be substantially eroded. Consequently, employment in all sectors, regardless of their degree of dependency on I-81 for personnel or resources would be substantially deteriorated. Based on our analysis, we project replacing I-81 with a boulevard in the area contemplated by the DOT would result in a net loss of 7,114 jobs which is a loss of almost 10% of the jobs in what is now the I-81 corridor. The chart below provides a further industry by industry breakdown:



Potential I-81 Corridor Impact¹

	2012 Corridor Employment	Dependency on Interstate for Personnel or Resources	2012 Corridor Employment without Interstate	Impact
Retail Trade	9,852	Moderate	8,867	(985)
Fire	6,105	High	5,189	(916)
Hotels & Lodging	453	Very High	227	(226)
Automotive Services	779	Low	740	(39)
Entertainment	1,202	High	1,022	(180)
Health Services	15,010	Low	14,260	(750)
Legal Services	1,357	High	1,153	(204)
Education & Libraries	9,372	Low	8,903	(469)
Other Services	12,225	Moderate	11,003	(1,222)
Agriculture & Mining	258	Low	245	(13)
Construction	2,338	Moderate	2,104	(234)
Manufacturing	3,455	Moderate	3,110	(345)
Transportation	3,013	High	2,561	(452)
Communication	1,027	Moderate	924	(103)
Utility	1,660	Moderate	1,494	(166)
Wholesale Trade	2,603	High	2,213	(390)
Government	8,567	Low	8,147	(420)
Total	79,276		72,162	
Net Gain (Loss)				(7,114)

Conclusion

The Boulevard Option must be removed from further consideration, as it is currently deterring investment in the corridor area in anticipation of its displacing impacts. The sprawl and job loss associated with the Boulevard Option would be a crippling blow to the entire metro Syracuse area.

¹ Source ESRI & MFA; Central I-81 Corridor is a two mile wide corridor with I-81 at its center.

RECEIVED SEP 03 2014

RONALD ALLEN SCACCIA
STATE TOWER BUILDING
109 SOUTH WARREN STREET, SUITE 402
SYRACUSE, NEW YORK 13202
(315) 422-4000

September 2, 2014

I-81 Viaduct Project
NYS Department of Transportation
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, New York 13202

Re: **COMMENTS**

To whom it may concern:

I attended the Neighborhood Meeting held at The MOST on July 23, 2014, but had to leave for another meeting shortly before the end of the Q&A period. Unfortunately, I did not realize until most recently that comments could also be submitted concerning alternatives the DOT were no longer considering.

The Draft Scoping Report dated June 2014 (hereinafter, "DSR") identifies Alternative O-2 ("West Street" a/k/a "The Salt City Circuit") as "not recommended for further study." DSR 3-36. I concur; however, it appears to me that a viable West Street Alternative has not yet been submitted or considered.

Approaching Syracuse from the South, I-81 should be re-routed to follow the New York Susquehanna and Western Railroad (hereinafter, "Railroad") in an elevated manner from the existing crossing near Van Buren Street to West Street, and then, still in an elevated manner, to a modified and improved West Street/I-690/I-81 exchange system that would allow full exchange between I-690 and I-81. No entrance or exit ramps would exist between the Van Buren Street area and the improved 690/81 exchange, but the existing ramping between the Van Buren Street area and Adams Street would be retained.

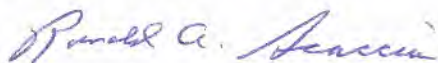
The existing I-81 viaduct between Van Buren Street and I-690 would be removed, and planning for any improvements to the areas left behind would be deferred until after the new route has been opened.

Please note that the Railroad would not be affected. A new viaduct, fully improved to current standards, would be constructed over the existing Railroad, and continue over West Street to the improved exchange system. I have walked the entire length of this new route, and it would involve only minor acquisition and/or exchange of rights and property.

I graduated from Union College in Schenectady, New York, with majors in Theoretical Mathematics and Economics. Connectivity with the hospitals, Syracuse University and DestinyUSA would be not only maintained, but likely improved.

Thanking you for the opportunity to submit this ever so brief comment, and hoping this will result in new interest in using the existing Railroad and West Street corridors to solve the immediate problem, I am,

Very truly yours,



Ronald A. Scaccia

RAS/wp

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: Will Schmeider

Address: 4795 Bear Rd Apt 116

City: Liverpool

State: NY Zip: 13088

Phone: ()

Email: wschmeider@gmail.com

Comments: MUST KEEP ABOVE SURFACE I-81; can't double Albany traffic or block side st.
Consider Washington/Fayette as One-Way from West St to beyond Univ (where
Adams/Harrison end one-way): Washington WB, Fayette EB
Consider upgrading Bear St. or Thawthwaite to interstate standards as alternative spur to
completing 81/690 at main intersection (similar to 270/Beltway in DC)
Expand I 481 lanes between 690 & 90, even if done as longer exit-only lanes
Possible expansion of 690 to eight lanes past of I-81?
Full exit lane from 690 to Exit 18 on 81, one building in the way. Merging causes issue!
Downtown movability is sufficient; could handle more going N/S from/to 81 north of 690
Enforce "black the box" laws to prevent gridlock.
Install noise barriers along I 81 viaduct near residences

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name: Heather Schroeder

Address: 125 Westminster Ave

City: Syracuse

State: NY Zip: 13210

Phone: (202) 641-0438 Email: hrs9@cornell.edu

Comments:

As a real estate developer who uses state and federal funding, I must complete environmental impact statements attesting to hazards in the environment that may affect the quality of life of future users of our buildings. These environmental hazards include proximity to railroads and airports - both known sources of noise pollution.

NYDOT has a unique opportunity to mitigate a major noise pollutant by further investigating - and perhaps pursuing - the tunnel options. I would agree that the long-term impact of a tunnel has the lowest environmental impact on the ~~ground~~ and ground-level users (residents, employees, bicyclists, pedestrians).

I sincerely hope that NYDOT's cost-benefit analysis factors in such long-term costs (pollution, noise inaccessibility, severed neighborhoods), in addition to monetary expenses, in evaluating each of the options.

Mail comments to:

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New York State Department of Transportation
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Syracuse, NY 13202

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: Andrew Schuster
Address: 431 Whittier Ave City: Syracuse State: NY Zip: 13204
Phone: (315) 484-8826 Email: aschust@gmail.com

Comments:

I think its extremely important that form
based development principles are included in
the testing of each alternative's viability.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

**Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014**

Mail comments to:
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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Name: Kevin Schwab

Address: 1902 Euclid Ave

City: Syr

State: NY Zip: 13224

Phone: ()

Email: _____

Comments: I have concerns about the impacts of
the viaduct options and tunnel options when it
comes to neighborhood demolition. This is
particularly the case with the I-190/I-81 connections
in the Franklin Square area.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name:

VITO SCISCIOLI

Address:

205 ALANSON ROAD

City:

SYRACUSE

State:

NY

Zip:

13207

Phone: (315) 472-1966

Email:

vsciscioli@twcny.rr.com

Comments:

WHATEVER "OPTION" INCLUDING DOING NOTHING NEEDS TO CONSIDER THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE FACILITY AND TO PROVIDE FOR ROUTINE AND ENHANCED MAINTENANCE. NOT ONLY DOES THIS MEAN "AIR QUALITY" (A PROBLEM ASSOCIATED WITH THE EXISTING FACILITY) BUT ALSO THE AESTHETIC IMPACT OF WHAT IS CREATED. THE CURRENT NEPA PROCESS MAY NOT ADDRESS THIS LATER. BUT THE NEGATIVE EFFECT OF THE OVERPASS, THE DIRT AND DEBRIS AND GENERALLY UNAPPEALING AND UGLY AREA UNDER THE ELEVATED ROAD HAS CONTRIBUTED SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE NEGATIVE IMPRESSION OF I-81. A HIGHER STANDARD MUST BE SET TO MITIGATE THIS NEGATIVE INFLUENCE NO MATTER BOULEVARD, OVERPASS, OR OTHER OPTION IS SELECTED. COCKEMATE AGREEMENTS EXIST NOW BUT THEY ARE DEFICIENT SINCE THEY HAVE PRODUCED THE RESULTS WE NOW SEE - INCLUDING A TERRIBLE

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

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New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation



STRETCH OF ALMOND NORTH BOUND FROM ADAMS TO HARRISON). ALSO THE FEDERAL RESTRICTION ON USE UNDER THE OVERPASS LIMITS THE IMAGINATION OF WHAT COULD BE. PARKING LOTS UNLANDSCAPED AND DEAD ZONES OF DEBRIS AND DIRTY ASPHALT ~~SEWER~~ SURFACES ARE MORE THAN UNAPPEALING - THEY ^{ARE} BLEAK, ~~AND~~ ABANDONED, DARK AND A PLACE HUMANS AVOID FOR THAT REASON ALONE A BOULEVARD WOULD HAVE MORE POTENTIAL OF BRINGING VITALITY, COLOR, LIGHT AND MORE BEAUTY TO THE AREA - REVEALING WHAT TRAFFIC COUNTS SHOW. PEDESTRIANS WOULD FIND IT MORE INVITING.

HOWEVER, EVEN A BOULEVARD WITHOUT ENHANCED LANDSCAPING AND A MAINTENANCE BUDGET TO SUPPORT IT WOULD BE UNSUSTAINABLE. WITNESS THE WEST STREET ARTERIAL. I DOUBT NEPA ON ^{SEVERA} ~~SEVERA~~ WEIGHT THESE CONCERNS. IF THAT IS NOT A PART OF THE SCOPE TELL THE COMMUNITY THE FEAR AND STATE DON'T SPEAK TO BEAUTY AND LET THE COMMUNITY ADDRESS THIS NO MATTER WHAT THE ^{FEDERAL} ~~NATIONAL~~ 60% OR STATE DO IN THE NATIONAL OR STATE INTEREST.

Comments (continued from front):

I-81 Viaduct Project
Comment Sheet

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Name: Jolene Weaver

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: () _____ Email: jolene.weaver@gmail.com

Comments:

/ LIKE:

THE DEPRESSED HIGHWAY

- HAS OPPORTUNITIES FOR
UNIQUE DESIGN ON WALLS
- PARK-LIKE OVER PASSES
- BRIDGES/WALKWAYS COULD HAVE
"GREENHOUSES" AS COVERS TO
PROTECT/ENLIVEN PEDESTRIANS
(THINK MINNEAPOLIS/WEATHER) YUK

THE SALT CITY CIRCUIT

- ALLOWS FOR A GOOD FLOW
- MAY BE GOOD FOR "ENCIRCLING"
THE CITY CENTER
- ★ COULD BE BAD IF THERE IS
MASSIVE PROPERTY ACQUISITION.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

I'M PROUD OF OUR COMMUNITY - THAT PEOPLE CARE ABOUT THIS

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Name:

Reggie Seigler

Address:

516 East 1st

City:

Syr

State:

NY Zip: 13202

Phone: (315) 470-4127 Email:

RSeigler@Syrhousing.org

Comments:

How come none of your Artists' dealings

Show the impact to people south of Adams St...

As the south as Calhoun - Pleasant and Lyndhurst

The area around exit 17 before with

Area will be completely cut off from services

Which are all located currently to the north + east

Where there 81 North daily for access to some
hospitals, dining establishments, shopping etc.

Why no talk about impact to those citizens?

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) 181-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation



"History's Hometown"

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JAN 12 2014

Operating Division

CITY OF AUBURN

January 9, 2014

Douglas A. Selby
City Manager

Mr. Jonathan McDade
New York Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Building
7th Floor, Room 719
Clinton Avenue and N. Pearl Street
Albany, New York 12207

Ms. Debra Nelson
NYS DOT
50 Wolf Road
Albany, New York 12232

Re: I-81 Project – Syracuse Area Corridor

Dear Mr. McDade and Ms. Nelson:

On behalf of the City of Auburn, we thank the Federal Highway Administration and New York State Department of Transportation for allowing us the opportunity to formally submit our input for consideration in deciding the future of Interstate 81 in Central New York. This is a watershed moment for the entire region, and as such, it is crucial that those directly affected have a stake in the decision making process.

In this submission you will find the City of Auburn's resolution requesting that the New York State Department of Transportation seek a solution to the redesign of the Interstate 81 that will not pose negative effects to smaller outlying communities, particularly the City of Auburn, and that Interstate 81 function and designation as an interstate highway must not be removed or impaired.. These negative effects include declined economic growth, increased traffic congestion, longer and more stressful commutes, and compromised public safety.

We hope the Department of Transportation and other decision-makers will thoroughly consider our viewpoints when deciding the best plan for Interstate 81. Our resolution should be made part of the FHWA/NYS DOT NEPA and SEQRA record. While we are open to many of the ideas presented, we firmly believe the best option will maintain Interstate 81's current function and designation as an interstate highway through Syracuse. If FHWA and NYSDOT determine to continue to pursue the proposed boulevard option, the critical issues raised in this resolution need to be carefully and thoroughly weighed by FHWA and NYSDOT.

Thank you,


Douglas A. Selby
City Manager

COUNCIL RESOLUTION #95 of 2013

**MEMORIALIZING THE NEW YORK STATE
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION REGARDING
THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT
OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE**

By Councilor

Camardo

August 15, 2013

WHEREAS, the New York State Department of Transportation is considering the possibility of significant changes to Interstate 81 through the city of Syracuse which could potentially alter the flow of heavy commercial traffic and truck traffic flow through the city of Auburn; and

WHEREAS, the alteration of the commercial traffic and increased truck traffic could pose negative effects to smaller outlying communities, including the city of Auburn; and

WHEREAS, the City of Auburn does understand that Interstate 81 is an important route for the State of New York, however, the Department of Transportation must recognize that any significant change which increases commercial and truck traffic through the city of Auburn could create safety issues and affect the quality of life for its residents.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Auburn City Council does request that the New York State Department of Transportation seek a solution to the redesign of Interstate 81 that will not pose negative effects to smaller outlying communities, particularly the city of Auburn, and that the Interstate 81 function and designation as an interstate highway must not be removed or impaired; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the City of Auburn is directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and the Cayuga County Legislature.

Seconded by Councilor

Ruzicka

	AYES	NOES
Councilor Graney	✓	
Councilor Camardo	✓	
Councilor Smith	✓	
Councilor Ruzicka	✓	
Mayor Quill	✓	

CARRIED AND ADOPTED

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name:

Kenny Shepard

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone: ()

Email:

Comments:

The tollroad is a good choice because it will be less of a barrier than the elevated highway through the city.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) 181-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name:

Cindy Shippers

Address:

4122 Malaya Rd

City:

Syr

State:

NY Zip: 13215

Phone: ()

492-0677 Email:

Comments:

My opinion is to use a double decker system of some sort. Starting back by Brighton start (let say over first) a rampway to an upper level where the people passing thru the city would take. Then that upper level would continue to around say just before the Teal Ave exit where it would lower back to the ~~the~~ current highway. Then anyone leaving downtown on the current on ramp by Harrison would not have problems crossing to 81N or 690 W and join up with the by pass people by Teal as another lane. ~~Do~~ Same type of thing for the 81N and 690 W.

This same idea might work where the by pass people go underground (by Brighton) and the local traffic be on ground level. The by pass people would then come above ground to ground level or over to the current 690 Highway.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name: Shanti Shoemaker

Address: 614 1/2 1st St City: Syr State: NY Zip: 13204

Phone: () Email: sshoemaker

Comments: I am in favor of the Boulevard option because
it removes the unsightly barrier of I-81 overpasses and
it allows for the best complete streets options.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) 181-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

Shults, Greg_09-25-2013

From: Greg Shults [greg.shults@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, September 25, 2013 4:35 PM
To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities
Subject: Suggestion for 81, through Downtown Syracuse
Dual Deck, one for northbound traffic and the other for southbound. This will allow for the footprint to remain the same. This would also allow for higher traffic flow and perhaps the addition of an Emergency Vehicles Only or HOV lane

August 18, 2014

NYSDOT Region 3
I-81 Viaduct Project
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202
Attn: Mark Frechette, Project Director
I-81 Viaduct Project

RECEIVED SEP 02 2014

RE: Scoping Process Comment; June 2014 Draft Scoping Report

Dear Mr. Frechette:

As the Executive Director of the Syracuse Housing Authority I would like to present the following comments concerning the Draft Scoping Report that NYSDOT published in June of 2014.

Comments on the Overall Report

Concerning the Overall Report, I was dismayed at the lack of attention to any detail to the project south of Adams Street. This is the community in which the Syracuse Housing Authority has property and a residential community on both the east and west sides of the current viaduct. Specifically, the at-grade and replacement alternative speak to major structural possibilities including ramps and interchanges.

Most notably, here were no artistic renderings of the proposed ramp down to Jackson Street, the proposed new interchange at MLK East or Burt Street, or anything south of Adams Street in the report. Why? These are necessary to understand the impact on that mostly residential community.

For all At Grade solutions the scoping report speaks of a ramp from existing southern elevation origin to nearly Adams Street – no other options looked at? This appears to be a ramp which will keep almost 1/3 of the viaduct above-grade but the report does not address if this will be a greater barrier to the neighborhood, its livability and its walkability, or if it will mitigate the current impediment that the structure presents.

This ramp solution also does not address how the current Almond Street traffic south of Adams Street will access University Hill up Van Buren, for traffic coming from the north. The draft references traffic coming down McBride and Burt Streets. But this is a residential community

on McBride, with children, school buses, a Parks and Recreation Center... not really a commuter road.

Concerning the Viaduct Replacement solution (specifically V-2 Alternative) where is mention of an interchange at Martin Luther King East or Burt Street. What would these look like? How will they effect the community? What property must be taken? What changes to local traffic patterns will occur?

With the Viaduct Replacement solution which promote the elevation of the viaduct up higher from Martin Luther King East on the southern end up to Adams Street, what would the noise of traffic impact be. There is no mention of what would be apparent; that the sound of traffic would travel further and have more room underneath to resonate.

And lastly, each option, except rehabilitation, speaks to buildings being taking and demolished, but no indication of where these may occur. Can more detail be offered? It is hard to specifically comment on the direct and immediate impact to the Syracuse Housing Authority when we know very little about this possibility.

Comments concerning the General Scope of the Project

In keeping with the direction of concern from our Board of Commissioners, I would like to provide additional comments to the following areas of concern and issues which need to be resolved by NYSDOT during their environmental review process:

1. Address the needs of Syracuse Housing Authority's housing vulnerable population living in close proximity to the highway.
2. The need for and timing of transit solutions to be put in place prior to the I-81 construction.
3. Vibration and other significant (e.g. noise, access) environmental impacts on all buildings, communities, and institutions during construction.
4. Safety: Will there be emergency access for fire, medical, and law enforcement to communities along the corridor during construction; will there be impediments to emergency medical access to the hospitals in the area.

Syracuse Housing Authority Vulnerable Population

The Syracuse Housing Authority is extremely concerned with the scope and need for temporary and/or permanent relocation which may occur as part of any highway replacement project. I-81 is lined by important public housing projects such as Pioneer Homes and Toomey-Abbot Towers. The Syracuse Housing Authority understands that given the close proximity and limited access to some of these units that even if they are not required for the ultimate solution chosen there will likely be requirement to

relocate tenants during the period of construction as noise, dust, vibration and limited access render them uninhabitable while the construction is under way. Significant lead time, funding for temporary housing, and funding for restoration of housing after temporary vacancy is an absolute requirement in order to comply with Federal Executive Directives for Environmental Justice concerning the relocation of any individuals and families.

Many of these current residents have physical limitations and/ or no vehicles and need to live near medical services, jobs in downtown or University Hill. Many of these residents are elderly, have mobility impairments or other special needs. We ask that NYSDOT provide a minimum of a year's notice to help us find suitable relocation units for these tenants and immediately engage all of the relevant state agencies such as Housing and Community Renewal to form a task force with NYSDOT and local public and private leaders to devise a workable relocation scenario.

As part of any solution NYSDOT should build into project funding sufficient funds to restore units that had to be temporarily closed to facilitate construction. Experience has proven that units such as these are expensive to renovate and re-occupy once they have been taken out of service for long periods of time.

In Place Transit Solutions

With the level of disruption likely to be caused during construction, no matter what option is selected, it is imperative that a series of workable transit solutions be put in place and working prior to the I-81 construction. There is also a great opportunity in that if there is ever a chance to substantially increase the number of transit riders the construction of the interstate provides that opportunity. To address that issue, we ask that the NYSDOT also immediately convene a committee of state and local transit experts, as well as major employers located close to the construction in order to plan for reasonable transit alternatives.

While the Syracuse Housing Authority does not recommend specific solutions to transit solutions, we do understand that light-rail, rapid-transit, and park and ride solutions have been studied in detail, and sometimes implemented with success by the greater Syracuse community.

In order to keep our community functioning, medical services not disrupted, and our neighborhoods not overrun by traffic, parked cars, and other impediments to a quality life by additional vehicle concerns, such solutions for the construction and permanent completion phase of this project need to be considered and issues mitigated in the environmental review.

Vibration and other Significant Environmental Impacts on Buildings

With a 23 story high rise building, and over two dozen low-rise 2-4 story buildings along the viaduct footprint, the Syracuse Housing Authority is concerned about the impact on the physical structures through any demolition and construction phases.

In addition, our institutional neighbors who provide employment and medical services to our residential population possess the same concerns. Again, this is an issue which needs to be considered and issues mitigated in the environmental review.

Safety: Emergency Access

On the east side of the viaduct, the Syracuse Housing Authority has 308 apartments of elderly and disabled residents in Toomey Abbott Tower, and 134 units of family housing. The access to all of these units comes from roads and drives off Almond Street (under the current viaduct). With the length of the demolition and construction project ahead, there is great concern about daily access, and especially emergency access by fire/medical/police to these residents.

The Syracuse Housing Authority will not accept at any time a singular route for entrance and egress, and needs the environmental review to truly address this issue in detail.

Overall, the Draft Scoping Report from June of 2014 is a good starting point for discussion, study, and a much more detailed environmental review process. And ultimately, the final outcome should be one which is viable and which enhances the residential community, provides greater pedestrian access through the neighborhood, and affords the opportunity for further housing and economic development for those who live there.

Sincerely,



William J. Simmons
Executive Director



**CENTERSTATE
CORPORATION FOR
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY**

September 16, 2013

Ms. Joan McDonald, Commissioner
New York State Department of Transportation
50 Wolf Road
Albany, New York 12232

Dear Commissioner McDonald:

On behalf of the business leadership of Syracuse and Central New York, I am writing today in hopes of continuing and furthering the dialogue that you have engaged on the future of Interstate 81 in Syracuse.

As you know, we consider this to be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to develop a project that will help shape the future of this region into the 22nd century. This project has implications not only for future traffic patterns through Syracuse, but development of many of the community's most important economic engines and their connectivity to the rest of the region.

We appreciate the process that you have put in place to gather input from residents, businesses owners and the traveling public. We are encouraged by this level of engagement and hope to see it continue as we work toward a replacement for I-81 of which we can all be proud.

Following discussion with many of our members, we have developed a set of goals and principles that we hope will help build consensus within the community and guide us toward the best possible outcome, one that provides truly transformational benefits for our future. I have attached a copy of an open letter to the community that will appear in tomorrow's edition of *The Post-Standard*.

While a boulevard and a reconstructed bridge have emerged as the lead options at this stage, we understand that there are many questions still to be answered about these and other potential outcomes from this process. Based on our review of the information available, to date, and discussions with our members, we have assembled a list of questions that we hope will help to achieve the most beneficial outcome.

We appreciate the willingness you have shown to engage personally with the community on this project. With this continued approach, we believe New York's investment in the future of I-81 will become a model for similar projects throughout the state, improving not only our critical transportation infrastructure, but our cities and surrounding communities, as well.

Thank you for your involvement and your consideration of this vital issue.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Simpson
President

LEADING BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN CENTERSTATE NEW YORK



I-81: Opportunity of a Lifetime

Robert M. Simpson

The portion of Interstate 81 that travels through downtown Syracuse will soon be demolished and a modern transportation system will be built to replace it. This system, we hope, will enhance the region for the next 75 to 100 years. For a community that has fought for and earned a statewide and national reputation for its remarkable level of public and private sector collaboration, this moment is an opportunity of a lifetime to re-think and re-envision our region's future.

With conceptual proposals that range in cost from \$700M to more than \$1.5B, critical questions remain. The data and analysis needed to make a fully informed decision in support of our region's vision is not yet complete. No maps showing needed eminent domain have been made public. No street-level traffic analysis has been conducted. So we are left, for now, to speculate on the real-world impacts of any solution. But we are not entirely without facts.

The existence of I-81 through Syracuse has not brought an economic boon to our region. We have lost people and business since the viaduct was constructed. The highway, of course, does not bear all of the blame, but nor has it been a panacea that should be romanticized for its economic benefits.

To therefore spend a minimum of \$700 million and end up with anything less than a transformational approach would be a staggering opportunity lost. We have an opportunity to reach for something better – to create a solution that meets our transportation needs and advances our region's strategic goals.

We must **demand** a solution that minimizes the width of any roadway and associated right-of-ways, the need for further eminent domain, the demolition of the historic fabric of our neighborhoods, and the relocation of residents and businesses.

We **deserve** a solution that unifies our city and links the two most powerful economic engines our community has, and better connects these assets to areas of growth and investment throughout our city and suburbs.

We should **expect** a solution that doesn't transfer the congestion and safety concerns of the existing viaduct to our urban and rural streetscape; one that ensures downtown walkability; provides convenient access to commuters, tourists and public safety vehicles; and updates traffic patterns through our entire street grid to create better access to the city than today's I-81.

And we should **embrace** the highest level of urban design; use state-of-the-art project phasing to minimize construction disruption; deploy state-of-the-art intelligent systems that many of our own businesses are developing to improve traffic flow and safety and build a highway worthy of the twenty-second century; and recognize the important role that mass transit must play in reducing congestion and unhealthy emissions in our region.

In light of these goals, a simple fact becomes clear: today's I-81 does not serve this region as well as it should – not drivers, not business, not residents.



For drivers, I-81 through downtown Syracuse is the most dangerous stretch of the entire 855 mile highway. Serious accidents occur at more than three times the national average. *

It is also an economic liability, creating a swath of under-utilized and undevelopable property between a resurgent downtown and Central New York's strongest economic force, University Hill. Even property not in the existing right-of-way, but adjacent to it, has been hobbled by the barrier that the elevated viaduct represents to vibrant development. These properties could instantly be among the most valuable, tax-producing parcels in the entire county if we embrace a solution that reclaims and reactivates them.

And there is ample evidence that we would make the most of that opportunity. Downtown is already the geographic, psychological, cultural and economic center of our region's – with 37.4% of our region's total employment within 3 miles of Columbus Circle. And with more than a billion dollars of investment underway in Syracuse today, the economic potential is obvious.

In recent years, communities like Milwaukee, Chattanooga, Portland, OR and San Francisco, have reconfigured outdated transportation systems and opened up valuable real estate to hundreds of millions of dollars of private development, creating vibrant new areas of commerce and revitalized neighborhoods. These projects have enhanced transportation access for businesses, commuters and tourists and ensured walkability for residents. There is absolutely no reason that we cannot achieve similar outcomes here.

We cannot ignore that there is a very real price to pay for transformation. Budgetary limitations, political realities and community attitudes will undoubtedly affect the art of what's possible. And there will be tough choices in the end which will require thoughtful mitigation for the people and businesses most impacted by this decision.

But Central New York is no stranger to transformation. We have been indelibly impacted by decisions both within our control, and those that were not. This decision belongs to us. The opportunity of a lifetime is at hand.

Rob Simpson is president of the CenterState Corporation for Economic Opportunity. He also serves as a member of the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council.



I-81 Questions for NYSDOT

1. At this point, are proposals other than a bridge or boulevard (such as an underground tunnel) still being considered?
2. What will NYSDOT do to assure that open lines of communication will be maintained so the community understands what is going on in the process?
3. What role, and how much influence, will the community have in the selection of the preferred alternative?
4. What level of detail will NYSDOT release as part of the process? Will the public be able to see all of the data by which NYSDOT makes its decision? Will there be a public website? What role will SMTC play?
5. Is the proposed boulevard capable of carrying the traffic that is likely to operate over it?
6. If a boulevard is the preferred solution, how much traffic will divert to other routes? How much (if any) additional traffic will divert to I-481?
7. Does NYSDOT have any projection for how traffic will split among the various north/south routes through downtown? Is it possible that a significant percentage of the traffic will divert to Townsend Street, State Street, Salina Street, Warren Street or West Street? Does the NYSDOT model indicate dispersal of the traffic across multiple north/south routes?
8. What impact would such a diversion have on the existing city north-south streets? Would they still function at acceptable levels of service?
9. Would the construction of the boulevard have any other impacts such as on pedestrian accessibility or parking downtown?
10. If a boulevard was no longer part of the interstate highway system, how will the maintenance be accomplished? Who will pay for it?
11. Are the proposed changes to Erie Boulevard and Water Street as a one way couplet required to support the boulevard? This runs against the trend to turn more streets into two way traffic.
12. If an elevated viaduct becomes the proposed solution, how much wider, and/or straighter will it have to be in order to meet USDOT standards?
13. Will USDOT permit any mitigation to its standards in order to accommodate the viaduct moving through the city?



14. What properties will have to be acquired in order to accommodate an elevated highway?
15. What buildings will have to be demolished in order to accommodate an elevated highway?
16. How many, and which businesses are likely to be displaced? How many residents will be displaced?
17. Whichever solution is adopted, will there be a need to acquire more property or to demolish buildings in order to construct the boulevard or the highway?
18. What will NYSDOT do to assure that the design of the solution will be of the highest quality? What role will the community have in the aspects of that design process?
19. What role will mass transit play in the solution? How will NYSDOT evaluate the cost and benefits of mass transit's aspects of the solution?
20. A lot of concern has been expressed by all communities about the impact of truck traffic. Will there be a separate component of the NEPA study that will look at truck traffic now traveling on I-81 and its impact on the community?
21. How will NYSDOT analyze the potential health impacts of the project? Will NYSDOT have a medical team engaged in the NEPA evaluation? How will the relationships between the environment and health be evaluated in NEPA?
22. What will the state do to mitigate any losses that might happen to a private property owner, tenant or resident as a result of the project?
23. How long will the construction take? What will be done to mitigate the impacts on businesses, tenants and residents during the construction period?
24. If a tunnel is considered, what are its eminent domain impacts?
25. In your comparison of options for I-81's replacement, a depressed highway poorly in Social and Economic impacts. How did you reach this conclusion?
26. In the same comparison, the tunnel scored very poorly in its Social impact. What were the reasons for this outcome?
27. Will the state soon carry out a similar analysis regarding I-690? What is its condition? What is the length of its useful life beyond that of I-81?



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28. What will be the most important factors in making the decision regarding the final selection of an option? What criteria will be used? How will those factors be weighted?
29. Some of the largest investments in the region are taking place in downtown Syracuse, University Hill and the Syracuse Lakefront. How will this growth be accounted for in the traffic model? What will the state do to assure that this growth will continue in spite of the construction? What is the likely impact of more residents moving into the center city?
30. When will the community have a complete analysis of the projected costs for the project? To date, many important factors such as acquisition costs, have not been included in the cost estimates for the project?
31. What will be the role of technology in a new segment built to replace Interstate-81? Can it be a "smart highway"? Can it incorporate intelligent systems? Materials have been developed from which highways can generate their own heat (to melt snow) or generate clean energy (generally by covering them with a layer of solar cells), or to have sensors embedded in them. How can we assure that this is a highway that will be built for the next 75 years, and will not be obsolete in a decade?
32. By what percentage would traffic on the current viaduct have to be reduced in order to safely have only four lanes of automobile traffic traversing Syracuse on the Route 81 of the future ?
33. Is it possible to reroute all truck traffic off from the portion of Route 81 that traverses the center of the Syracuse?
34. Will an option be studied that calls for the creation of three or four improved access points into and out of Syracuse for commuters and the restriction of the Route 81 viaduct area through the City to through traffic alone?
35. Will there be any new land made available for development if a six-to-eight lane boulevard is constructed in the same general area where the viaduct stands today?
36. Many of the scenarios in the SMTC report call for increasing traffic on the West Street arterial. What method will be used in the EIS to weigh New York's sunken costs in the West Street arterial against the negative impact on the Near Westside neighborhood?
37. Do we know from previous studies if there is a mass transit scenario for central New York with a high likelihood of success?

Ryan, Kimberly (DOT)

From: Lisa Sculley [lsculley@centerstateceo.com] on behalf of Robert Simpson [rsimpson@centerstateceo.com]
Sent: Monday, September 16, 2013 2:36 PM
To: Commissioner, NYSDOT
Subject: Interstate 81
Attachments: I-81 Letter.pdf; I81 Opportunity of a Lifetime 0913.pdf; Questions for NYSDOT on I-81 091613.pdf

Dear Commissioner McDonald:

Please see attached cover letter and documents regarding I-81. Thank you. Rob

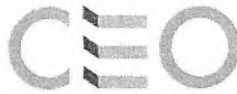
Rob Simpson
President
CenterState CEO
572 South Salina Street
Syracuse, New York 13202
315-470-1800
rsimpson@centerstateceo.com



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SEP 16 2013

OFFICE OF THE
COMMISSIONER



CENTERSTATE
CORPORATION FOR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

January 17, 2014

Ms. Joan McDonald, Commissioner
New York State Department of Transportation
50 Wolf Road
Albany, New York 12232

Reg. Dir.	Asst. Reg. D.	
LT.	Construction	
Design	Fleet Admin.	
Admin. Svcs.	PPM	
RECEIVED REG. DIRECTOR R-3		
JAN 22 2014		
Real Estate	Safety	
Traffic	Operations	
All GDs	All REs	
	Michelle	

Dear Commissioner McDonald,

The CenterState Corporation for Economic Opportunity is a twelve county business leadership and economic development organization based in Syracuse, New York. We represent more than 2,000 members and serve as the region's primary economic, community and business development catalyst. Together we work to achieve regional growth and total community prosperity through partnerships, planning and problem solving.

We appreciate the opportunity NYSDOT has provided to comment on the initial scoping period for the I-81 environmental impact statement process. I-81 is a critically important asset to our region, and we are looking forward to a project that will help to transform the community, the region, and the economy. We believe that a solution can be found that will achieve the goals that the Department of Transportation has set for this project. We have enclosed our comments and questions we have posed that we desire to have answered during the study process.

We look forward to working with you and your team as a member of the stakeholders committee, and please feel free to contact me if there is any assistance you need from CenterState or its members.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Simpson

Robert M. Simpson
President & CEO

cc: Hon. John A. DeFrancisco
Hon. David Valesky
Hon. William Magnarelli
Hon. Sam Roberts
Hon. Al Stirpe
Ms. Debra Nelson
Mr. Joseph Flint
Mr. Carl Ford
Ms. Diane Lombardi
Mr. Jonathan D. McDade

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JAN 22 2014
NYSDOT REGION 3
MAIL ROOM
1- Joe Flint

COPY



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CORPORATION FOR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

WRITTEN COMMENTS ON I-81

We want to thank the New York State Department of Transportation for this opportunity to participate in the scoping for the NEPA review for I-81, and for the opportunity to add written comments to our statements at the November 13 meeting. Our comments are below.

1. The replacement of the I-81 viaduct creates an historic opportunity for this community.

The proposed investment of between \$750 million and \$1.5 billion in construction funds presents an opportunity to have a major impact on the center of one of the state's five largest cities. The state should look for a transformative solution that will address the transportation need and meet the second goal of providing a solution that enhances the livability, sustainability, and economic vitality of greater Syracuse and the region. Listed below are examples of how the current configuration fails to meet both the transportation and livability goals:

- The viaduct is not safe, as the SMTC/NYS DOT study stated that the accident rate on the elevated portion is 3 to 5 times the national average for the interstate system.
- As the study noted, the viaduct suffers from multiple design deficiencies and re-occurring accident problems.
- Many community leaders believe that the viaduct creates a barrier between two of the region's largest job and growth generators: Downtown Syracuse and University Hill.
- The viaduct's design and current condition severely impede the very pedestrian and bicycle traffic that NYSDOT is seeking to encourage.
- A study soon to be released by the Downtown Committee of Syracuse, Inc. indicates that real property tax revenues generated decline as properties are located closer to the I-81 viaduct.

However, there is a great opportunity that could result from re-structuring the viaduct that could significantly leverage other public and private investment taking place in the center of Syracuse:

- There is over \$1.4 billion of new investment currently taking place in central Syracuse. This growth has been driven by the educational and medical institutions on University

Hill and Prospect Hill, and both have contributed to downtown revitalization by making significant investments in downtown, in spite of the need to leapfrog the highways.

- There is a significant change in the character of the central city as there is a surge of market rate residential development taking place. After a long period of decline, the population of the City of Syracuse has stabilized, and in the last Census, both Downtown and the Franklin Square/Syracuse lakefront have emerged as two of the fastest growing neighborhoods in the region.
- The opportunity exists to create improved access to the suburbs and other areas of economic activity such as DestinyUSA, which has emerged as a major shopping and tourist destination.
- The State of New York has made significant investments in this central core, particularly in the SUNY Upstate Medical University, the Syracuse Center of Excellence, the Biotechnology Accelerator, and the Convention Center complex. One of the focus points in Syracuse for Governor Cuomo's "Start-Up New York" program will be on SUNY owned land adjacent to the highway in the Loguen's Crossing area, in close proximity to the two technology transfer facilities completed by the state.
- The opportunity exists to create better connectivity between the state funded Oncenter complex in downtown and one of the largest hotel concentrations in the city built in University Hill, enhancing the region's competitiveness to host major conventions.
- A goal of this project should be to shrink the footprint of the I-81 viaduct and to recapture land in the Center City for redevelopment to meet the demands of this growing market.

2. NYSDOT and FHWA need to work to assure that no further damage is done to the City of Syracuse and its commercial and residential neighborhoods as it solves the transportation problem.

- This section of I-81, which passes through the city, is over 50 years old. It no longer meets FHWA's modern standards for an interstate highway. As such, critical issues regarding the surrounding physical context of the city may be threatened if the highway replacement is wider and/or is straightened to meet these standards. The original construction of the highway through the city was traumatic to the residents as neighborhoods and commercial areas were torn down to accommodate it. There should be no further demolition of any significant building, park or other physical attribute to accommodate the highway. Displacement of families, businesses and jobs must be avoided in the new project. The highway passes close to multiple commercial and residential properties, churches, and historic structures. These should be maintained.
- The SMTCS/NYSDOT analysis stated that the tunnel and depressed highway options as presently proposed require the closure of seven city streets, including major thoroughfares such as Erie Boulevard, Fayette Street, and Almond Street, further

isolating Downtown from University Hill. Closing local streets to accommodate the highway is counter-productive to mobility and unacceptable. These options should be re-designed to avoid this impact.

3. To control the scale of the solution, reduce the size of the problem.

- According to the recent SMTc/NYSDOT study, traffic volumes on the viaduct reach 90,000 cars per day. Some of these counts are driven by the configuration of the highway, which limits access points to University Hill, particularly with respect to the Harrison/Adams on and off ramp.
- NYSDOT should seek to reduce the demand for single occupancy vehicles by considering mass transit alternatives, by improving bus service or creating a street car or light rail system that could reach from the city center to its surrounding suburbs to reduce automobile use. NYSDOT should review if existing rail lines and right of way could be used for access to the airport or to meet the needs of commuters. As demonstrated in recent national trends, younger people are delaying buying vehicles or getting licenses and are using mass transit at a higher rate than previous generations.
- NYSDOT should seek to use the local street grid to handle more of the traffic and dissipate its impacts across the system. Efficient traffic dispersal and coordination of the traffic light system throughout the area impacted by I-81 holds benefits for the entire Syracuse area.

4. Use the opportunity to increase livability and reduce environmental impacts across the entire system.

- A Brookings Institution study in 2008 noted that the Syracuse MSA had one of the largest carbon footprints in the country (2.68 tons of carbon per year) which places Syracuse 67th among the 100 largest metropolitan areas in the country. Rochester (14th) and Buffalo (16th) were substantially lower. The Brookings study attributed the high discharge in Syracuse largely to transportation use. Use this project to reduce that carbon footprint.
- Much of the impact of the construction will take place in the neighborhoods close to the center of the city. Most of these are already challenged with higher vacancy rates, housing units in need of repair, or areas where the neighborhoods' physical and social structure is frayed. NYSDOT should seek to secure a mitigation fund to improve the neighborhoods in close proximity to the project.
- Of particular concern is land and buildings owned by the Syracuse Housing Authority, many of which are adjacent to the highway. Assist the SHA in replacing any units that are too close to the highway to remain viable.
- Look for opportunities to create parks, green space and drainage facilities close to the highway, but build any green areas with a view to connecting them to adjacent neighborhoods. Do not build green space that becomes underutilized next to the road.

- Carefully analyze the health impacts of vehicle emissions, and seek to reduce emissions and protect neighbors from the impacts.
- Mitigate the noise impact of the highway.
- Highway and road embankments have become traps for trash. Design improvements that can be easily maintained. Create a maintenance plan for all of the improvements built, particularly for areas adjacent to the road or highway. Anticipate the need for rodent control before construction (a lesson from Boston's "Big Dig"). There is a concentration of rodent habitat on the embankments of the highways.
- Look for opportunities to improve/enhance pedestrian and bike trails throughout the project's length. Look for linkages to the County's project at Onondaga Lake and the Connective Corridor.
- Reduce the width and impact of the West Street Arterial as part of the project. Create a "West Street Parkway" instead, and re-connect streets between downtown and the west side that were severed by the arterial.
- Build better directional signage for those getting on and off the highway/roads. Make sure that there are adequate trailblazer signs to identify the multiple points of access to the system.
- Attend to the needs of the medical institutions adjacent to the highway. Multiple medical facilities are located in close proximity to the highway, including Crouse Hospital, the Veterans Administration Medical Center, SUNY Upstate Medical University, Hutchings Psychiatric Center, St. Joseph's Hospital Health Center and the Syracuse Community Health Center. Access for emergency vehicles to these medical facilities needs to be a critical element of this project.
- Preserve and protect national register, locally significant, and potentially eligible historic buildings adjacent to the project.

5. Assure the community that this will be an open and collaborative process driven by facts, not opinions.

- NYSDOT and FHWA are to be lauded for seeking to build a collaborative process that will lead to mutual fact finding and a hope for community consensus around a solution to the project.
- CenterState CEO has attached a list of questions on the project to NYSDOT. The answers to the questions will help make the decision easier about the construction of the new infrastructure.
- NYSDOT should commit to a timetable for when it will present to the public a specific illustrated plan, including maps and diagrams, showing the proposed new traffic routes and flows and reconfigured surface streets that will result, and the specific footprint of each option.

- Work with state, federal and local government leaders to provide the time necessary to get to full and complete answers. Do not allow the process to be short circuited or allow viable options to be eliminated until there is evidence that an option should be eliminated.
- Seek to integrate new advances and demonstration projects in highway technology in this project. Make use of Central New York's strengths in environmental and information technology and embed technology in the road system.
- Communicate frequently with the public regarding the facts that are uncovered as part of the process.
- Develop an inventory and model of business impacts along the project corridor to generate knowledge regarding the real or prospective impacts of proposed changes on businesses both in the cities and the suburbs which may be created by the different scenarios before a final solution is chosen.
- Seek to make this process a new national model for highway/road development.

I-81 Questions for NYSDOT

1. At this point, are proposals other than a bridge or boulevard (such as an underground tunnel) still being considered?
2. What will NYSDOT do to assure that open lines of communication will be maintained so the community understands what is going on in the process?
3. What role, and how much influence, will the community have in the selection of the preferred alternative?
4. What level of detail will NYSDOT release as part of the process? Will the public be able to see all of the data by which NYSDOT makes its decision? Will there be a public website? What role will SMTc play?
5. Is the proposed boulevard capable of carrying the traffic that is likely to operate over it?
6. If a boulevard is the preferred solution, how much traffic will divert to other routes? How much (if any) additional traffic will divert to I-481? Has the impact of increased traffic on I-481 been calculated on the roads, particularly at the I-481/I-690 interchange and the I-481/I-90 interchange?
7. If the boulevard is the preferred solution, does NYSDOT have any projection for how traffic will split among the various north/south routes through downtown? Is it possible that a significant percentage of the traffic will divert to Townsend Street, State Street, Salina Street, Warren Street or West Street? Does the NYSDOT model indicate dispersal of the traffic across multiple north/south routes?
8. What impact would such a diversion have on the existing city north-south streets? Would they still function at acceptable levels of service?
9. Would the construction of the boulevard have any other impacts such as on pedestrian accessibility or parking downtown?
10. When will NYSDOT present to the public a specific illustrated plan, including maps and /or diagrams showing the proposed new traffic routes and flows and the reconfigured surface street grid that will necessarily result from the removal of the viaduct and replacement with a boulevard?
11. If a boulevard was no longer part of the interstate highway system, how will the maintenance be accomplished? Who will pay for it?



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12. Are the proposed changes to Erie Boulevard and Water Street as a one way couplet required to support the boulevard? This runs against the trend to turn more streets into two way traffic.
13. If an elevated viaduct becomes the proposed solution, how much wider, and/or straighter will it have to be in order to meet USDOT standards?
14. Will USDOT permit any mitigation to its standards in order to accommodate the viaduct moving through the city?
15. What properties will have to be acquired in order to accommodate an elevated highway?
16. What buildings will have to be demolished in order to accommodate an elevated highway?
17. How many, and which businesses are likely to be displaced? How many residents will be displaced?
18. When will NYSDOT be able to deliver a specific illustrated plan showing how a rebuilt viaduct would look, including changes to all exits and on-ramps that may be added, reconfigured or removed, along with its footprint?
19. Whichever solution is adopted, will there be a need to acquire more property or to demolish buildings in order to construct the boulevard or the highway?
20. What will NYSDOT do to assure that the design of the solution will be of the highest quality? What role will the community have in the aspects of that design process?
21. What role will mass transit play in the solution? How will NYSDOT evaluate the cost and benefits of mass transits aspects of the solution?
22. A lot of concern has been expressed by all communities about the impact of truck traffic. Will there be a separate component of the NEPA study that will look at truck traffic now traveling on I-81 and its impact on the community?
23. How will NYSDOT analyze the potential health impacts of the project? Will NYSDOT have a medical team engaged in the NEPA evaluation? How will the relationships between the environment and health be evaluated in NEPA?
24. What will the state do to mitigate any losses that might happen to a private property owner, tenant or resident as a result of the project?



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25. How long will the construction take? What will be done to mitigate the impacts on businesses, tenants and residents during the construction period?
26. Will the impacts on traffic during construction be different based on what solution is selected? Can you generally outline what the plan will be for the maintenance and protection of traffic during construction and access to the center city for each of the proposed solutions?
27. If a tunnel is considered, what are its eminent domain impacts?
28. In the SMTc/NYS DOT comparison of options for I-81's replacement, a depressed highway scored poorly in Social and Economic impacts. How did you reach this conclusion?
29. In the same comparison, the tunnel scored very poorly in its Social impact. What were the reasons for this outcome?
30. Will the state soon carry out a similar analysis regarding I-690? What is its condition? What is the length of its useful life beyond that of I-81?
31. What will be the most important factors in making the decision regarding the final selection of an option? What criteria will be used? How will those factors be weighted?
32. Some of the largest investments in the region are taking place in downtown Syracuse, University Hill and the Syracuse Lakefront. How will this growth be accounted for in the traffic model? What will the state do to assure that this growth will continue in spite of the construction? What is the likely impact on the traffic model of more residents moving into the center city?
33. When will the community have a complete analysis of the projected costs for the project? To date, many important factors such as acquisition costs, have not been included in the cost estimates for the project.
34. What will be the role of technology in a new segment built to replace Interstate-81? Can it be a "smart highway"? Can it incorporate intelligent systems? Materials have been developed from which highways can generate their own heat (to melt snow) or generate clean energy (generally by covering them with a layer of solar cells), or to have sensors embedded in them. How can we assure that this is a highway that will be built for the next 75 years, and will not be obsolete in a decade?



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35. By what percentage would traffic on the current viaduct have to be reduced in order to safely have only four lanes of automobile traffic traversing Syracuse on the Route 81 of the future?
36. Is it possible to reroute all truck traffic off from the portion of Route 81 that traverses the center of the Syracuse?
37. Will an option be studied that calls for the creation of three or four improved access points into and out of Syracuse for commuters and the restriction of the Route 81 viaduct area through the City to through traffic alone?
38. Will there be any new land made available for development if a boulevard is constructed in the same general area where the viaduct stands today? What about the other options?
39. Many of the scenarios in the SMTC report call for increasing traffic on the West Street arterial. What method will be used in the EIS to weigh New York's sunk costs in the West Street arterial against the negative impact on the Near Westside neighborhood?
40. Do we know from previous studies if there is a mass transit scenario for central New York with a high likelihood of success? Are their enhancements to the current bus transit that could be considered?

From: Lisa Sculley [<mailto:lsculley@centerstateceo.com>] **On Behalf Of** Robert Simpson
Sent: Tuesday, September 02, 2014 4:36 PM
To: Frechette, Mark (DOT)
Subject: CenterState CEO Comments on the Draft Scoping Report, I-81 Viaduct Project

Please see attached I81 Scoping Comments and Transmittal letter from CenterState CEO. Thank you.

Robert M. Simpson

President

CenterState Corporation for Economic Opportunity

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**CENTERSTATE
CORPORATION FOR
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY**

September 2, 2014

Mr. Mark Frechette, PE, Project Director, I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation, Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, New York, 13202

Re: CenterState CEO Comments on the Draft Scoping Report, I-81 Viaduct Project

Dear Mr. Frechette:

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Draft Scoping Report for the I-81 Viaduct Project. Please see attached for CenterState CEO's scoping comments.

CenterState CEO is an active member of the state's review process, having both members and staff participating on the state's Economic Development and Sustainability Committees. CenterState CEO is a not for profit business leadership organization, representing the interests of 2,000 business members from throughout the region. We appreciate the work that has been done by NYSDOT and its consulting team, not only to find an engineering and design solution, but to engage the community and its stakeholders in the decision making process.

We are pleased with the way that the project has advanced. We believe that the planning process for this project must remain open and transparent to gain the full support of the residents of the region. We ask that NYSDOT continue to look for opportunities to share information with stakeholders and the community as the study moves forward.

This project is about much more than simply finding an adequate replacement for a highway segment. I-81 runs through the most dynamic, fastest growing business, educational, technological, medical and residential center of our region. There is an opportunity to achieve transformational outcomes for our region through this project. An investment of more than \$1.5 billion must achieve our mutual goals of creating a transportation system to serve this community for decades to come, drive a significant increase in our economic growth, and greatly enhance the quality of life of this community. We look forward to our continuing involvement with NYSDOT and you in the achievement of that vision.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Simpson
President

LEADING BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH IN CENTERSTATE NEW YORK

Attachment: CenterState CEO I-81 Scoping Comments

cc: Jonathan D. McDade, Federal Highway Administration
Joan McDonald, Commissioner, New York State Department of Transportation
Governor Andrew Cuomo
Andrew Kennedy, NYS Assistant Secretary for Economic Development
New York State Legislative Delegation
County Executive Joanie Mahoney, Onondaga County
Onondaga County Legislature
Mayor Stephanie Miner, City of Syracuse
Syracuse Common Council
CenterState CEO Board of Directors

CENTERSTATE CEO I-81 VIADUCT PROJECT SCOPING COMMENTS

I. Statement of Goals

A year ago, CenterState CEO adopted a series of principles to guide its evaluation of the future of I-81 and the outcome it seeks from this investment. These principles call for a solution that unifies our city and links our community's economic engines; minimizes the highway's footprint and reduces the need for eminent domain; enhances access, safety, and walkability; and aspires to 22nd century design standards. We are measuring the report and the options for the future of I-81 against these principles and the following goals:

- **Transformational Approach:** The proposed solution should meet transportation needs while advancing our region's strategic goals.
- **Minimize Adverse Impacts:** The proposed solution should minimize the width of any roadbed and associated rights-of-way, the need for eminent domain, and avoid the demolition of historic buildings and relocation of residents and businesses.
- **Improved Linkages:** The solution should create better access and improved linkages between downtown and University Hill, link central city assets to the suburbs, and connect the region to national and global markets.
- **Transportation Benefits:** The proposed solution should resolve traffic problems, not just move them. The solution should resolve safety concerns, support the use of mass transit, enhance walkability, and provide convenient access for commuters. The solution should upgrade traffic patterns through the entire street grid to create better access than today's I-81.
- **Environmental Impacts:** The solution should embrace the highest level of urban design, minimize construction disruption, lead to environmental improvement, and result in generating additional land for development. The solution should utilize state of the art technology to improve traffic flow and safety.

These goals represent the lens through which CenterState CEO is evaluating the options for the future of I-81, and this is the nature of the information we seek to help the community make an informed and intelligent choice.

II. Potential for Transformational Impact

CenterState CEO seeks a transformational approach that provides for not only the movement of vehicles efficiently through the region, enhancing safety, and preserving access to national and international markets, but which will also incorporate a comprehensive system involving enhanced transportation options (transit, pedestrian, and bicycle). It would provide for a program that would leave the region and city in better condition than it exists today, both from an economic development and tax standpoint, and also through significant improvements to the city's appearance and its urban design characteristics. While we understand NYSDOT's

requirements to meet traffic and environmental requirements, we expect a project that goes beyond mitigating harm to one that enhances the community.

In recent years, communities like Milwaukee, Chattanooga, Portland, OR and San Francisco, have reconfigured outdated transportation systems and opened up valuable real estate to hundreds of millions of dollars of private development, creating vibrant new areas of commerce and revitalized neighborhoods. These projects have enhanced transportation access for businesses, commuters and tourists and ensured walkability for residents. There is absolutely no reason that we cannot achieve similar outcomes here.

Furthermore, true transformation could be accelerated by aligning the goals for I-81 with the economic goals outlined in the Central New York Regional Economic Development Council's (CNY REDC) Five-Year Strategic Plan. Currently, there is no reference to the CNY REDC plan in the "Purpose and Need" statement (Section 2-6, "The Need for Transportation Infrastructure to Support Long Range Planning Efforts").

This plan outlines three priority goals to guide the region's collective actions:

- Strengthen Targeted Industry Concentrations that Leverage Unique Industry Assets
- Improve Competitiveness in, and Connections to, the Regional, National, and Global Economies
- Revitalize Our Region's Urban Cores and Main Streets

The CNY REDC plan identifies seven regional priority industry concentrations: Clean Energy and Environmental Systems; Health, Biomedical Services and Biosciences; Financial Services; Agribusiness and Food Processing; Advanced Manufacturing; Tourism; and Data to Decisions. The segment of I-81 under study passes by critical elements of four of these seven sectors. Within a few blocks of the current viaduct exist the Syracuse Center of Excellence in Environmental and Energy Systems (SyracuseCoE); four of the region's largest hospitals; the CNY Biotech Accelerator, the Loguen's Crossing site; the regional headquarters and national processing operations of numerous banks and insurance companies; and the region's premier tourism assets such as the Oncenter, the Carrier Dome, Armory Square, and the gateway to the Inner Harbor and Destiny USA. NYSDOT should specifically consider how this viaduct replacement project could link and enhance those assets. The current I-81 corridor could be used to demonstrate environmental and energy saving technologies, as a backbone for high speed broadband connections to global financial centers such as New York City, Toronto, Boston or Washington; and enhancements to the visitor experience to the region.

The I-81 project is also critical to achieving the goal of greater global connectivity. Along the 14 mile stretch of I-81 between the interchange points with I-481, this highway segment passes by Syracuse's Hancock International Airport, and the CSX and NYS&W rail lines, both of which can link the region to the Port of New York and New Jersey, the New York State Thruway (I-90), and via I-481, the Port of Oswego, the Great Lakes, and by extension from the port to the St. Lawrence Seaway. The I-81 project can be used to enhance all of those connections.

There is also significant opportunity for the I-81 corridor to contribute to the revitalization of our region's urban cores, main streets and neighborhoods. The corridor is centered within the immediate neighborhoods of downtown, University Hill, and Syracuse's Northside all of which

are experiencing investment equal to the cost of the highway project. At the same time, this highway segment also passes by some of the most economically challenged sections of the community. The opportunity exists to better connect these neighborhoods to the larger economy, create jobs for their residents, and assist in the upgrade of neighborhood housing.

Better alignment of the project's goals with those outlined in the CNY REDC's plan could make the highway replacement truly transformational.

III. Alignment of the Options with CenterState CEO's Goals

- Depressed Highway and "Other" Solutions

Based on its goals, CenterState CEO was pleased to see NYSDOT has recommended no further consideration be given to the depressed highway options. The depressed highway options are clearly some of the most destructive, requiring the largest amount of land through the city center. This would have resulted in a significant amount of land taking and demolition, led to the closure of multiple east-west streets essential for connectivity, caused a significant maintenance challenge for the removal of snow and trash, and required a longer construction period, at a higher cost than more reasonable options.

We are also pleased to see the elimination of the West Street Arterial and Western Bypass options, both of which seemed to relocate the traffic problem rather than solve it. Relocating traffic is not a goal of this project, rather it is to provide options so traffic can move in the most efficient manner between its origin and destination. The amount of land taking for the Western Bypass is inconceivable, and the West Street Arterial should be reduced in width and the east-west streets between downtown and the near west side re-connected as a part of any plan to enhance neighborhood connections and the visual appeal of the city. There is simply no need for the number of lanes currently on that street.

- Tunnel Alternatives

While the tunnel options reduce land demand by placing at-grade streets above it (rather than next to it in the case of the depressed highway), and would offer the benefit of splitting traffic such that only traffic with destinations in downtown and University Hill would be on the at-grade streets, these options are destructive, requiring the acquisition and demolition of multiple properties, and result in the closure of several east-west streets to bring the tunnel back up to grade and to link with I-690.

Construction as well as long-term operation and maintenance costs (lighting 24 hours per day, continuous pumping of ground water, ensuring adequate fresh air exchange, and the extra costs of handling accidents and breakdowns) would need clear identification, scrutiny, and justification. More analysis would be needed to determine how many vehicles per day would use the tunnel, and how many would operate on the at-grade streets. If the volume in the tunnel was too low, there

would be significant construction and operating expenses when considered on a per car usage basis.

Additionally, there must be a commitment by some party to pay those costs. As a business organization, CenterState CEO wants to avoid any unnecessary expense which would lead to an increase in taxes and fees. Funding sources for this project would have to be clearly identified and sustainable, without resulting in an undue burden on area residents and businesses.

If any tunnel option is further considered, it should be clearly routed in such away to have its openings in areas with few buildings and avoid the closure of significant cross streets. Additionally, it should fit into the existing right of way to avoid the demolition of additional buildings, and commitments would have to be made for both the higher capital and operating costs of the tunnel.

- Viaduct Alternatives

It is hard to see CenterState's CEO's values reflected in the remaining viaduct options. These options would require more land to accommodate the need to conform to current federal highway standards, therefore resulting in acquisition and demolition of additional property, removing more property from the tax rolls, and leaving the dividing wall of the viaduct in place between downtown and University Hill.

Furthermore, the design indicated in the draft scoping document is not inspirational, and the potential for significant demolition and devaluation of property in the region is not an acceptable outcome.

While it may be one of the most cost-competitive solutions, there is nothing transformational in these options. These alternatives would only continue to divide the heart of our city and speed traffic away from its center. As such, the viaduct options are not in keeping with any of our region's current economic development strategies nor the hopes and goals we have for this project. Other options provide for benefits we believe are more transformational for the economic development potential of our city and community.

- Street-level Alternatives

The street-level solutions address many of our goals, including reuniting the city center and generating more land for economic development. With proper zoning and development practices, these options could lead to an enhanced corridor through the city center. Drivers would be encouraged to explore the city rather than pass over it. It is imperative that the significant question around traffic flow and operations, maintenance, commute times and impacts on city streets and regional traffic patterns are addressed as part of the environmental impact statement process.

We would recommend that, in order to achieve the greatest chance of success for an at-grade option to work, it be considered in conjunction with either the I-481 re-designation as recommended in the study, or used with the “S” solution that would make use of sections of I-481 and I-690 to be re-designated as I-81. This would encourage as much through traffic as possible to stay on the interstate and to only attract traffic onto the street-level solution that has an origin or destination close to the city center.

- “Missing Links”

We also need to understand the impact of the “missing links,” i.e. the current lack of a full interchange between I-81 and I-690. While these links could be an important part of an enhanced system, they also have significant impacts on property acquisition and demolition. It is possible that the overall impact could be reduced by improving the street level connections between highways, rather than building these new connections.

- Solutions Offered by the Community

We recommend that NYSDOT subject the solutions proposed by the community, such as the “S” solution and the proposed tunnel/boulevard combination, to the same analysis the other options were given to guarantee that all the options that move forward have stood the basic tests of purpose and need, right of way, constructability and cost.

IV. Additional components that should be included in the solution

- *Enhanced transit should have a role in any solution*

We recognize the state has a separate analysis underway with the Syracuse Transit Systems Analysis. There is a significant opportunity for a coordinated and comprehensive solution to the community’s transportation needs that should include enhanced transit services, and bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. Among the advocacy groups that have formed in the community over the future of the highway, one of the points of consensus is that mass transit should play a larger role, particularly in moving employees, customers, and visitors to concentrated centers such as University Hill, Downtown, and Destiny USA and the Syracuse lakefront.

We ask for a better integration of mass transit and highway solutions in a single analysis to better determine whether some of the highway replacement options might either impede or enhance the potential for mass transit. There will be no better opportunity to demonstrate the growing need for, and responsiveness of, mass transit systems than during the four to seven years of construction that the proposed highway replacement might take.

- *Dispersing traffic away from the current viaduct should be a component of the analysis and multiple points of highway access to University Hill should be identified*

Given the sensitive nature of inserting such a large piece of infrastructure through the center city, we ask that NYSDOT determine steps that could be taken to reduce the amount of traffic that flows on the path of the existing viaduct through the city. Various estimates of vehicle flow on the current viaduct range from 70,000 to 100,000 cars per day. We recognize that the number varies depending on the time of day, day of week, and during special events (i.e., Carrier Dome events). However, we believe NYSDOT should work to demonstrate a possible reduction in the flow over the path of the current viaduct, such as a more direct connection to University Hill from either I-690 and/or I-481, or other methods that might disperse traffic away from this location, either by taking advantage of the city's existing street grid, adding other enhancements to the regional highway system, encouraging the greater use of mass transit for routine commuting, or by encouraging greater development of housing and work options that might be less dependent on the highway system. Since one of the largest flows of traffic on and off the existing viaduct is from University Hill at the Harrison/Adams interchange, we believe that creating new access points from I-690 and I-481 could greatly improve traffic flow, access for emergency vehicles to the hospitals, and better access to, and egress from Carrier Dome events.

- *More analysis of the impacts along the entire corridor in addition to the downtown/University Hill segment, particularly in the city's south side and in the suburbs surrounding the corridor, is needed*

A great deal of the housing adjacent to the highway south of Adams Street is affordable public housing, which is fully occupied and in short supply. Many units are so close to the highway that they may prove to be uninhabitable during construction. We urge NYSDOT to take the lead now to create a taskforce with local, state, and federal officials to devise a plan for relocation of the residents during construction. We call this to your attention because Syracuse has had recent experience in the loss of affordable housing units, and the need to replace those was particularly challenging. Given the short timeframe and special needs of many of the tenants, we urge the state to move forward with the creation of a taskforce to proactively address these needs.

Impacts from each of the alternatives on suburbs surrounding the corridor also need to be examined. NYSDOT has provided detailed drawings and images on the impacts of the changes required by the various options on the segment of the highway between University Hill and Downtown. To make sure that the public is completely informed, NYSDOT needs to also provide more detailed drawings and images of suggested changes to I-81 or I-481 and I-690 in the suburbs, or other parts of the city, where NYSDOT has suggested that there would be changes required by the various options.

- *The positive impact of signal optimization and coordination*

One enhancement we advocate for is an improvement in signal optimization and coordination, to move traffic efficiently along the existing city grid. Thought should also be given as to how more traffic might be moved by using the traditional grid, as well as how to enhance non-highway connections between the city and its suburbs along streets such as Salina Street, Erie Boulevard and other major paths that connect adjacent communities.

- *Aesthetics, urban design, and maintenance*

Any solution should greatly enhance the aesthetics of the highway as it passes through downtown Syracuse. The current viaduct creates a barrier between downtown and University Hill that is not inviting to walk, bike or drive under. Additionally, the existing viaduct is adjacent to a number of empty lots, poorly designed parking, and a line of trees in need of pruning and replacement.

At the current level of analysis, it is unclear whether the alternatives provide a transformational path for the community. We continue to be concerned that the remaining alternatives do not meet our aspirations for transformational design. For example, the viaduct options currently offered are a continuation of the current form that splits the center of Syracuse as it has for the last 50 years. The street level solutions are also unimaginative, offering only linear parks and/or trees alongside six lanes of traffic. The street level solutions hold out the hope that new buildings could be constructed alongside the arterial, but there is no perspective which shows this possibility. We ask that the design and engineering team demonstrate infrastructure solutions of which the community could be proud.

We ask that the draft environmental impact statement consider these design and aesthetic issues, enhancing the visual connection between downtown and University Hill, identifying the amount of blockage of sunlight attributed to the various solutions, and finding a solution that is sustainable in the sense that any improvements built to enhance the design of the highway have dedicated funding streams to support them, including the identification of a long-term maintenance budget. There should not be an automatic assumption that the City of Syracuse can afford to maintain amenities located along the right of way. Better and more imaginative solutions should be identified. A specific maintenance plan for any improvements should be developed, and commitments to fund them identified.

V. Key Information Required for the Analysis

There are several pieces of additional information that need to be part of a thorough analysis:

- *Better origin/destination information*

CenterState CEO believes the analysis can be greatly enhanced if more detailed information on the origin and destination of travelers on I-81 is provided. Some current viaduct traffic may be there because drivers perceive it as the current best alternative to reach their destination, not necessarily the optimal route to travel.

Better information on the origin and destination of vehicles could indicate other enhancements needed to the transportation system to optimize traffic flow. This could also help reduce commute times and identify the impacts on business.

- *Inventory of the impacted properties*

We also ask NYSDOT to identify which properties will likely need to be seized and buildings that will need to be demolished in order to meet the project goals and highway standards. As we are about to begin the required Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act review, it is imperative that NYSDOT provide the information to the community as to where the various viaduct replacement options will be located and what buildings must come down as a result.

- *Analysis of impact on the region's health care institutions and emergency access*

There are multiple sensitive receptors along the path of I-81, including most of the community's acute care hospitals located within a very short distance of the interstate, and several other health care facilities, such as Loretto at the intersection of I-81 and I-481, south of the city. These facilities are of particular concern given the physical and emotional condition of the patients, and the need for the community to preserve access both during construction and after the project. The impact of noise, dust, and vibration during construction on the ability of these facilities to conduct diagnostic tests, provide medical care, and house patients must be addressed. We believe there should also be a detailed emergency services access plan that will show how emergency services will access the institutions during and after construction under the various scenarios.

- *Health and noise impacts*

With the large and growing number of residents in close proximity to the highway, we ask that the draft environmental impact statement address the public health issues which may be experienced by existing residents, or new residents that choose housing close to the path of any solution. We ask that NYSDOT specifically identify the likely health issues one might experience while living in close proximity to vehicle exhaust, and the likely level of exposure for each of the solutions being advanced. We also ask that the environmental impact study specifically address the noise level adjacent to the highway and how far different levels of noise might extend out from the solution, and how that might change as different solutions are adopted.

- *Life cycle costs of the solutions*

We also ask that NYSDOT address the long term life cycle costs of the proposed infrastructure. Everything we have reviewed to date includes estimates of the capital costs of the options, but very little information on the long term maintenance, operation and repair costs. We must minimize those expenses for a solution to be truly sustainable.

- *Economic impact analysis*

It is clear this project will have both positive and negative economic consequences in the region. If the project built links to the assets described in the CNY REDC plan, there is the potential to create high economic value from the construction. We ask that NYSDOT also determine which solution has the potential to generate long-term, permanent jobs for our community.

We would like to see a solution that could generate an improvement in air quality and avoid any adverse regulatory impacts that could be created if air quality in proximity to the project is degraded. However, the potential loss of economic vitality must also be addressed. Proposed options that may require more land than presently dedicated, force the relocation of businesses, result in the demolition of recently accomplished projects, or result in a significant rise in ongoing operation and maintenance costs and subsequent taxation could undermine the region's fragile economic recovery from the recession and the progress reflected in new investment recently accomplished in the central city. The economic benefits and costs of each option considered should be clearly identified and calculated.

- *New technology testing and advancement*

We also ask that the state identify intelligent solutions/or new technologies that could be demonstrated on this section of highway since this is a capital project with a life expectancy of 50 to 75 years. With the educational institutions and the adjacent SyracuseCoE, it should be a site which can be easily studied and where technologies are tested. We have read with interest about concepts of using highways to generate electricity or heat that would be relevant to local research and the reduction in global warming. We would like to see the project as a testbed for engineering advancements. This type of research could greatly contribute to advances in environmental, energy, and safety technologies which would lead to new knowledge to apply to future projects.

- *Explicit construction Timelines*

As part of the analysis and evaluation, NYSDOT should provide its best estimates of the construction timeline for each option studied. It is clear that one of the largest adverse impacts could result from lengthy construction timelines which could impede access to the center city and University Hill. The goal should be to minimize the time of construction for any selected project. We also ask that NYSDOT present options for how construction projects can be phased to mitigate adverse impacts to commerce and quality of life.

- *Mitigation opportunities*

It will be imperative that the EIS discuss mitigation techniques and opportunities required for this project by looking at this as an entire transportation system. We need to understand what tools are available, either from a regulatory lens, transportation funding, or other sources, to mitigate impacts on the community

such as pollution, construction disruption, noise, relocation of businesses and residents, and economic impacts. We want the state's best efforts to mitigate traffic by using projects such as the proposed Inland Port project (which might reduce traffic by eliminating empty backhauls, and move more containerized freight by train). Best practices to limit dirt, noise and vibration during construction should be outlined.

VI. Conclusion

CenterState CEO appreciates the significant work NYSDOT and its consulting team have invested in this project. This plan is much more than the replacement of an aging highway viaduct, but a significant opportunity to make a positive connection between the transportation network and the economy of the community. To accomplish that, it must not only be an explicit goal to strengthen the economy, but that must be operationalized in tangible ways. Regional consensus has gone into the development of the CNY REDC plan as a framework that drives investment in CNY. A prudent start is to drive the linkage between the Regional Economic Development Council plan and this project.

We also need to actively avoid harm from the project. This project provides an opportunity to reverse the legacy of I-81's initial construction through the city's neighborhoods, and to take steps to thoughtfully address impacts to residences and businesses located along the corridor. Realizing that a major project will be built, we need to accelerate the planning and identification of resources to address those impacts now, rather than after the record of decision is released.

The project must effectively address and eliminate the barrier wall that I-81 has become through the city. Plans must also be devised to better connect the city, generate land for economic development, and aspire to world-class design and aesthetics of the future project compared with the current condition. Building "more of the same" with no tangible improvement in the appearance of the city, will be a failure.

We need to seize opportunities not only to move cars efficiently through and around the city, but to eliminate unnecessary traffic, improve access, and enhance the existing grid. We need to link the economy of the region to the rest of the world and demonstrate new technology and mitigation techniques, all of which could lead to a truly transformational project.

As noted, many unanswered questions must be addressed regarding each of the remaining options, and key principles that demand greater attention as this process moves forward. A smart, modern planning decision is necessary to ensure we realize the full benefit of more than a billion dollars of infrastructure investment in our community and the region.

We appreciate NYSDOT's consideration of our comments, and we look forward to continuing to work with NYSDOT in the next phase of planning to achieve positive outcomes for our community.

From: no-reply@dot.state.ny.us
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Subject: Participate in the Committee
Date: Wednesday, January 15, 2014 10:33:59 AM

Last name - Singleton

First name - Perry

Affiliation - Syracuse University

Address 1 - 131 East Water St

Address 2 - 302

City - Syracuse

State - New York

Zip - 13202

Phone - 3014377176

Email Address - psinglet@syr.edu

Question or Comment - As a downtown resident and an SU employee, I strongly believe that I-81 must go. The revitalization of downtown Syracuse, in regards to both community and commerce, depends on it.

From: [Joseph Sisko](#)
To: [dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities](#)
Subject: RE: submitting comment with attachments
Date: Tuesday, January 14, 2014 5:10:48 PM
Attachments: [UPSTATE_81_Questions_opt3.pdf](#)

Thank you for the clarification.

Please find attached a pdf of questions and associated diagrams for consideration in the study on route 81.

The file is over 10mb so please confirm receipt.

-joe

From: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities [mailto:dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov]
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2014 10:26 AM
To: Joseph Sisko
Subject: RE: submitting comment with attachments

Dear Mr. Sisko:

In response to your email below, yes, you can formally submit a PDF with your materials and questions to this email address.

Thank you for your interest in the I-81 Viaduct project.

I-81 Viaduct project team

From: Joseph Sisko <jrsisko@syr.edu>
Sent: Monday, January 13, 2014 8:43:54 AM
To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities
Subject: submitting comment with attachments

Hello,

I would like to submit a number of comments and diagrams related to questions about the study on behalf of my center. The online form does not provide for attachments. Is it possible to send a PDF with our material/questions to this email address and have it formally accepted?

Many thanks

Joe Sisko
Assistant Director
UPSTATE: [A Center for Design, Research, and Real Estate](#)
350 West Fayette Street / Syracuse / NY / 13202
P 315 443 6150 F 315 443 2742 W Upstate.syr.edu

RETHINK 8 | TO RECLAIM THE CITY AND RECONNECT SYRACUSE

SECTION I
Introduction

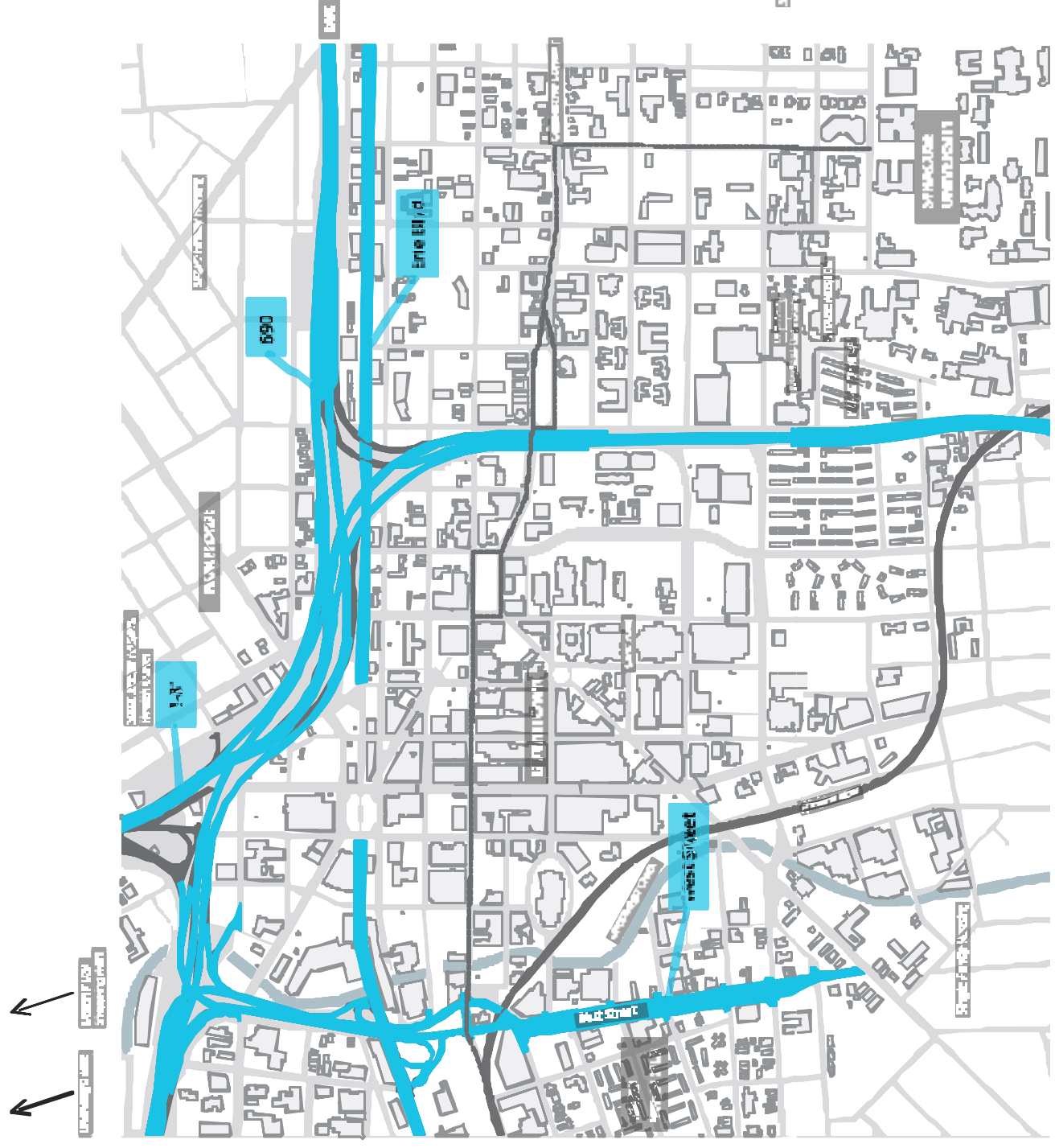
SECTION II
History

SECTION III
Vision

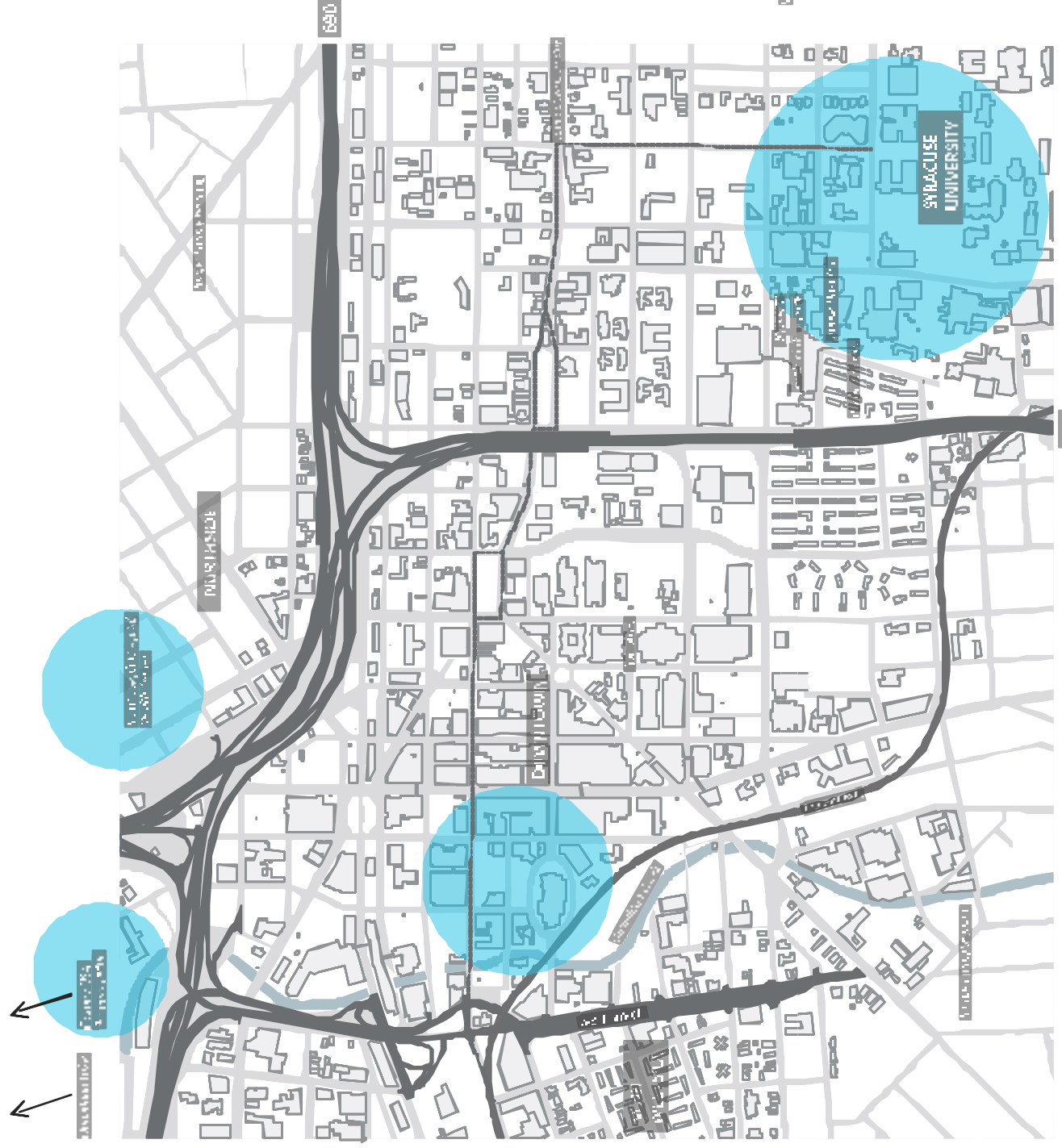
SECTION IV
Questions

**TO PROVOKE A POSITIVE
OUTCOME FOR THE CITY
AND REGION WE AS A
COMMUNITY MUST BE
ASKING THE NYSDOT
THE RIGHT QUESTIONS**

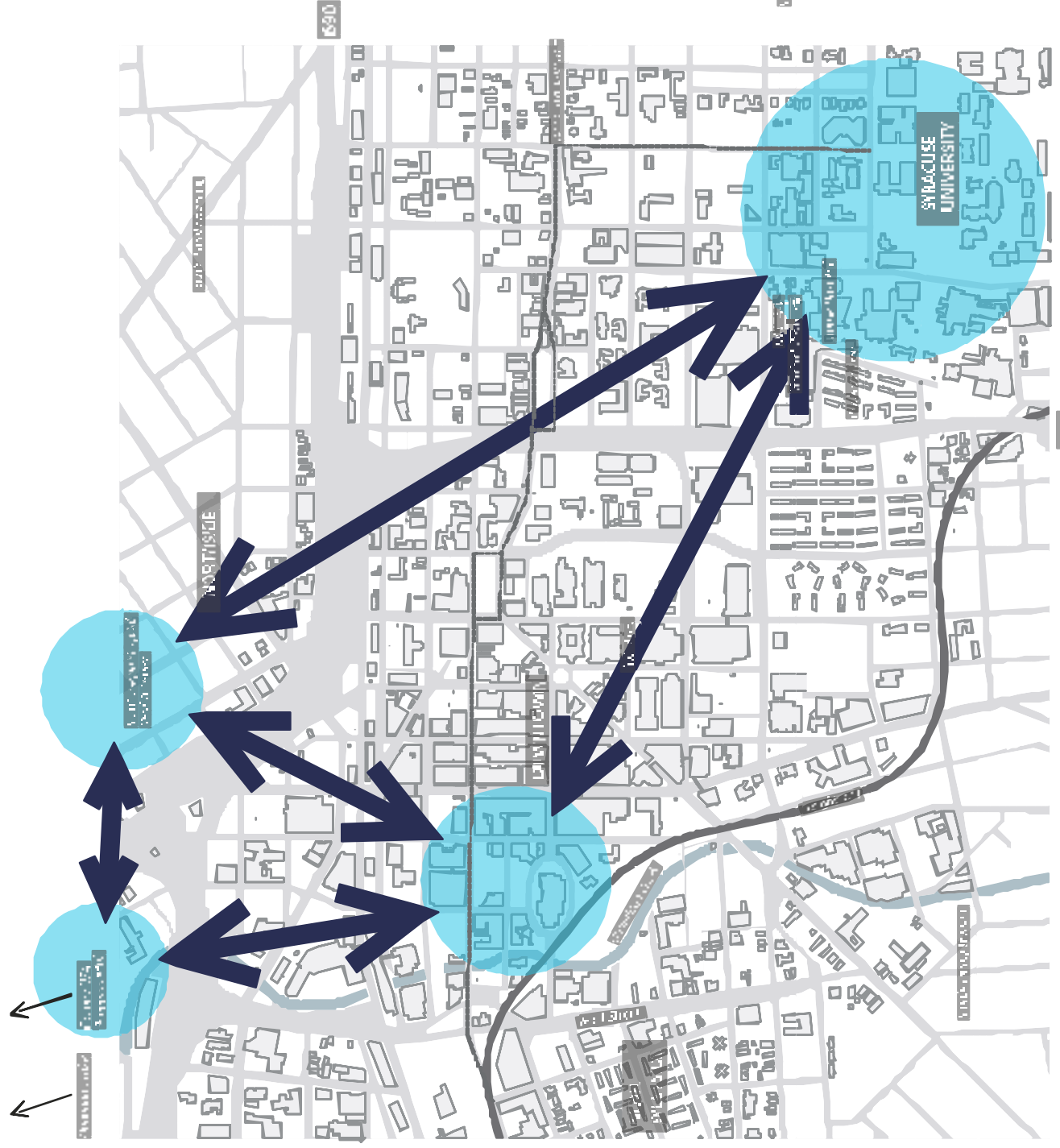
Question:
Where are
the current
barriers in
Syracuse?



Question:
Where are
the most
vibrant areas
in Syracuse?

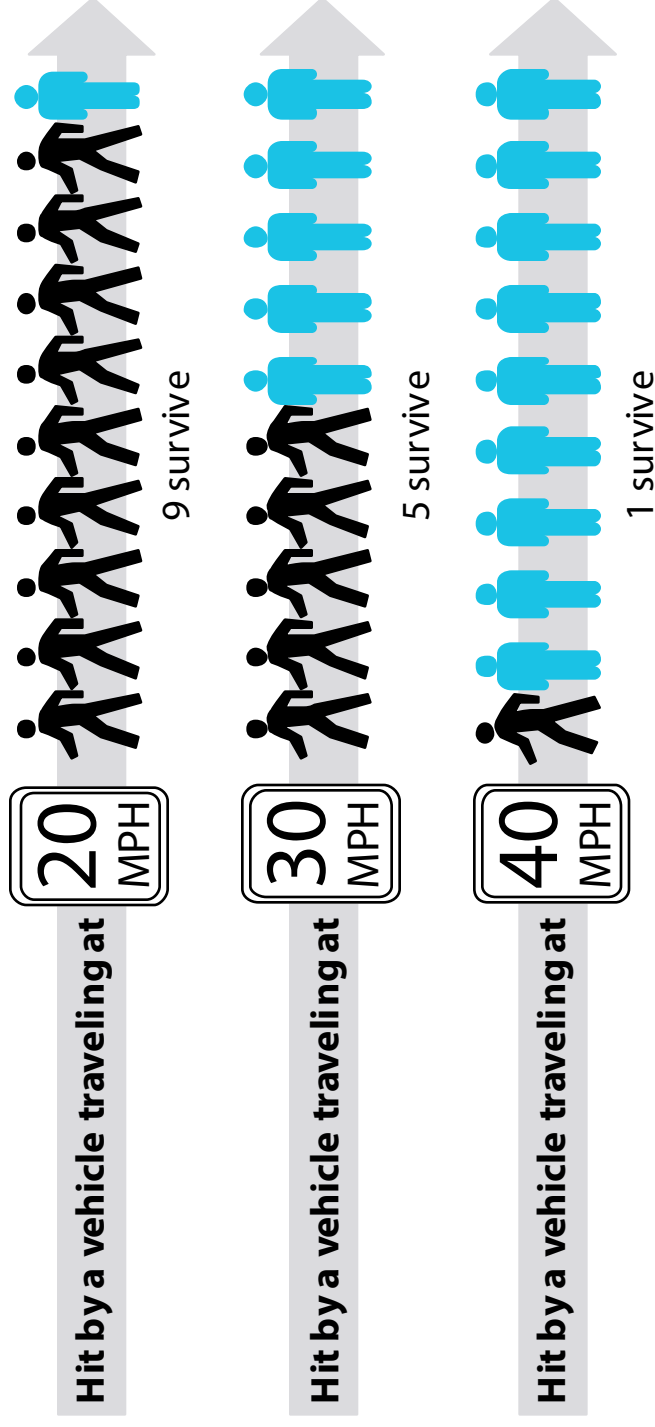


Question:
Can this
project
remove
barriers and
reconnect the
city's vibrant
areas more
effectively?



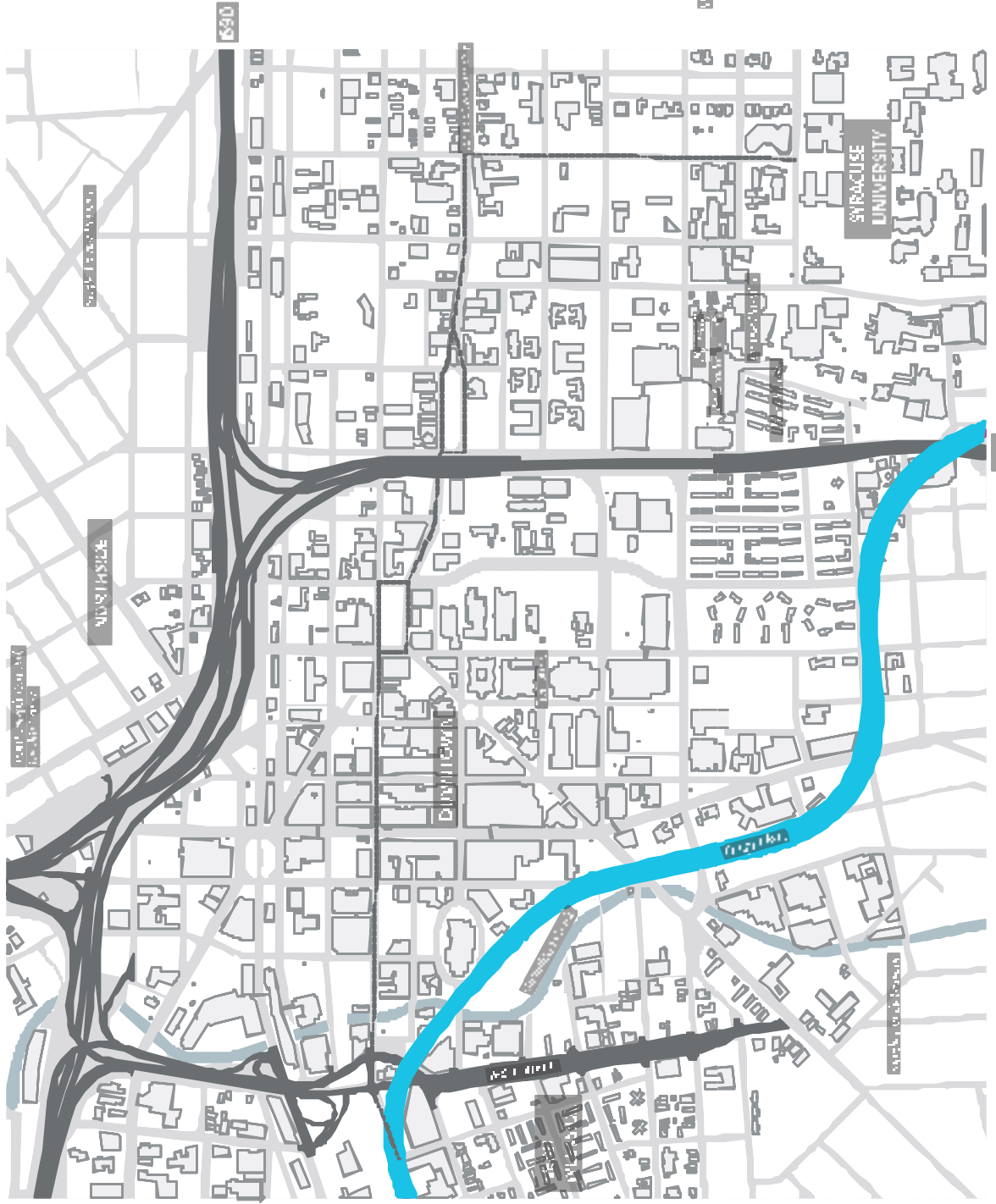
Question:

What are the criteria to measure success of a major transportation project in our city?



A SUCCESSFUL TRANSPORTATION
LEVEL OF SERVICE OF A, B, OR C MAY
BE INCOMPATIBLE WITH HEALTHY
NEIGHBORHOODS, PROSPEROUS
BUSINESS SECTORS, AND SAFE STREETS.

REACTIVATE DORMANT INFRASTRUCTURE SUCH AS LIGHT RAIL



Question:

Is it possible
to have
BOTH high
connectivity
and good
urbanism?

MAKE EXISTING HIGH DENSITY STREETS MORE WALKABLE



West St, Syracuse

vs



Octavia Blvd, San Francisco

Chronicle 2 News Ra 10/12/12

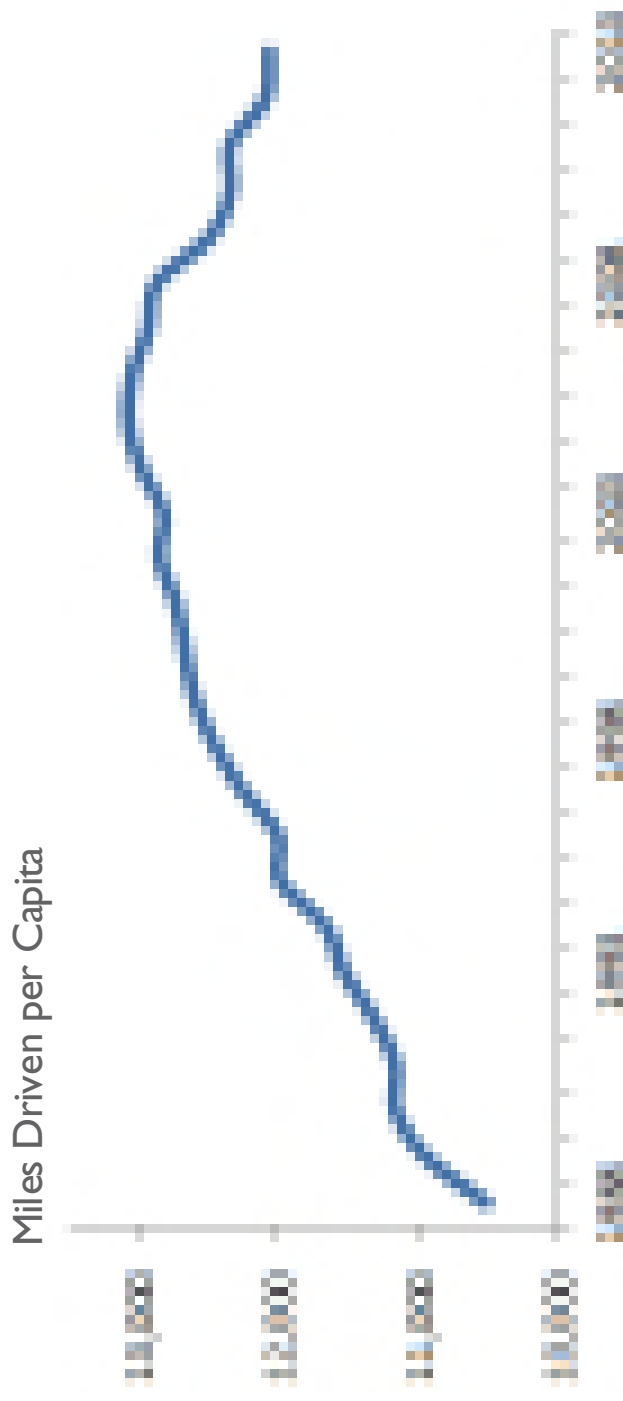
ALL OF THE OPTIONS PROPOSED
IN THE SMTCC/ DOT PLANNING
STUDY ASSUMED THE TRAFFIC
DEMAND ON THE SINGLE ARTERY
OF 81 WILL BE THE SAME OR
HIGHER IN THE FUTURE.

AN URBAN ROAD IN SYRACUSE
SHOULD NOT BE 175 FEET WIDE.
HOW CAN WE REDUCE DEMAND
TO INSURE THAT THE SOLUTION
IS SMALLER AND APPROPRIATE
TO THE SCALE OF OUR CITY?

Question:

Will the consulting team take into consideration future trends such as decreased miles driven, new technologies, and future development patterns, in addition to current traffic counts?

THE US DRIVING BUST 1988-2013

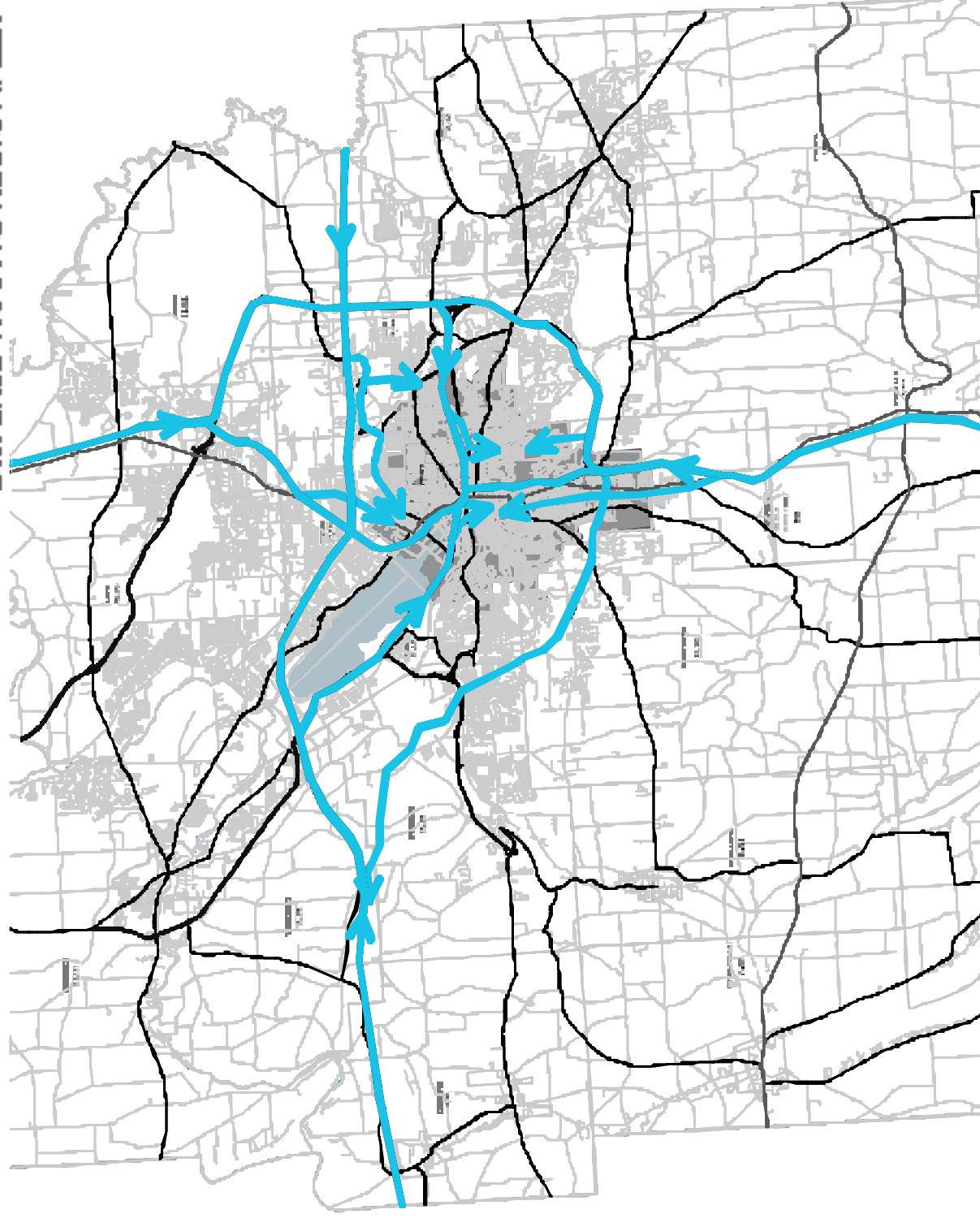


Source: U.S. Department of Transportation

Question:

**What are ways
the entire
transit system
can be modified
to reduce the
traffic demand
on 81 through
the City?**

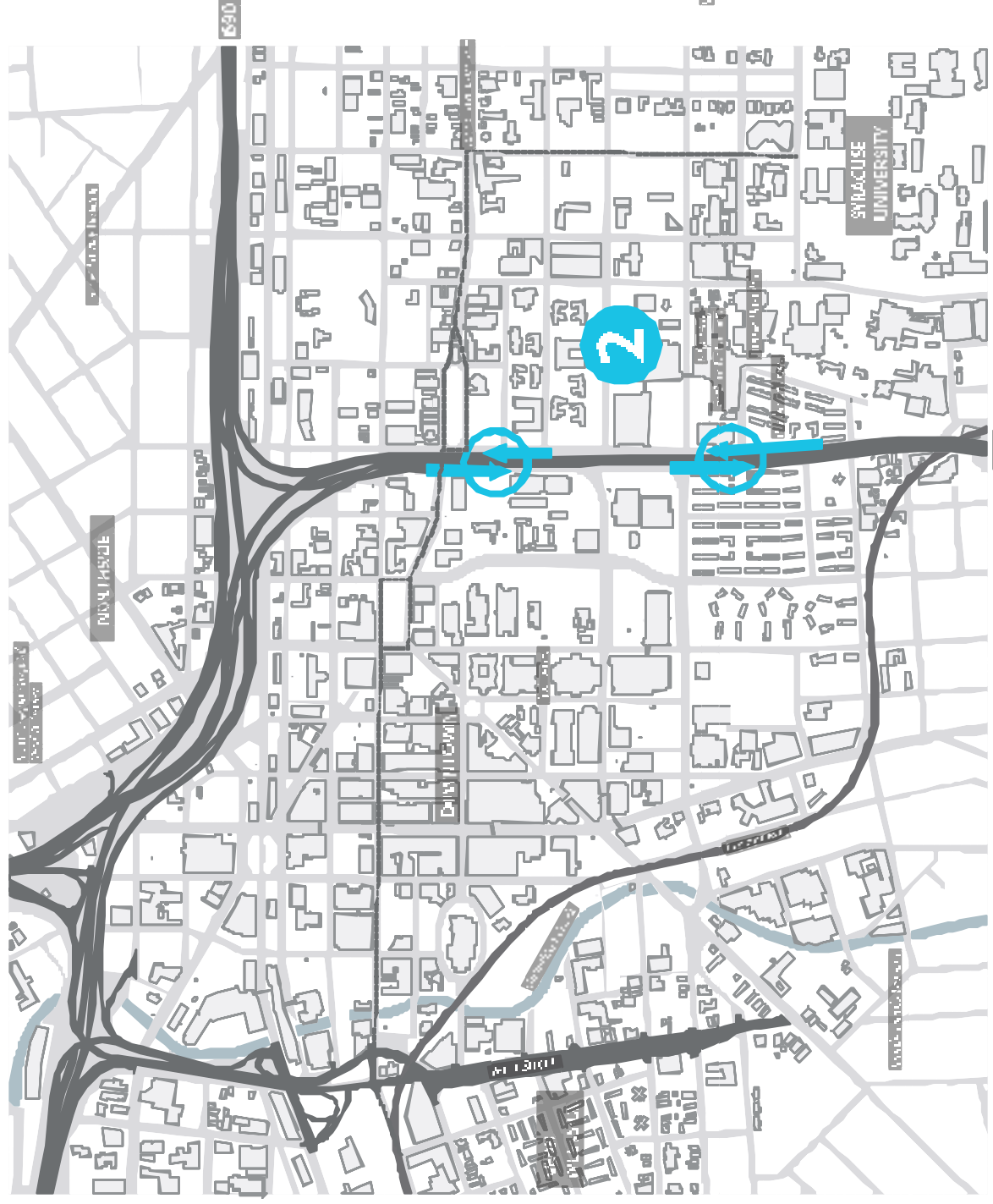
**CREATE MORE EFFICIENT ROUTES INTO AND THROUGH THE CITY TO
DISPERSE TRAFFIC REGIONALLY**



Question:

What are ways
the entire
transit system
can be modified
to reduce the
traffic demand
on 81?

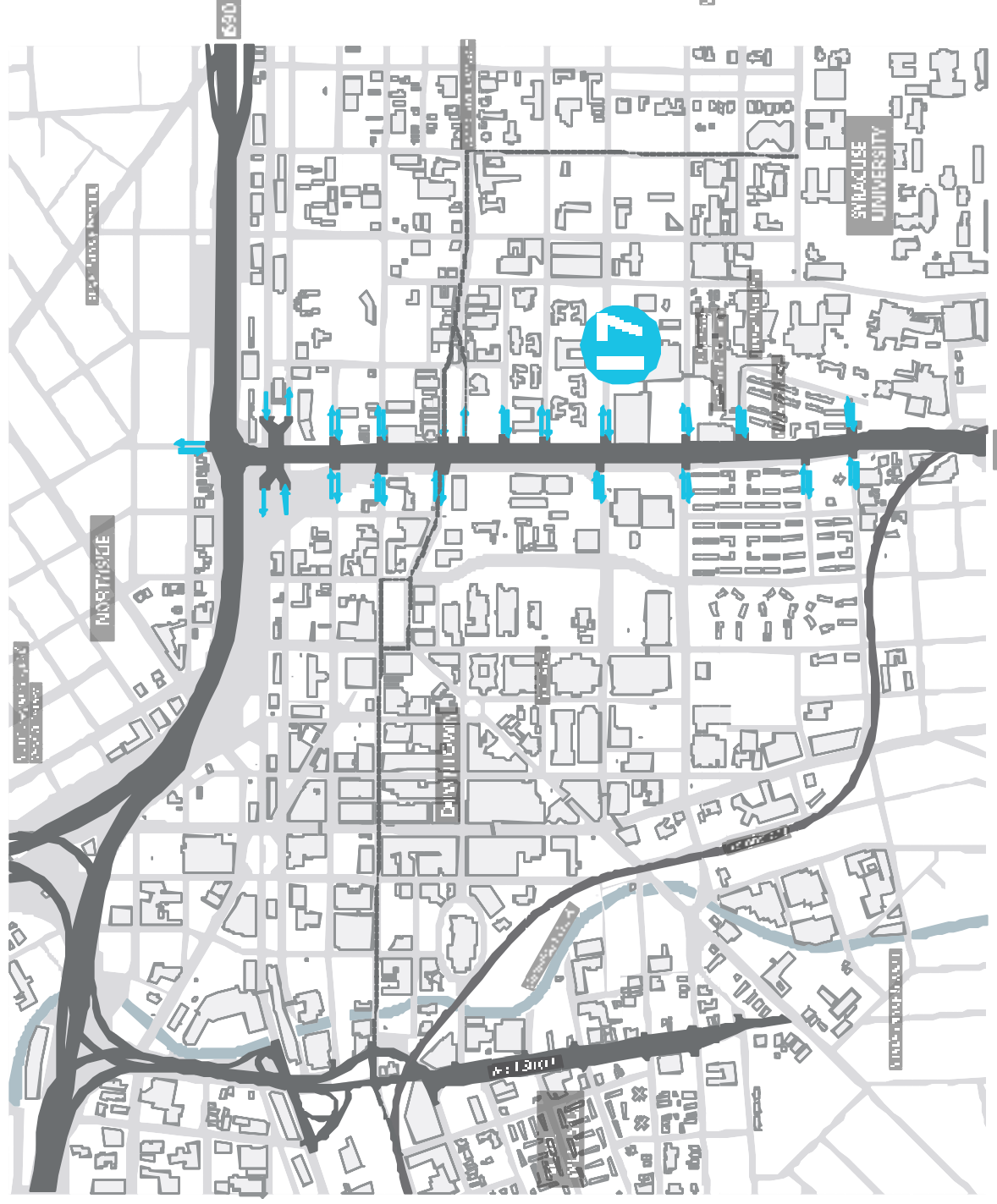
CURRENTLY THERE ARE ONLY 2 EXIT POINTS INTO THE CITY



Question:

What are ways
the entire
transit system
can be modified
to reduce the
traffic demand
on 81?

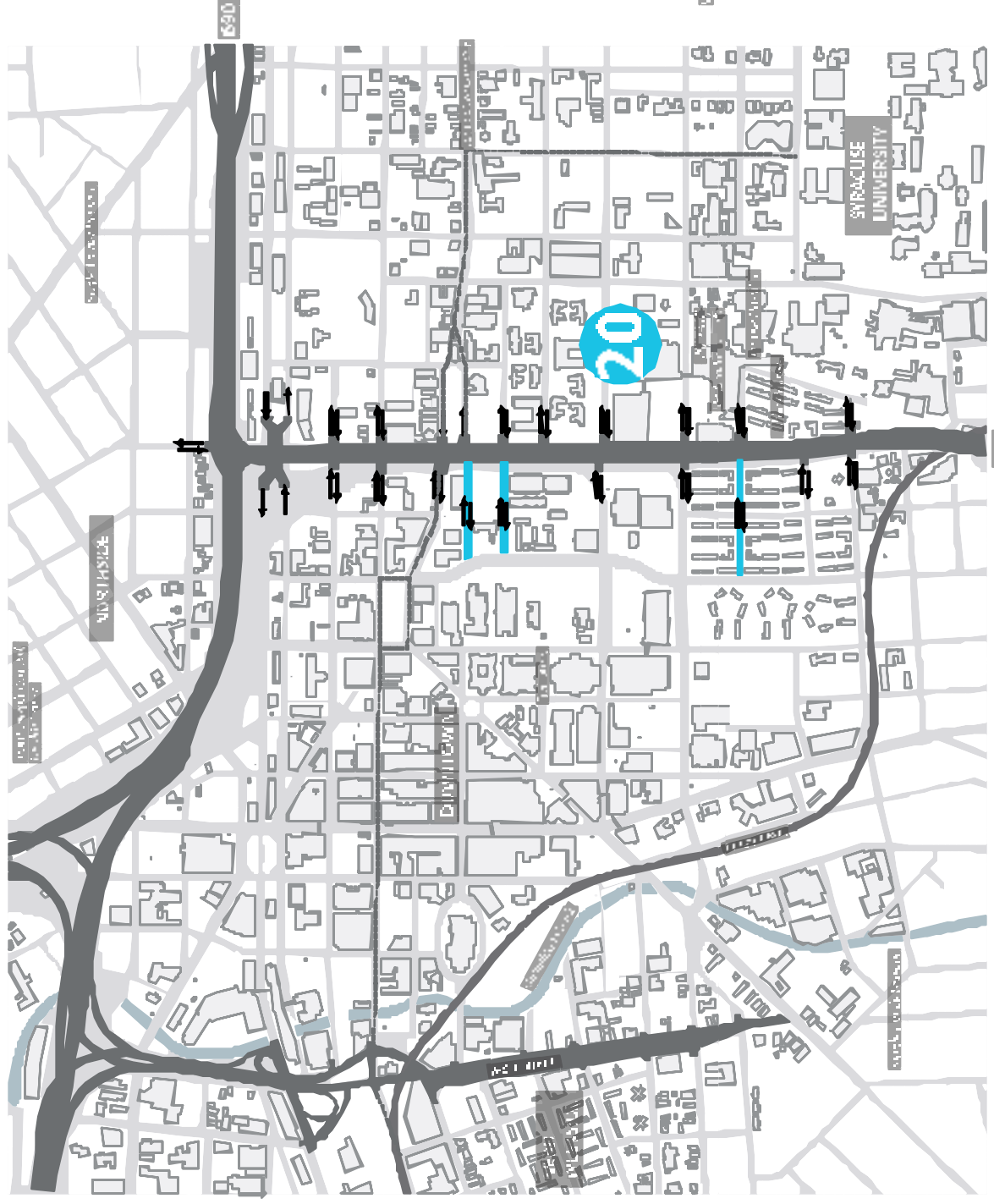
IF THERE IS A BOULEVARD THERE ARE MANY MORE
POINTS OF TRAFFIC DISPERSION INTO THE CITY



Question:

What are ways
the entire
transit system
can be modified
to reduce the
traffic demand
on 81?

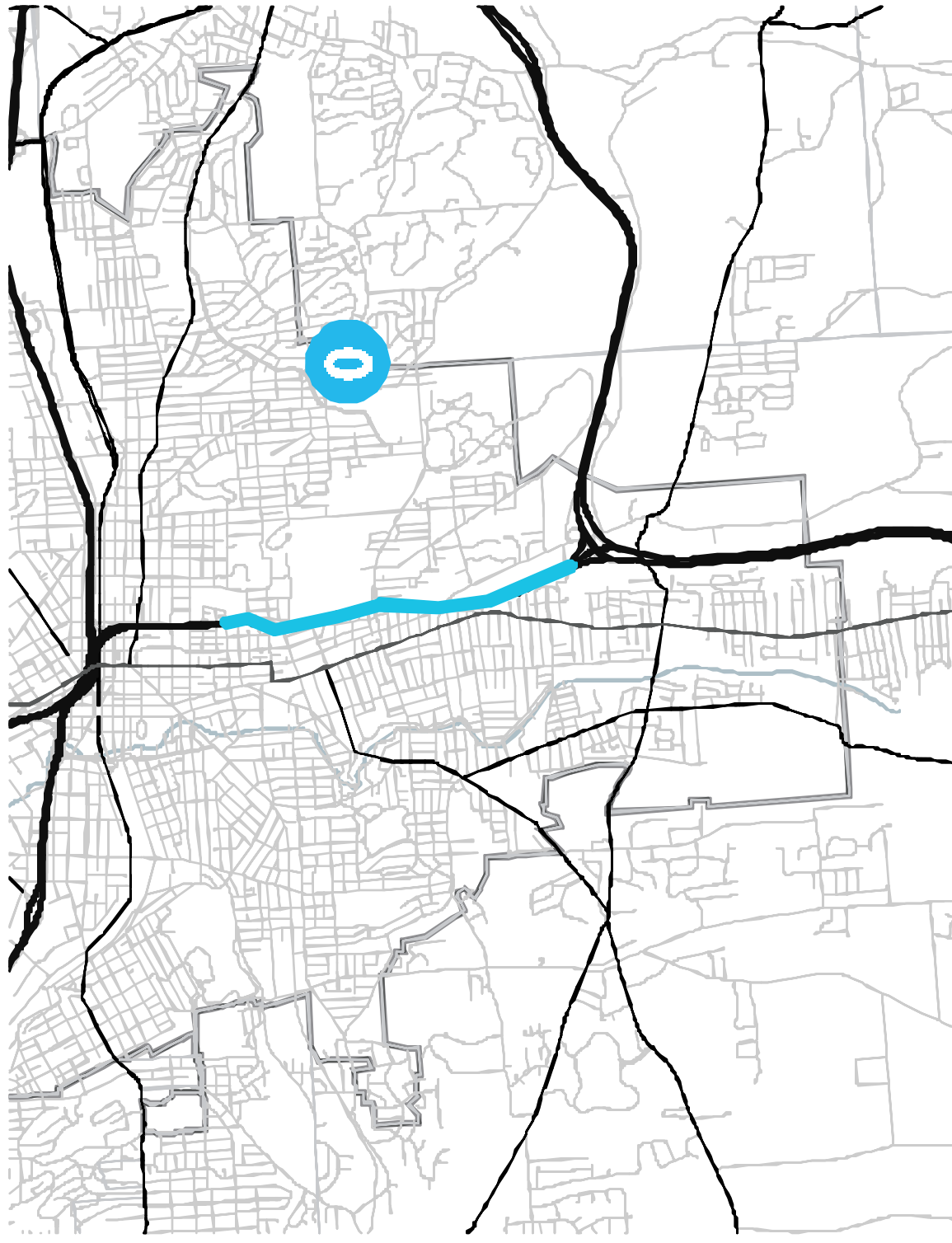
IF HISTORIC BLOCKS ARE REESTABLISHED THERE ARE
EVEN MORE NEW ROUTES THROUGH THE CITY



Question:

What are ways
the entire
transit system
can be modified
to reduce the
traffic demand
on 81?

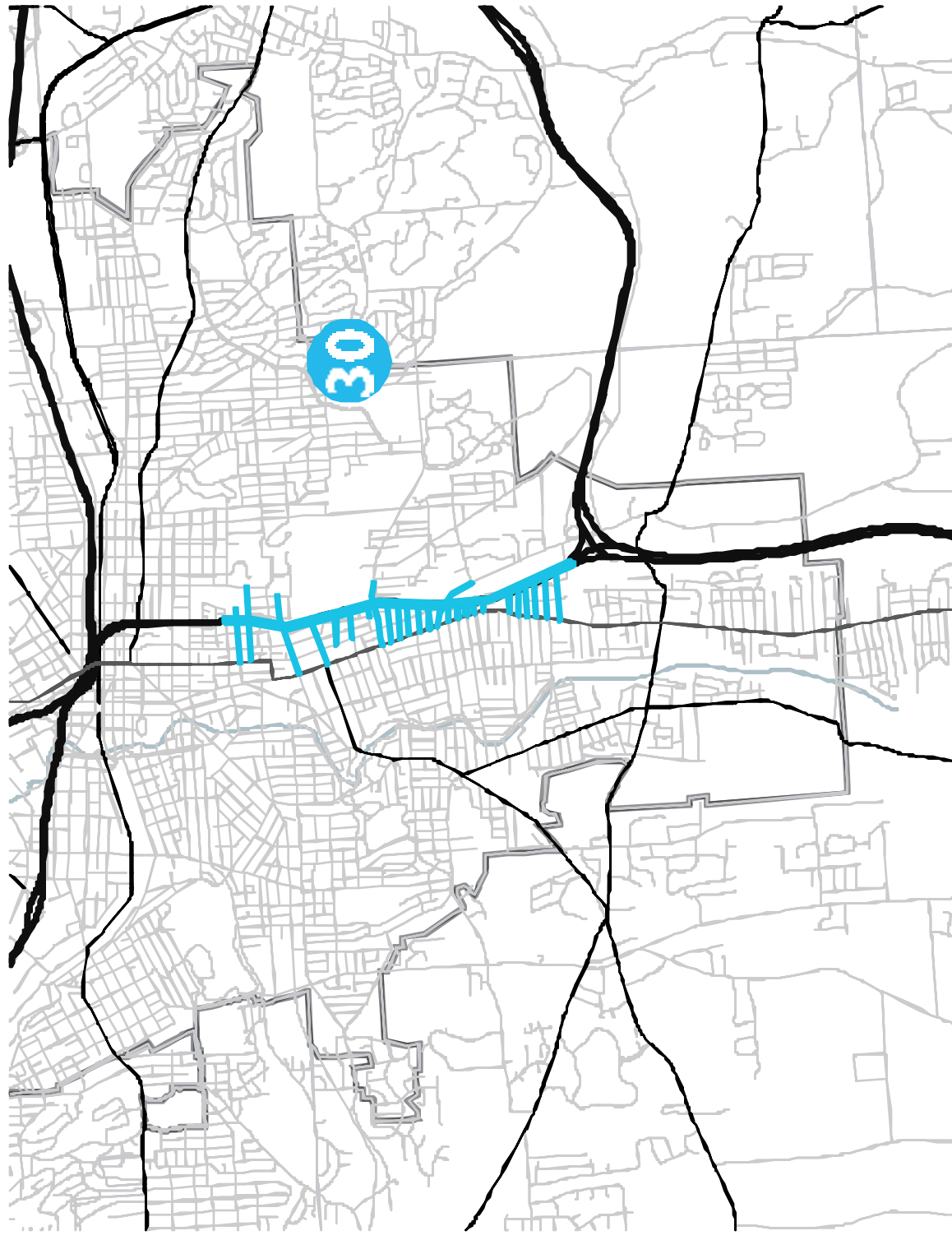
RECONNECT STREETS THAT I-81 HISTORICALLY BISECTED
BETWEEN DOWNTOWN AND I-481



Question:

What are ways
the entire
transit system
can be modified
to reduce the
traffic demand
on 81?

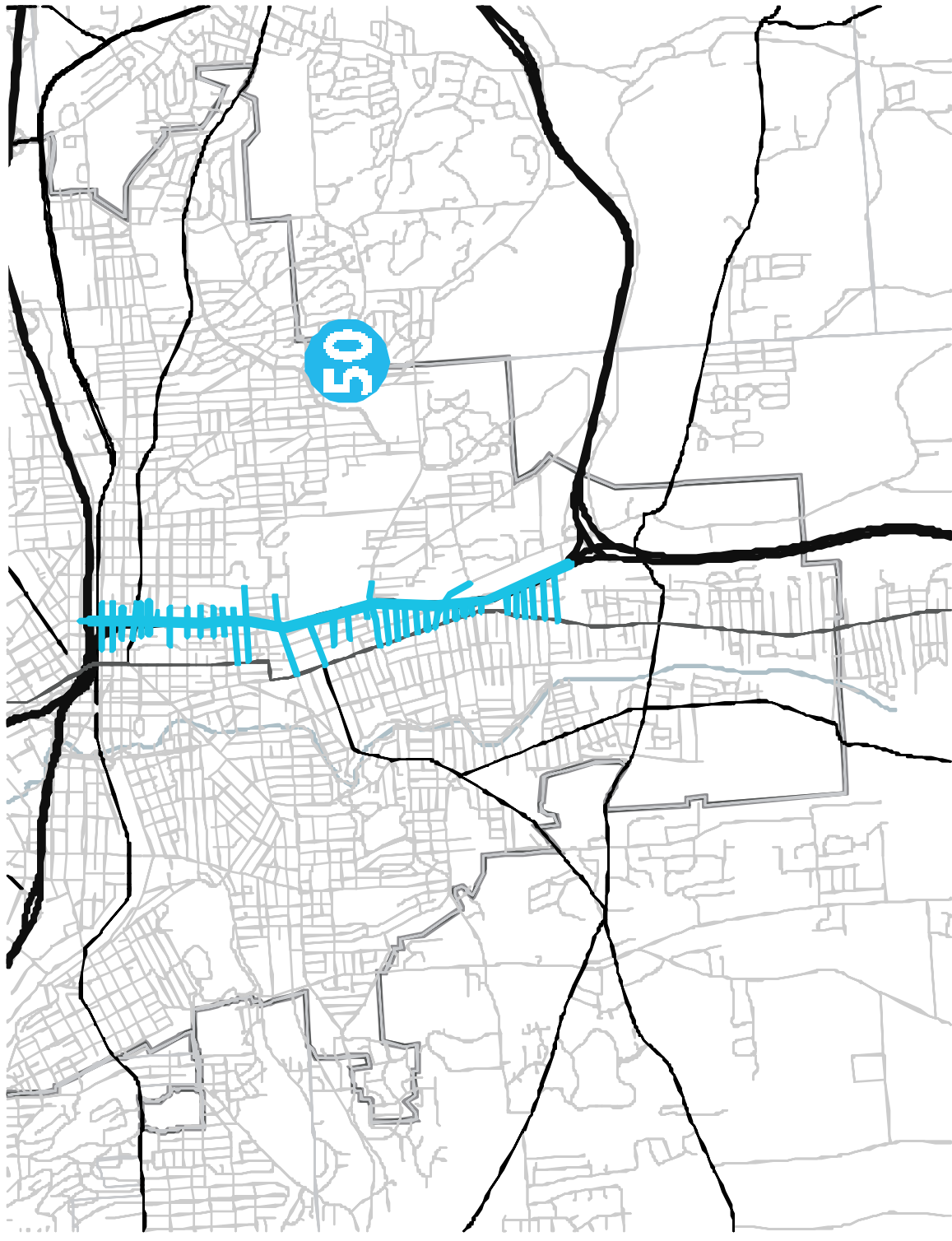
RECONNECT STREETS THAT I-81 HISTORICALLY BISECTED
BETWEEN DOWNTOWN AND I-481



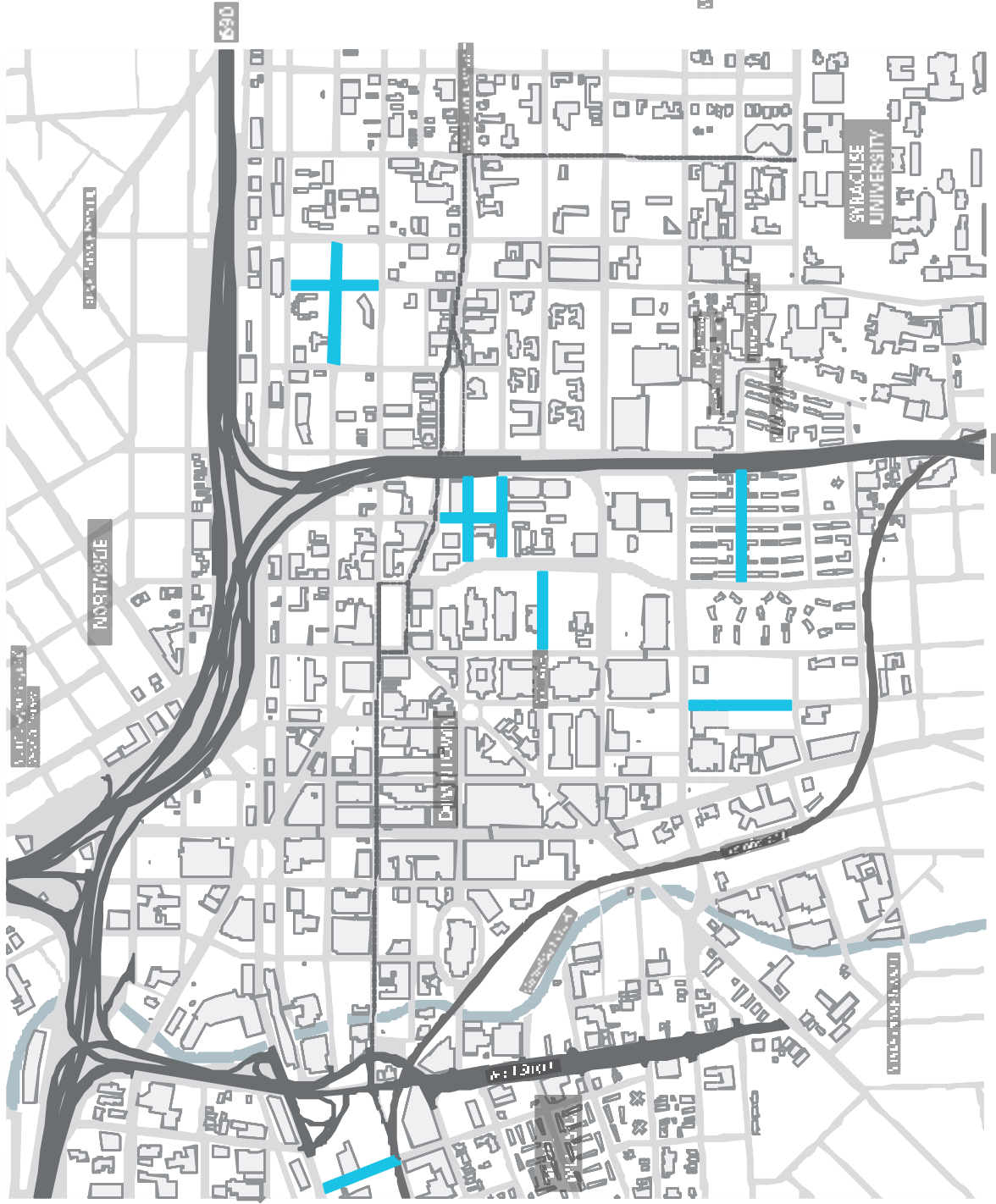
Question:

What are ways
the entire
transit system
can be modified
to reduce the
traffic demand
on 81?

COMBINING NEW DOWNTOWN DISPERSION WITH NEW
SOUTHERN DISPERSION STRENGTHENS THE GRID WITH
NUMEROUS NEW CONNECTIONS



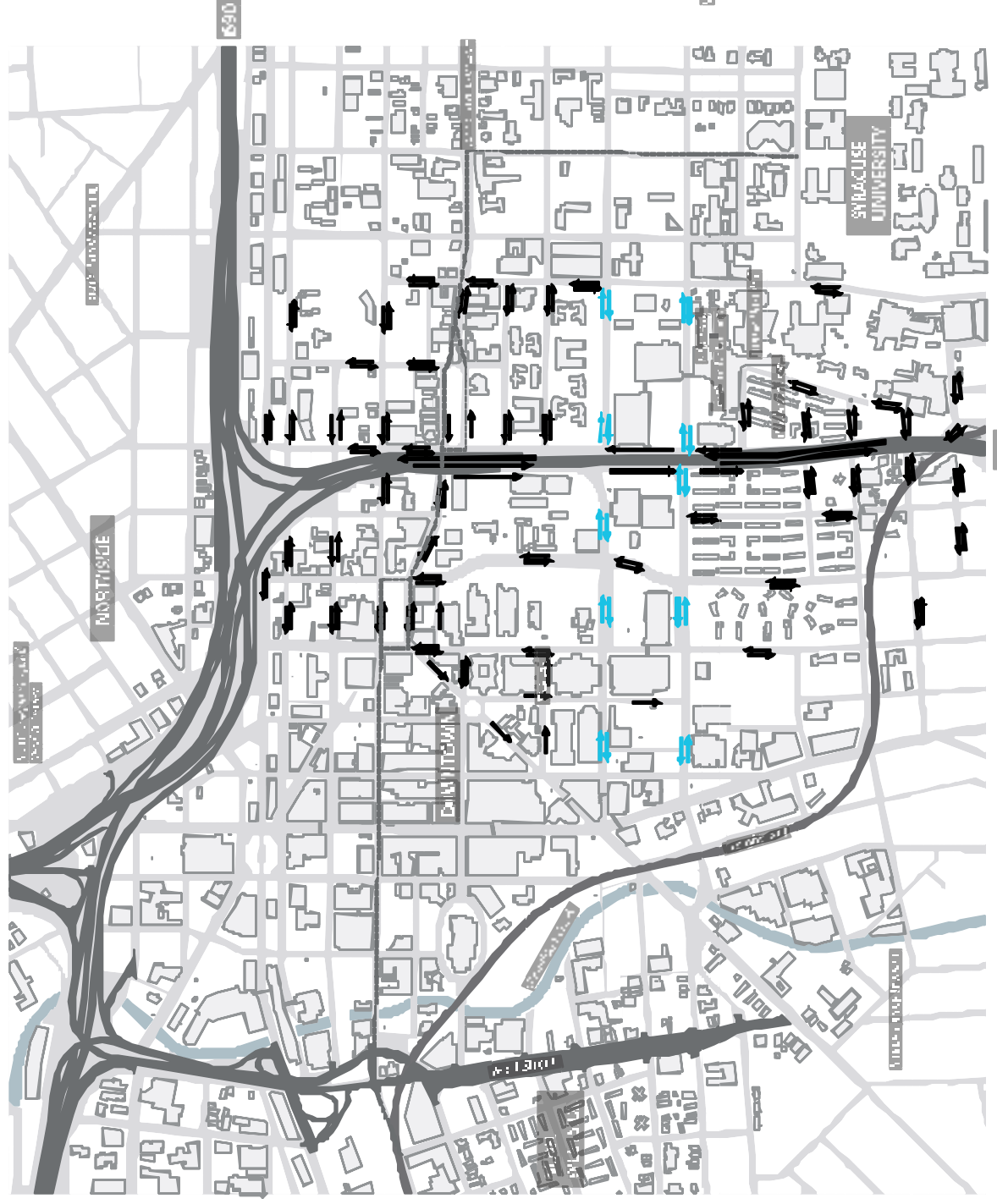
REESTABLISH HISTORIC BLOCKS THROUGHOUT THE CITY



Question:

What are the
improvements that
can be made to
the street grid to
make it operate
more efficiently?

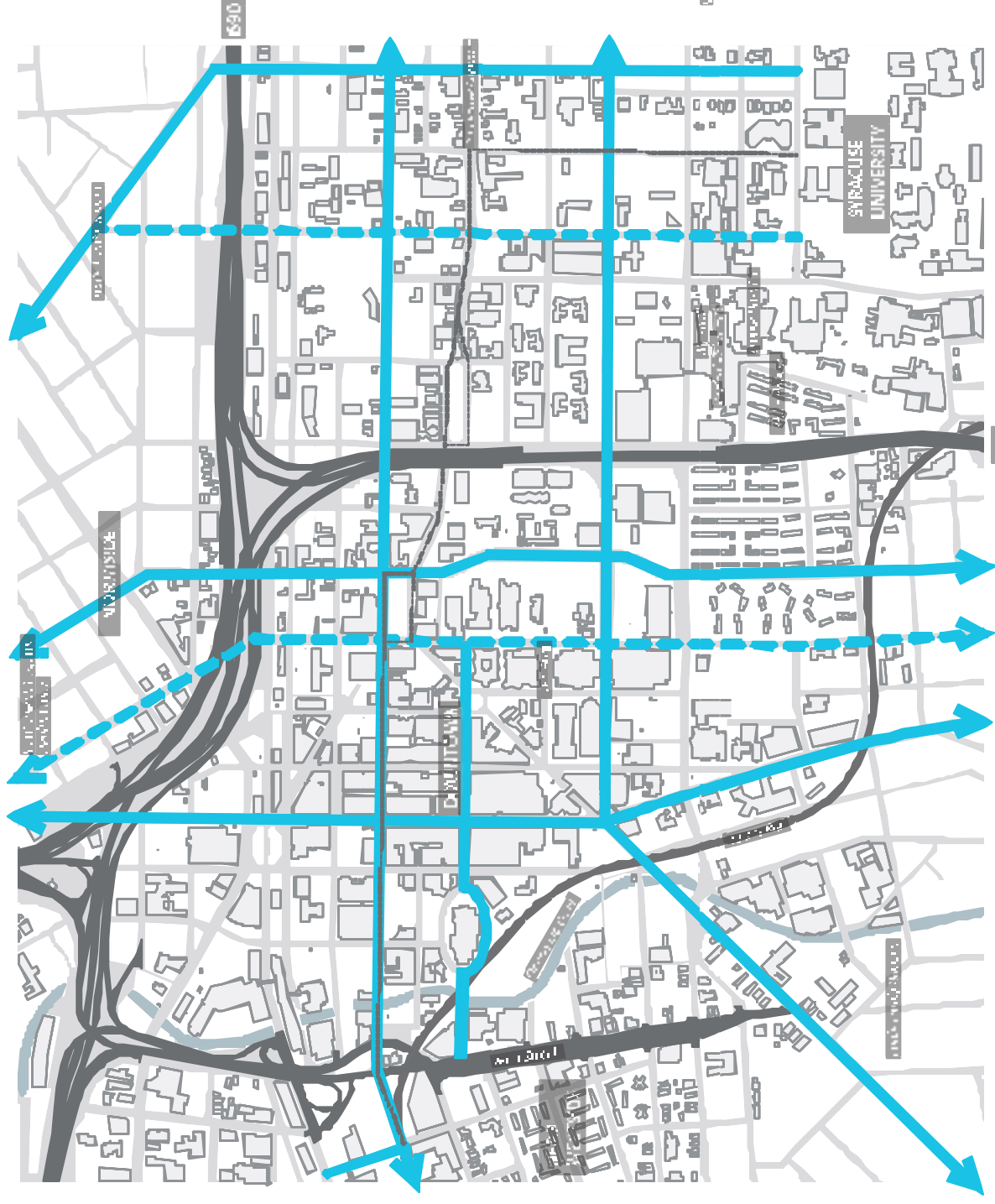
CONVERT ONE WAY STREETS TO TWO WAY



Question:

What are the improvements that can be made to the street grid to make it operate more efficiently?

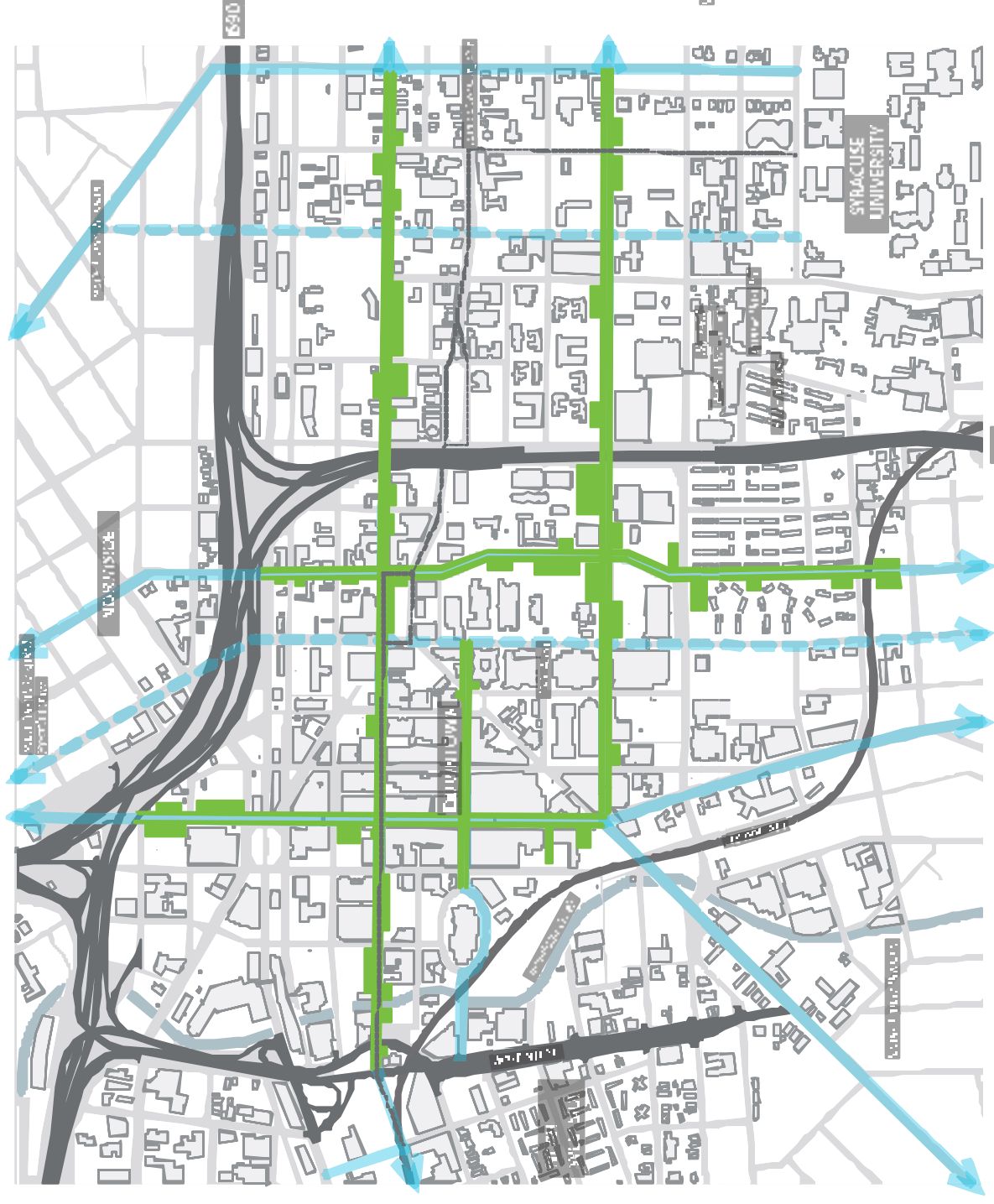
DESIGNATE THROUGH STREETS FOR INTENSIVE MULTIMODAL IMPROVEMENTS



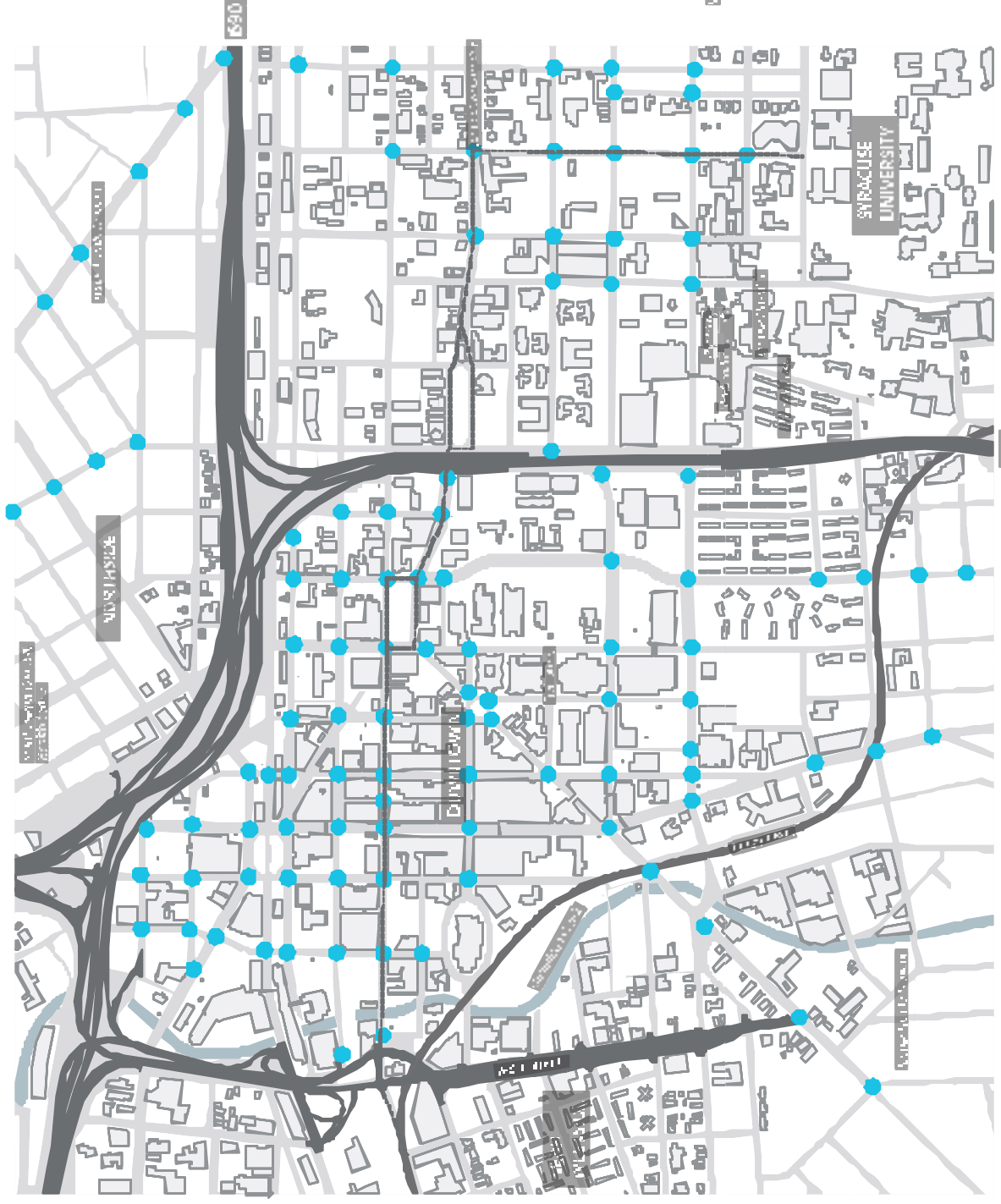
Question:

Is it possible
to have
BOTH high
connectivity
and good
urbanism?

WHERE ARE THE PARK AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES ALONG
THESE POTENTIALLY ENHANCED STREETS?



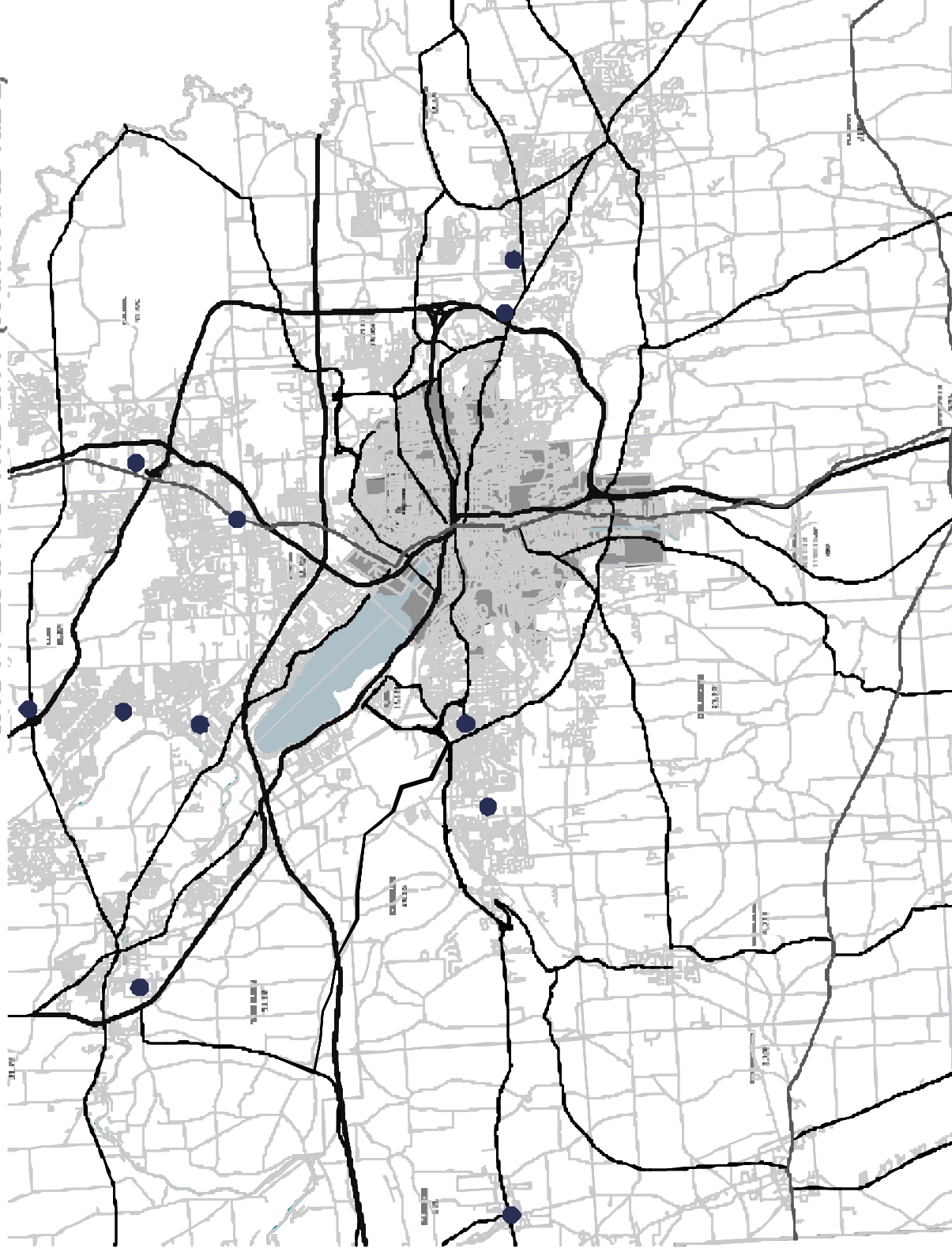
Question:
Can incorporating
synchronized
signalization
enhance traffic
flow and pedestrian
safety?



Question:

**Is it possible
to enhance
regional mass
transit options
to encourage
ridership?**

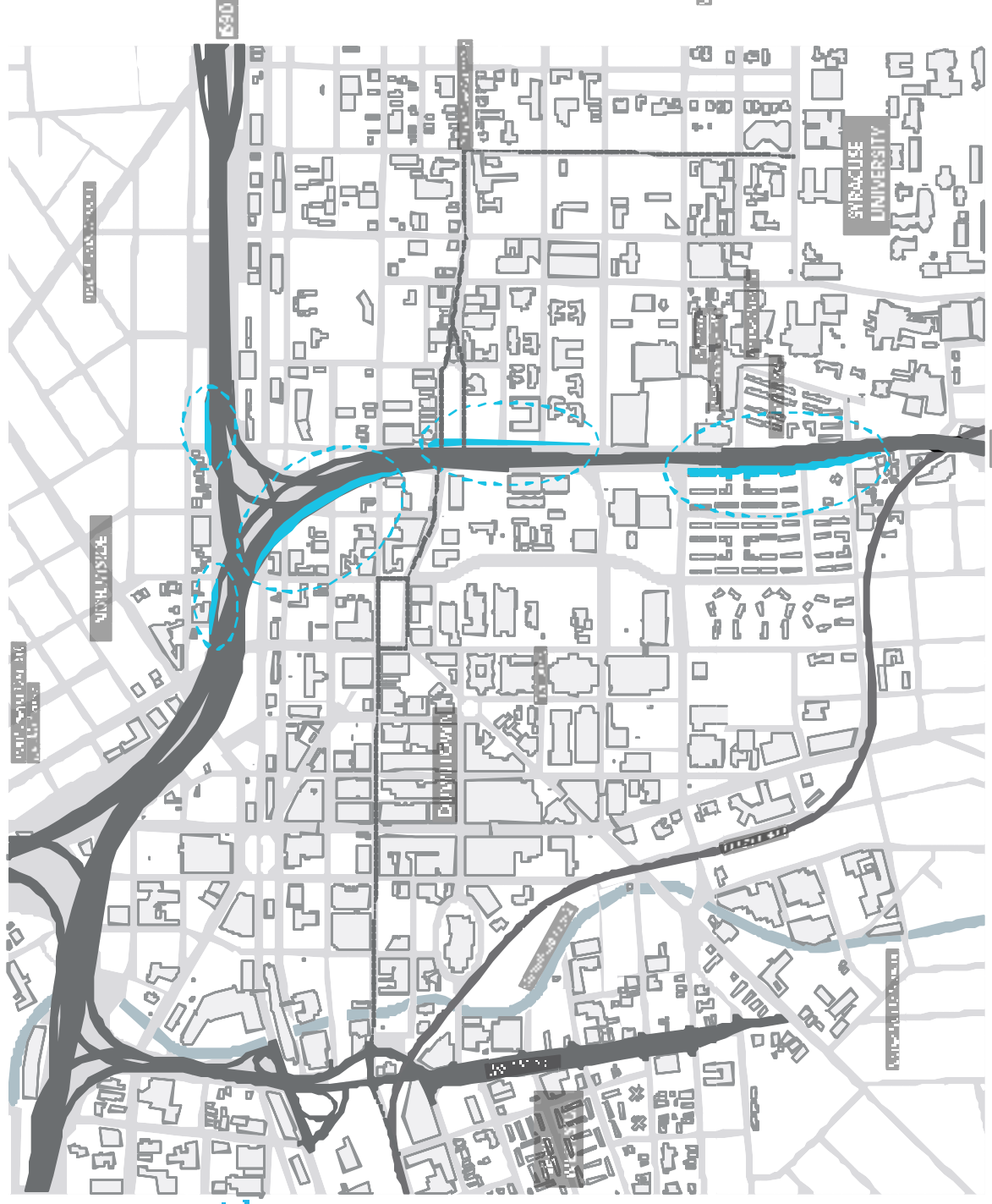
**ENHANCE AND MAKE MORE ATTRACTIVE EXISTING OFF SITE
SHUTTLES INTO THE CITY (PARK AND RIDE)**



Question:

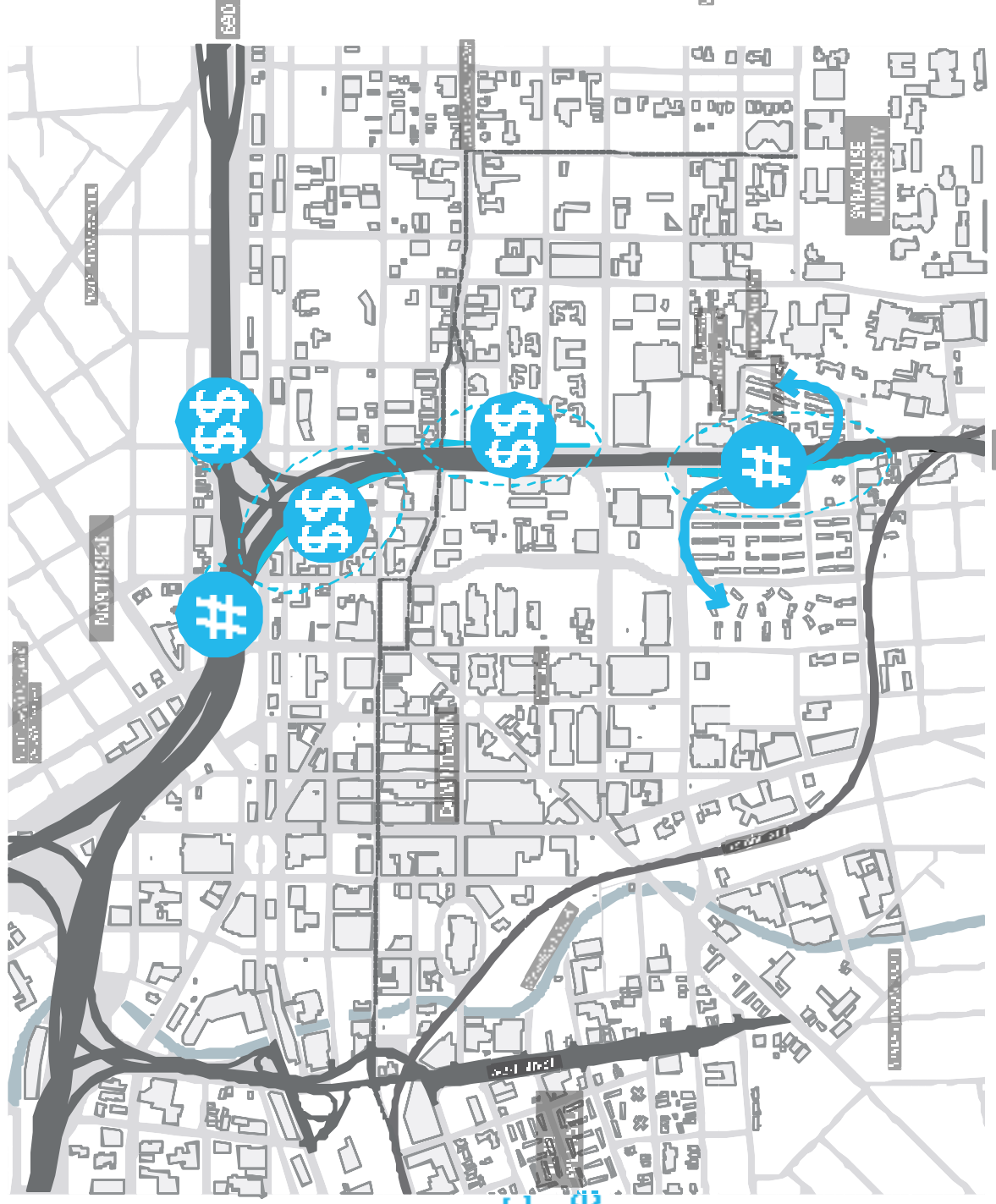
If the highway is
rebuilt to current
DOT standards
how much land is at
risk and where?

POSSIBLE LAND AT RISK TO EMINENT DOMAIN



Question:

If there is a need
for land seizures,
possibilities for
eminent domain,
loss of economic
value, loss of
housing units,
relocation costs, etc.
Can those effects be
clearly identified?

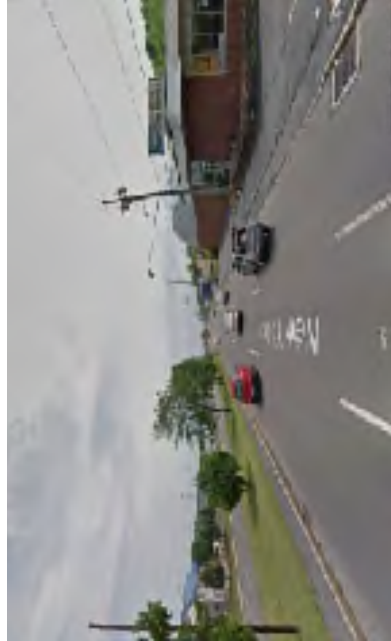


Question:
If rebuilt, can
recreational,
economic
development
and connectivity
opportunities
for underside be
considered?

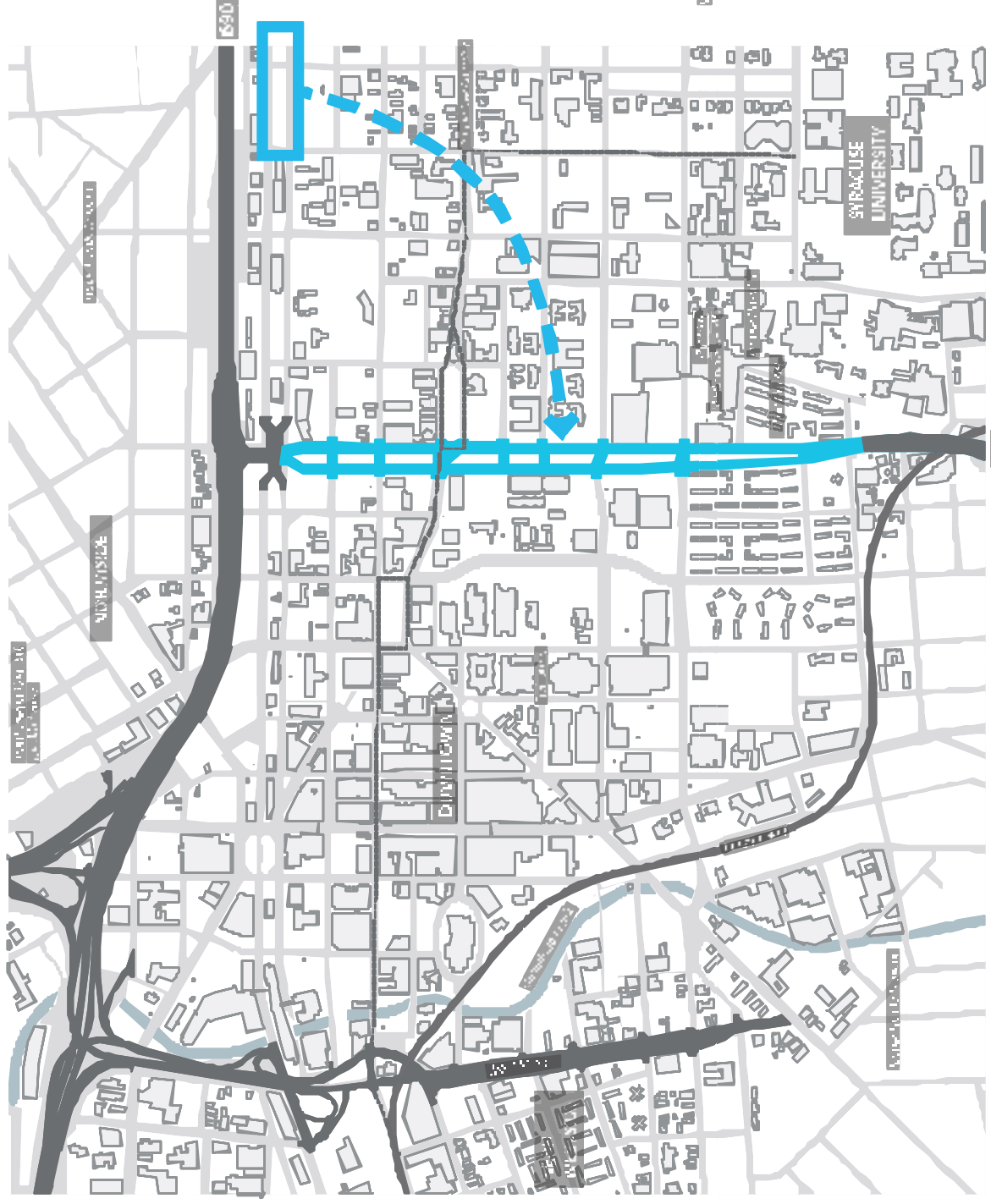


Question:

If a boulevard is built according to current design loads how does that street width compare to current undesirable “boulevards” in the city?

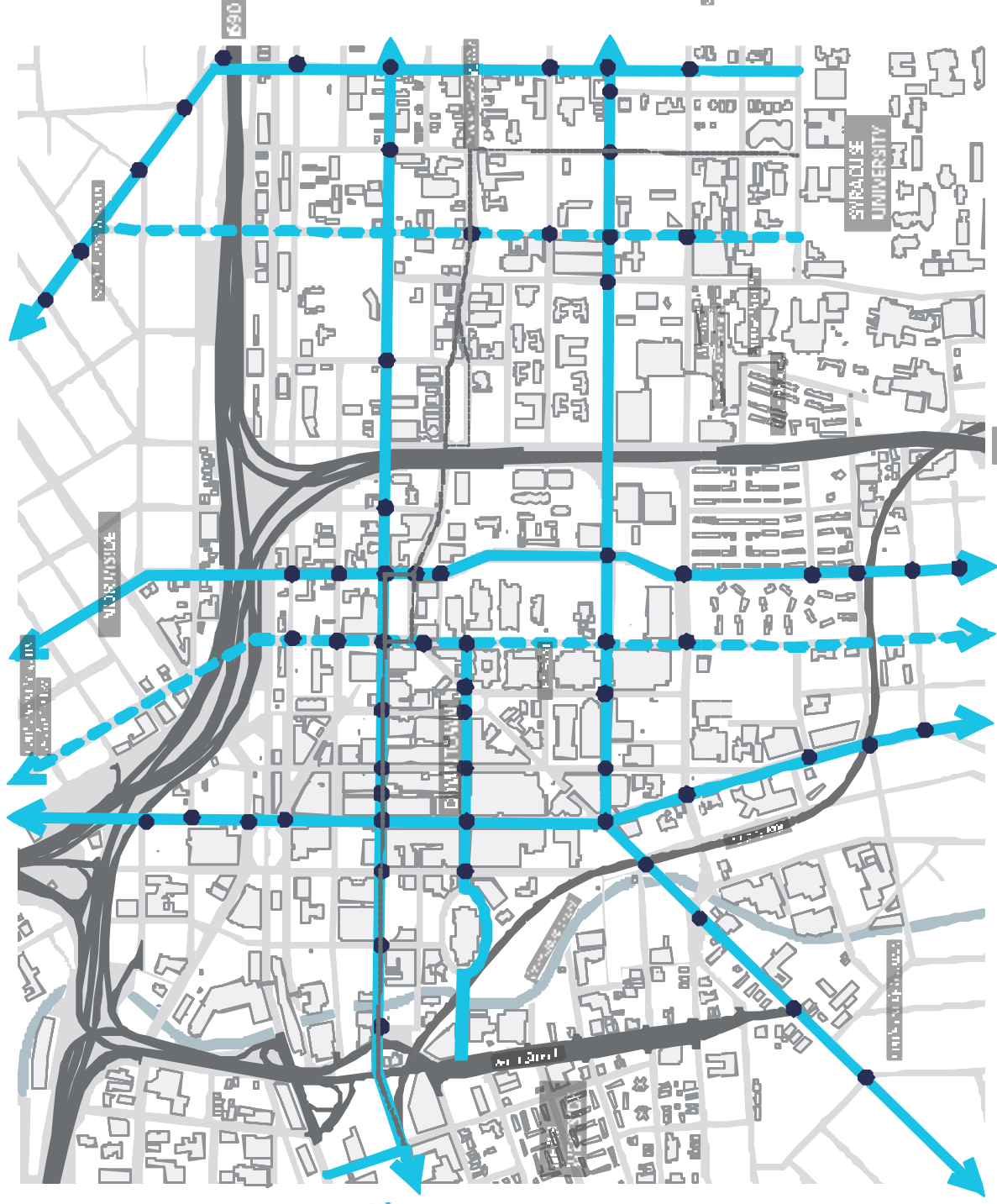


PLACING ERIE BOULEVARD FOOTPRINT ON ALMOND ST AND 81



Question: What are the efficient transportation options that could work in Syracuse? (Reverse flow lanes for events, real time signal timing, camera monitoring, etc)

etc)



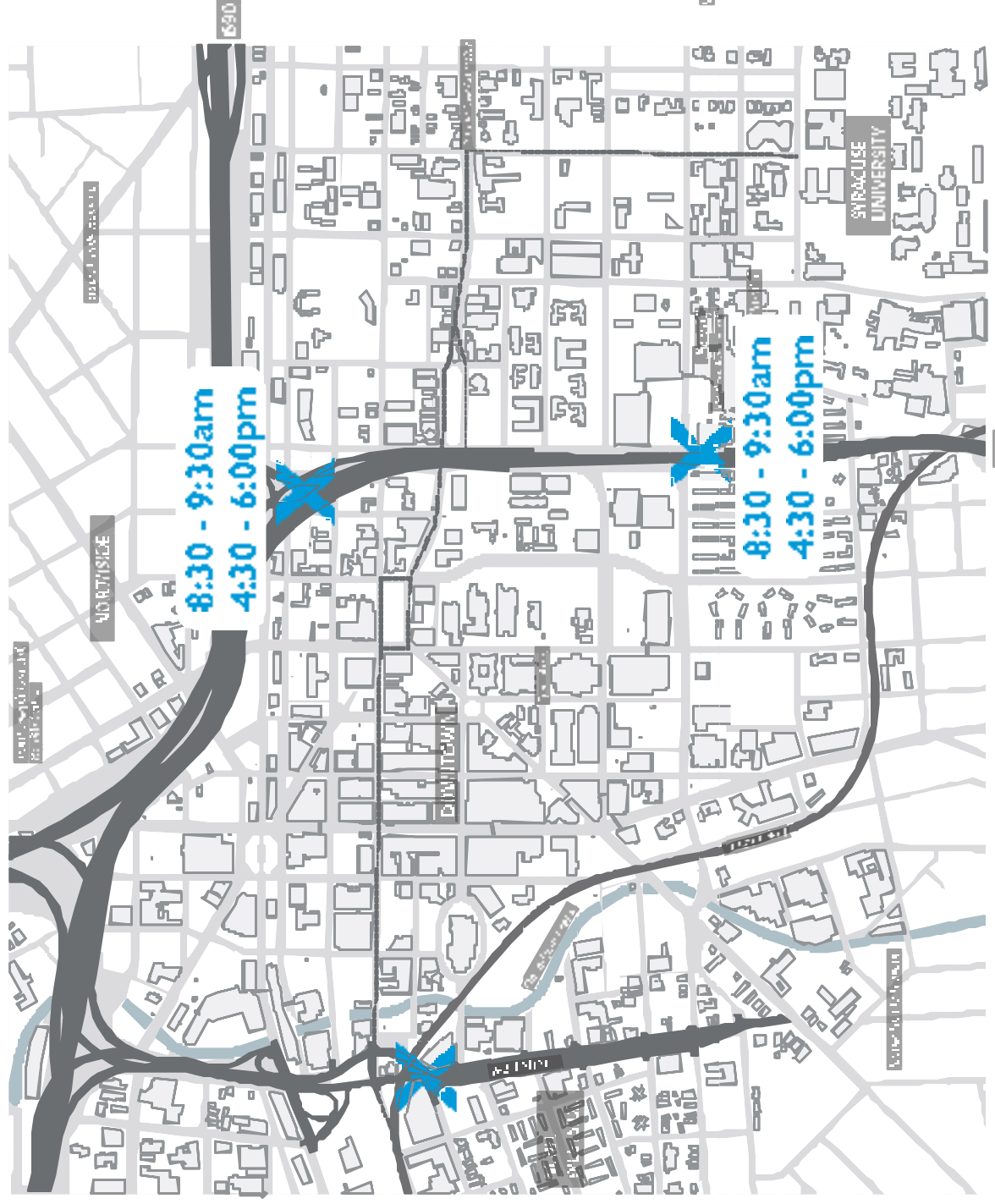
Question:

What is the feasibility for implementing roundabouts to disperse traffic at key decision points (Almond at Adams, West at Fayette, and Almond at 690)?



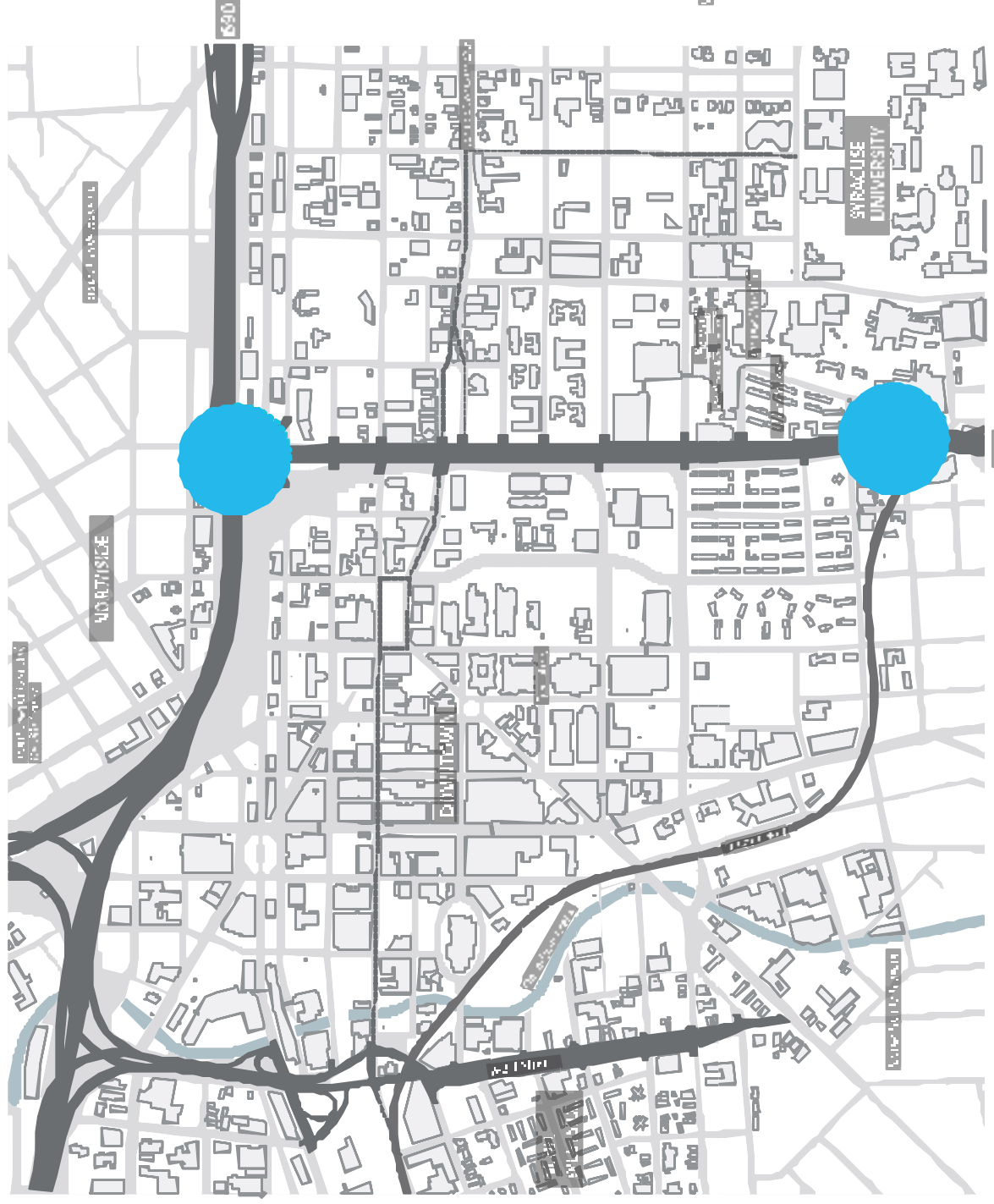
Question:

What are the methods and benefits to incentivize or disincentivize NYS Thruway, I-81, 481 truck traffic on certain routes or at certain times of day?



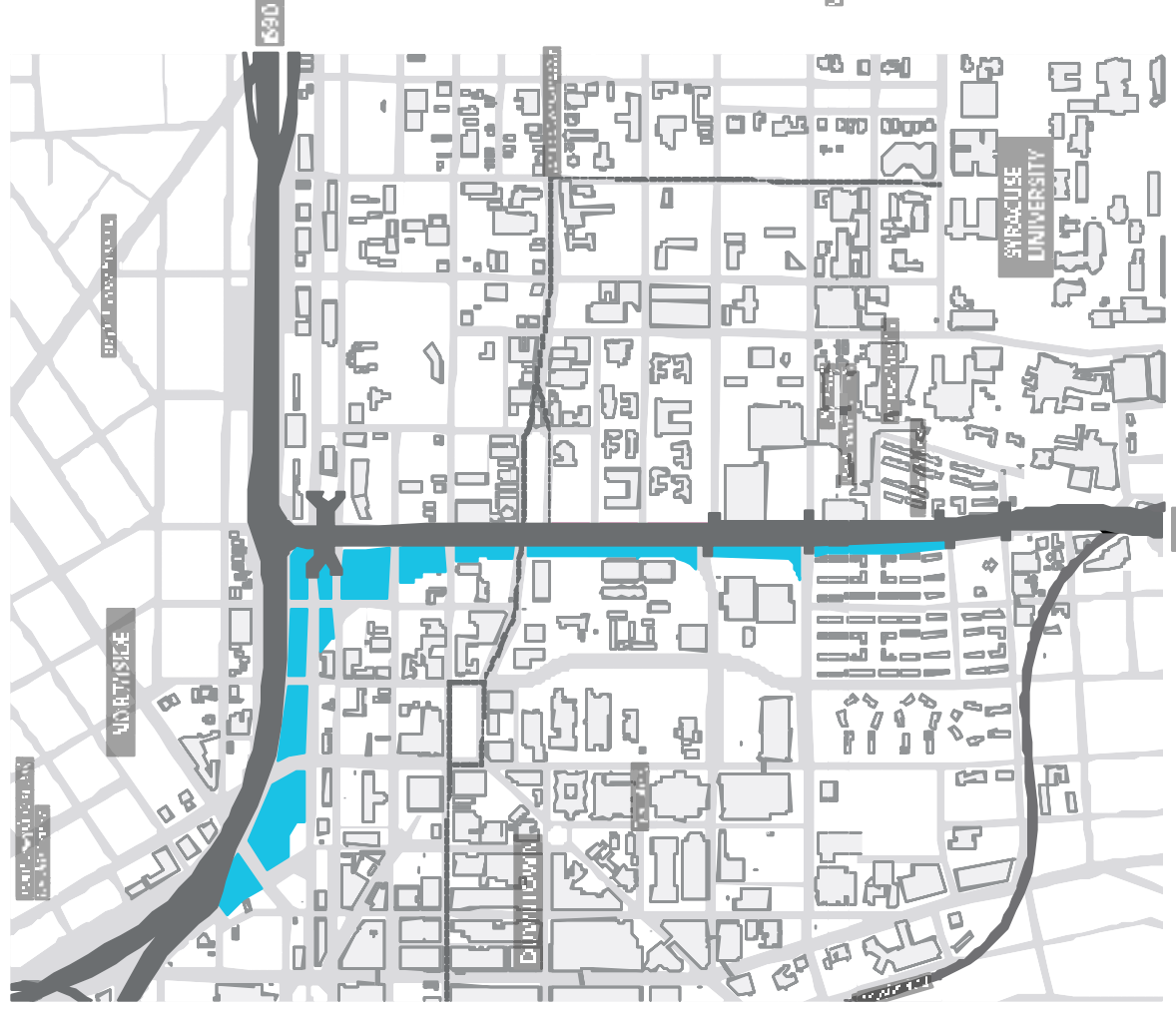
Question:

What are the strategies to reduce traffic speed as the highway ramps down to a boulevard?

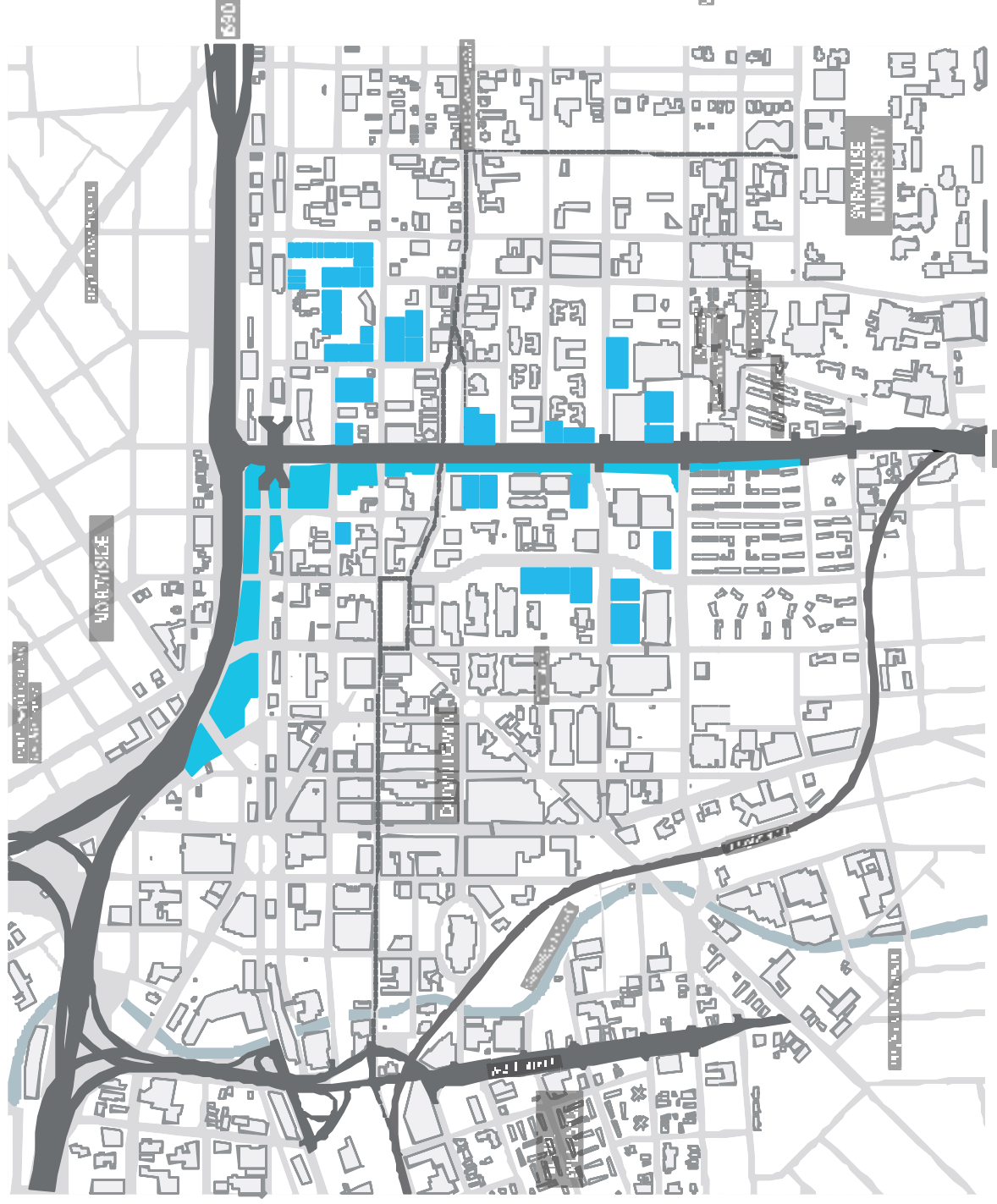
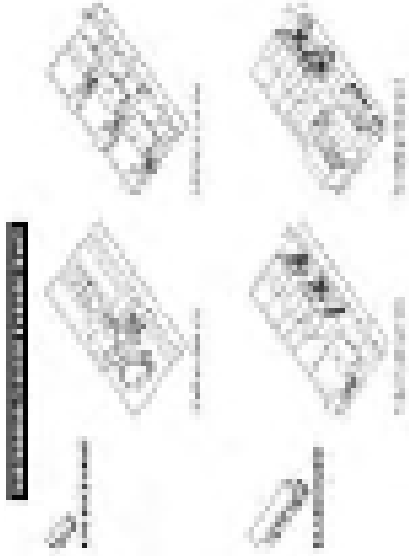


Question:

Can the project team coordinate with the City to create an overlay zoning district to ensure proper, dense development for public/reclaimed land?

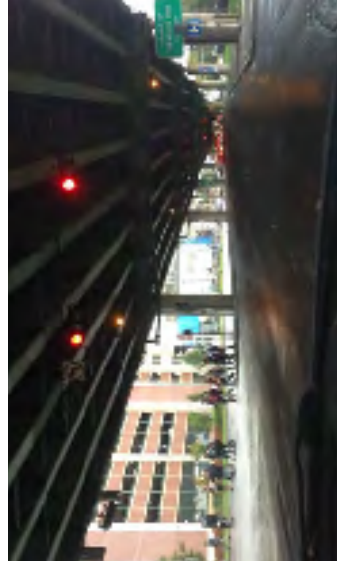


Question:
Can we allow
for new densities
necessary for
improved public
transportation in
the zoning code?



Question:

Can the team document and model the pedestrian experience for Pioneer Homes residents, students and others who have to cross every day for every option?



Question:

What are specific elements to enhance the streetscape and pedestrian experience? (locations and ideas for benches, bus shelters, vegetation, paving, cross walks, etc.)



Question:

Can the NYSDOT investigate precedents for partially depressed highways, i.e. Fall River, MA, Columbus, OH Cincinnati, OH, etc and quantify their benefit to the city?



Fall River, Ma



Columbus, Oh

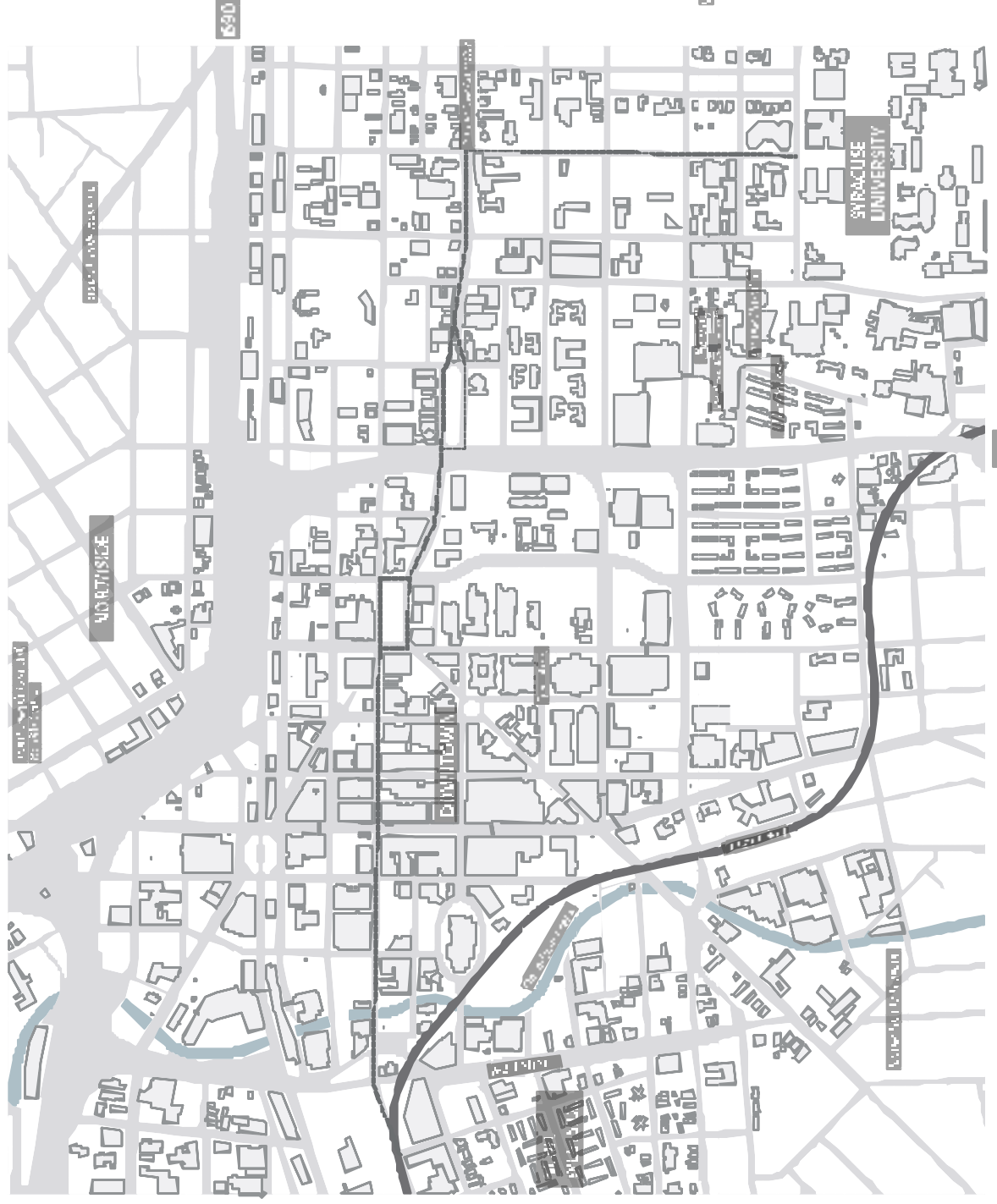


Cincinnati, Oh



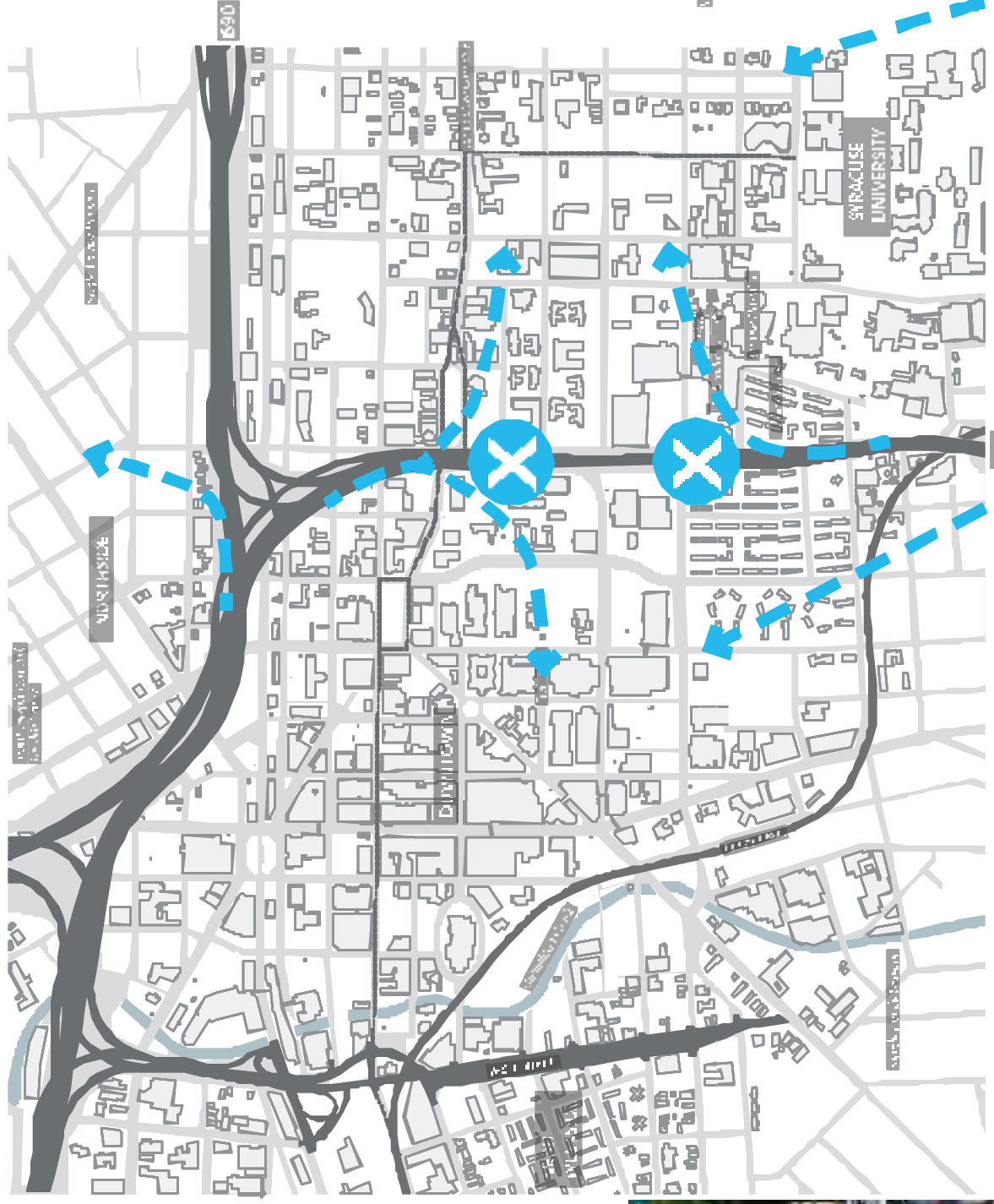
Question:

Can there be an
interim plan during
construction
to not diminish
quality of life for
residents?



Question:

Would temporary
closures and
reroutings be
useful to gain real
world data about
viable alternate
routes?



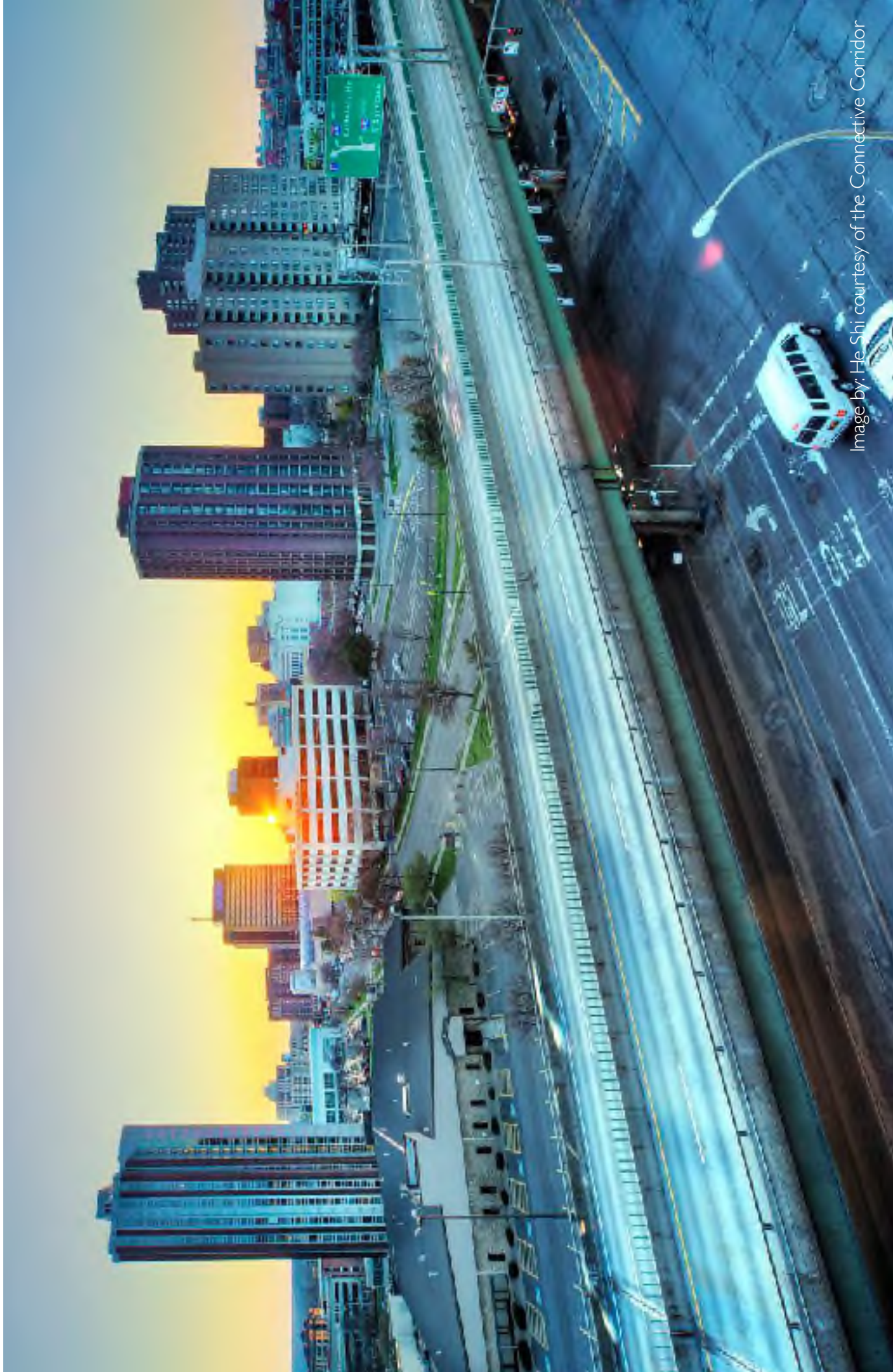


Image by: He Shi courtesy of the Connective Corridor

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name: Dan Smith Sr.

Address: 409 Cayuga St. City: Syr. State: NY, Zip: 13204

Phone: Email: danlisa74@aattol.net

Comments: I. How are you going to deal with traffic during
any construction? Mainly when it comes to games, ambulances,
graduations and deliveries to Up-State Hospital when their main
deliveries get delivered on Renwick Ave. that can only be accessed
from Almond St and current 81 bridge).

A. Street level would cause people to go around the city
rather than going thru W. From past history any town or
city that has lost their highway and their connection to
the rest of their area, has lost business and become a ghost town,
I prefer the viaduct to be built.

Also I deliver and work for Up-State Hospital, I deal with
the issues on a daily basis between the hours of 5am-6pm and
I only see the viaduct options working. unless you want to
increase accident down town. The only ones that would benefit,
would be the hospitals from patients they admit. Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:
I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online: www.i81opportunities.org **Information Hotline:**
toll-free: (855) 181-TALK (481-8255)



US Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Comments (continued from front):

I Please inform us of the potential advantages and disadvantages of each I-81 option with regard to snow removal, melting snow, difficulty getting on/off ramps in snow (or rain). This should be an important feature to consider in Syracuse.

II Show real examples of each option in other cities:

e.g. Depressed highway Rte 33 Buffalo
or I-495 Rockton
boulevard NY 8/12 arterial
in Utica
(I - I'm
not including tunnel &
blvd!!)

Frank Smith
Troy, NY
6379389



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

Mark SpadaFore
824 2nd Street
Liverpool, NY 13088
315-461-0146

Our community has a once in a lifetime opportunity to rethink how our city is designed. We are lucky to be living in such a time and place with the technological advances in urban design, and thoughts on how to build a community that can serve the interests of the entire community. We as a community, with our elected governments on the local, State and Federal level, can determine what type of community that will be created for the next 50 years. We should contemplate not only what is best now, but what is best for the future.

Since the viaduct completed construction in late 1960s, the way our economy was ordered has changed drastically. The largest employers are located right next to the viaduct, and the community is now looking towards the urban core for growth, rather than expanding into the suburban and exurban areas of the surrounding community. Therefore, keeping the existing viaduct (that runs approximately from Castle Streets to Hiawatha Boulevard) is not an option that follows good urban design, or one that follows good environmental or healthy strategies. Our transportation system is also sorely lacking in planning of moving people to these highly dense areas of the city, but that is a topic that is secondary to the planning task at hand.

As a person who commutes from Liverpool, it is important that we respect all people when making a decision. I personally would prefer to see the existing viaduct replaced, the land reclaimed for other uses, and the existing traffic either put through a below grade tunnel or depressed highway. That is the best use of the land that is there today, and I am sure we have enough engineers that can figure a way to make the below grade tunnel or depressed highway happen in a healthy, environmental sound way that reclaims the land below the existing viaduct for commercial and residential uses. We need to ensure that we are making the proper investments that benefit everyone, and not small, myopic interests. I would encourage those that are looking at these options to consider the broader concerns of what is best for the entire community.

From: no-reply@dot.state.ny.us
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Subject: Contact the Project Team
Date: Friday, January 17, 2014 12:21:46 PM

Last name - SPENCER

First name - TODD

Affiliation -

Address 1 - 383 WINKS RD

Address 2 -

City - CENTRAL SQUARE

State - NY

Zip - 13036

Phone -

Email Address - ajax@yahoo.com

Question or Comment - EMERGENCY TRIPS TO THE HOSPITALS WILL TAKE EXTRA TIME FOR US THAT LIVE NORTH. ALSO A REAL PAIN FOR COMUTERS TO ALL THE MEDICIAL FACILITIES.

Contact the Project Team

dot.sm.webcentral

Sat 5/3/2014 10:18 AM

Managed Folders

To:dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>;

Last name - SPIEGEL

First name - Stuart

Affiliation -

Address 1 - 198 bRONSON rOAD

Address 2 -

City - Syracuse

State - NY

Zip - 13219

Phone -

Email Address - sspiege1@twcnny.rr.com

Question or Comment - 1) In searching the <https://www.dot.ny.gov/i81opportunities> web site for SEQR information relating to the project, there are no hits for "SEQR" returned from the site. Either there is an issue with the search function, or there are no references to the NYS SEQR process on the site. The state SEQR process has as much importance as NEPA in this instance. While much of the documentation being developed can serve for compliance with both NEPA and SEQR, they are distinctly different in some aspects. The public needs to be able to review both processes.

2) There is a link to the LOI for the NEPA process so that it can be viewed. However, there is no indication that a Lead Agency letter under SEQR was issued by the NYSDOT, nor of the circulation list for that letter.

Respectfully,
Stuart Spiegel

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Reg. Dir.	Asst. Reg. D.
LT.	Construction
Design	Fleet Admin.
Admin. Svcs.	PPM
RECEIVED REG. DIRECTOR R-3	
DEC 30 2013	
Real Estate	Safety
Traffic	Operations
All GDs	All RES
☒ PIO	Michelle

Name: Elizabeth Stack

Address: 223 Crawford Ave City: Syr State: NY Zip: 13224

Phone: () 449-0602 Email: _____

Comments: I have attended several meetings & have heard the concerns & criticisms. I feel we have an opportunity - a once in a lifetime opportunity to improve the beauty, ^{traffic}retail & accessibility of downtown by replacing 81 with a boulevard. Access to Upstate is critical. If a grid can work in NY City it can work here - Emergency vehicles can get to Upstate by the boulevard - Cars will move over & slow down as they do now on surface roads. Business's on 7th No. Street Park an exit directly from 81 to their hotels. They can advertise & I don't think

Please continue comments on back if needed.

**Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014**

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Comments (continued from front):

they will lose revenue.

What I don't understand is how 690 will safely move into 81 No.

As I said before, we have an opportunity to enhance the retail business & also make the city a more beautiful place.

I hope the Boulevard will become a reality.

Good luck to you all -



I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: GREG STARK

Address: 223 OAKFORD

City: SYR

State: NY Zip:

Phone: () 449-0602 Email:

Comments:

SEEMS THE CITY IS BEING RAILBONDED
BY BOB CONGER AND THE BUCKS

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

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New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

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toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



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Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

Contact the Project Team

dot.sm.webcentral

Sat 6/28/2014 10:58 AM

Retain

To:dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>;

Last name - Stavenhagen

First name - W. Kurt

Affiliation - Syracuse University

Address 1 - 239 HBC Syracuse University

Address 2 -

City - Syracuse

State - New York

Zip - 13244

Phone - 3156262852

Email Address - wkstaven@syr.edu

Question or Comment - I think the SI-1 option offers the best low-cost solution, provided bike lanes and green landscaping is made part of the plan.

I work at Syracuse University as a professor and have use the 690/81 interchange for years. Its merging lanes are dangerous and prone to traffic congestion.

481 provides what is needed for transit through Syracuse. The boulevard can encourage current trends of mixed housing and urban renewal as an appeal to young people and other renters that want an urban community experience. It could also integrate light rail, much like Portland, Oregon's system that could connect parts of the town and has been a boon to Portland's revitalization. It would continue former Chancellor Nancy Cantor's vision of corridors between the campus and surrounding communities.

Sincerely,

W. Kurt Stavenhagen

Writing Department

Syracuse University

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name:

Rich Steele

Address:

4814 PATRICK PL.

City:

SY

State:

NY

Zip:

13088

Phone: (315) 451-3292

Email:

Comments:

Build The BRIDGE

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name: Kate Strach

Address: 449 Keawick Dr.

City: Syracuse

State: NY Zip: 13208

Phone: ()

Email: kstrach@juno.com

Comments:

I believe a viaduct option rather than the bus option would be in the best interests of the city. I have time constraints + believe the viaduct would be faster into + out of the city. The boulevard option would exceed more of a traffic jam when I need to get to the north part of the city (N. Syrl) within 15 min + back.
You are also losing some of the possible revenue opportunities in generating all the through traffic around the city to 481.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) 181-TALK (481-8255)



US Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

Streater, Kelley_09-24-2013

From: Streater Kelley [streater3000@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, September 24, 2013 10:08 PM
To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities
Subject: The cheapest option, everyone can agree on

81 should be rerouted onto west street. You could easily build this option while traffic is still flowing on the current highway.

If you rebuild 81 in the same place, there would be so many traffic disruptions, costing lots of money. Please don't do that.

Plus, everyone can agree in this option: the elevated highway comes down, but 81 still goes through Syracuse

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: Michael Streissguth
Address: 223 Twin Hills City: Syracuse State: NY Zip: 13207
Phone: () Email: _____

Comments: _____

IN MY VIEW ANY SOLUTION SHOULD ~~HAVE~~ INCLUDE
REGIONAL PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AS AN IMPORTANT
COMPONENT. ~~AS~~ IF THE CURRENT I-81
CORRIDOR THROUGH SYRACUSE IS TO BE REPLACED
BY A ROADWAY, IT SHOULD BE LIMITED
TO TWO OR THREE LANES. PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION
(SUCH AS LIGHT RAIL) CAN ~~FIX~~ ~~TRAFFIC~~
LIMIT VEHICULAR TRAFFIC SO AS NOT
TO OVERBURDEN THE SMALLER ROADWAY.

^{Smaller}
THE COMBINATION OF PUBLIC TRANSPORT AND A SMALLER
ROADWAY WILL IMPROVE AIR QUALITY AND STREET-
LEVEL CONVENIENCE AND COMMUNITY NEAR THE
CURRENT I-81 CORRIDOR.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:
I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

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toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

Sullivan, Patrick_09-17-2013

From: Patrick J. Sullivan [patrick.sullivan@aslf.org]

Sent: Tuesday, September 17, 2013 2:18 PM

To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities

Subject: vertical stacking the viaduct

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen:

Stacking the northbound and southbound lanes of the I-81 viaduct would reduce the width of the interstate's

footprint in the area, allow newly constructed lanes and shoulders to meet USDOT specifications, and make the final

product much safer. Please contact me with any questions.

Best wishes,

Patrick J. Sullivan

GIS Manager

Atlantic States Legal Foundation, Inc.

658 West Onondaga Street

Syracuse, NY 13204-3711

Phone: 315.475.1170

Fax: 315.475.6719

www.aslf.org

www.onondagalake.org

www.glgc.org

practiceGREEN

Save a tree. Read, don't print, emails.

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting November 13, 2013

Reg. Dir.	Asst. Reg. D.
LT.	Construction
Design	Fleet Admin.
Admin. Svcs.	PPM
RECEIVED REG. DIRECTOR R-3	
JAN 09 2014	
Real Estate	Safety
Traffic	Operations
All GDs	All REs
	Michelle

Name: JAMES M. SWEM
Address: 213 KINNE ST. City: E. SYR State: NY Zip: 13057
Phone: (315) 439-1963 Email: JMSWEM@VERIZON.NET

Comments: SEE MAP ON OTHER SIDE

I WOULD KEEP 81N TO 481N
WITH MANDATORY TRUCK EXITS
AT 481 N

I WOULD "GO TO GROUND" AT NEDROW
WITH YOUR 6 LANES B "GO TO GROUND"
AT ADAMS BUT JUST TO STOCK STREETS;
WITH SIGNAGE TO DEFINE AS SUCH.

KEEP 481 S TO 81N LOOP FOR
EMERGENCY ACCESS (NO TRUCK TRAFFIC)
81S EXIT TO 481S ALL TRUCK TRAFFIC
AGAIN, SIGNAGE OF TRAFFIC REDUCTION.
WEST ST. TO ADAMS FOR EMERGENCY
TRAFFIC / B/O 481S FROM THE NORTH

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:
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New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:
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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

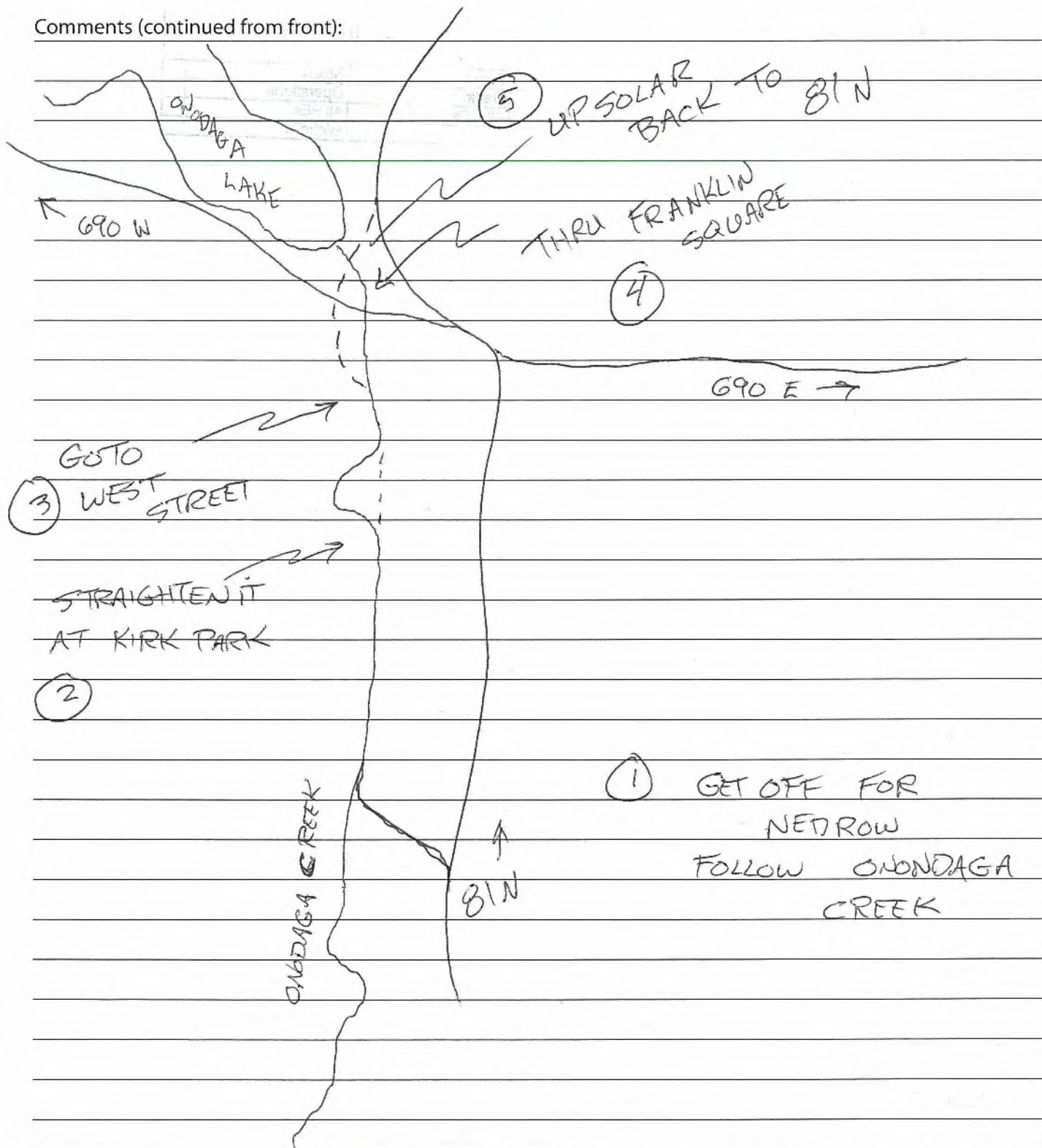


New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Comments (continued from front):



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation



RECEIVED SEP 02 2014

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

September 2, 2014

Mr. Mark Frechette, Project Director, I-81
New York State Department of Transportation
Hughes State Office Building
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, New York 13202

Dear Mr. Frechette,

The replacement of Interstate 81 through the City of Syracuse will have a significant impact on Syracuse University no matter which proposed alternative is selected. The University is a major regional employer and destination for commuters, visitors, and those conducting business on a daily basis. The interstate directly contributes to traffic on the University Hill, and the decision to replace I-81 provides an important opportunity to improve transportation conditions for our campus and the surrounding community.

For this reason, I assembled a University workgroup composed of faculty and staff who have vast experience and expertise in design, planning, and transportation management. Over the course of several months this past spring and summer, this workgroup compiled information on the University's business operations, transportation conditions, the campus and surrounding community's physical environment, and future plans for development on and around the University's campus.

Enclosed is a copy of the workgroup's report that I submit for your review as the University's response to your solicitation for comments to NYSDOT's scope of work in its study of proposed alternatives. The report focuses on the major issues, concerns and objectives for the University – not the current proposed alternatives. As you will find, the report describes several challenges in how traffic flows to and from campus, and recommends key objectives and considerations to improve the transportation experience. These recommendations include:

- (1) Access to campus and the University Hill community must be preserved and enhanced before, during and after constructing any alternative. A well-functioning multi-modal transportation plan should be in place to mitigate the disruptions in daily commuting, and create positive experiences to encourage the use of alternative transportation options.
- (2) A new exit off I-481 should become a major direct access point to the campus and University Hill community, when it currently is not, to further leverage park-and-ride operations from South Campus.

CHANCELLOR AND PRESIDENT

900 S. Crouse Avenue / Crouse-Hinds Hall, Suite 600 / Syracuse, New York 13244-2130 / 315-443-2235 / Fax: 315-443-3503

- (3) Any new highway exchanges and gateways to the University Hill must have an aesthetically pleasing view of the city and community in addition to traffic planning to make the most of this entryway to campus.

In addition to accepting this report, I hope that we can continue to work closely together as you undertake this complex initiative. The workgroup will reconvene this fall to hold an open forum to discuss its findings and recommendations with faculty, staff and students who have just returned to campus to begin the new academic year. I encourage you and/or your staff to attend, and have asked my staff to work with you to ensure that NYSDOT has an opportunity to participate.

I appreciate the opportunity to share the University's perspectives on I-81, and trust that you will give the report's findings and recommendations your full consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kent Syverud", written in a cursive style.

Kent Syverud

The Chancellor’s Workgroup on I-81

Final Report

June 23, 2014

Michael Speaks (Chair)

Colleen Bench

Allan Breese

Chris Johnson

Burak Kazaz

Outline

Chancellor’s Memorandum to the Workgroup.....	2
Executive Summary.....	3
Section 1: I-81 and the Current Decision-Making Process.....	6
Section 2: The City and the University Hill.....	8
Section 3: SU Campus Daily Operations.....	13
Section 4: Campus Planning and Real Estate Holdings.....	16
Section 5: Economic Development and Community Planning.....	21
Section 6: Quality of Life in the City and on the Hill.....	24
Section 7: Key Considerations and Recommendations.....	25

MEMORANDUM

To: Michael Speaks (Chair); Colleen Bench; Allan Breese; Chris Johnson; Burak Kazaz
From: Kent Syverud, Chancellor and President
RE: Workgroup on I-81
Date: April 15, 2014

I am appointing each of you to a workgroup with the charge to recommend key objectives and considerations for the University pertaining to the future of I-81. New York State is conducting an environmental review that will eventually lead to a decision for replacing the existing structure. Syracuse University has an important stake in the final decision as a national/international university, a major regional employer, and one of the most popular destinations in the region. We are also a leading educator in architecture, urban design, civil engineering, and other related fields of study.

I am asking this workgroup to produce a report that will:

- (1) Outline key considerations and impacts on the University's daily operations. This should include access to campus; attendance at athletics or other special events at the Carrier Dome; and, the logistics of moving employees, students, equipment, and supplies across campus and to destinations in the community. The report should examine the impacts in the short-term, given protracted construction that is expected, and long-term implications on daily academic and business operations.
- (2) Outline long-term implications on campus planning including campus design and environment; real estate holdings; capital projects currently under development; and potential changes to the University's planned institutional districts.
- (3) Describe the long-term implications on the community, including quality of life for living and working in the city; economic development; and regional planning.
- (4) Recommend key design objectives and considerations that address the issues outlined above.

Each of you has particular expertise and experience to understand how changes to I-81 will impact our campus and our community. There has been much public discussion pertaining to specific design alternatives being studied by the State, or ideas that have been presented to the community by other interested parties. The purpose of this workgroup is not to study those alternatives, nor advocate for a specific plan on behalf of the University. Your charge is to help me better assess the major issues surrounding the I-81 replacement and therefore make decisions that are in the best interest of the University, both internally and externally.

I expect a report to be completed by Monday, June 16th. I ask that you consult with Eric Spina, Lou Marcoccia, Kevin Quinn, Daryl Gross, Chuck Merrihew, Rebecca Reed-Kantrowitz (and any of their relevant direct reports). Staff support will be provided by Eric Persons, Associate Vice President in the Office of Government and Community Relations.

CC: K. Quinn, D. Gross, E. Persons, C. Merrihew, R Reed-Kantrowitz, L. Marcoccia, E. Spina.

Executive Summary:

Over the course of two months, the Chancellor's Workgroup on I-81 conducted weekly meetings to gather information about the campus and surrounding community, daily campus operations, and future planning efforts that would be impacted by the decision to replace the current I-81 highway. The Workgroup interviewed University officials from Syracuse University Athletics, the Office of Parking and Transit Services, and the Office of Campus Planning, Design and Construction in order to review the transportation needs of the University community related to daily commuting, special events, capital projects, and future plans for development in and around campus. The Workgroup also interviewed transportation planners and officials from the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council and the New York State Department of Transportation in order to better understand the decision-making process in replacing I-81.

Whatever the ultimate configuration of I-81, the most important issue related to the I-81 decision is improving traffic circulation on the University Hill and on the University campus: both vehicular and pedestrian. The impact on traffic will be significant, no matter the alternative. This provides not just an opportunity to improve upon current conditions, but a requirement to plan strategically and mitigate the impact that construction will have on the area.

The most immediate impact will be on traffic leading to and from campus, and thus on vehicular and pedestrian traffic on the campus proper. There are two aspects to these two kinds of traffic and traffic circulation. One concerns efficiency: How do we most efficiently move people and goods to and from, and throughout, the University Hill and campus so that students, employees and visitors are able to conduct their daily business. The other concerns the campus experience: How do we most effectively script the movement of people and goods to and from and throughout the University Hill and campus so that students, employees and visitors have a coherent, unified, positive "Syracuse University Experience."

Among its several findings and conclusions, the Workgroup believes the following current conditions should be strongly considered in establishing the University's perspective on I-81:

- The University does not have enough space to accommodate parking demands on the main campus. The long-term, strategic approach to University parking and transit is thus to move parking away from main campus to locations on the periphery of the University Hill. This will reduce the overall daily traffic strain on the University Hill.
- Access to the University Hill area from the current configuration of I-81 is extremely limiting with only one direct exchange at Adams and Harrison streets; the consequence of having essentially a single access point creates a traffic bottleneck for daily commuters and visitors to downtown Syracuse and the University Hill institutions.
- The University lacks a signature gateway, or "front door" that aligns well with current traffic flows.
- In order to accommodate the short- and-long-term needs of access to the campus, the University must participate in the development of a multi-modal transportation system for the University Hill.
- The vast majority of vehicles using I-81 exit the highway to reach a local destination in the city and surrounding community. Only 6% stay on I-81 to drive through the city; another 5% use the I-690 exchange to access I-90.

- Traffic congestion along with decisions made 50 years ago during Urban Renewal have impeded economic development. The decision to replace I-81 presents an opportunity to create a long-term development plan that will enable the University, the city and the region to live up to its economic and life-quality potential.
- Regardless of the alternative selected, the I-81 decision will significantly impact the configuration of the SU Steam Plant, and future construction will disrupt the commuting schedules of faculty, staff and students accessing University locations downtown.

In moving forward, and to ensure that the University's interests are best represented in the decision-making process, the Workgroup recommends the following key objectives and considerations.

- (1) Any campus strategic planning effort should take into account the extensive construction period that is expected to commence as early as 2017. Once construction commences on any of the I-81 alternatives, there will ensue a long and extremely disruptive period of at least 5 years that will require unprecedented planning and coordination with the city and the state.
- (2) It is essential that a well-functioning, multi-modal transportation plan be in place before any I-81-related construction occurs in order to mitigate the disruptions in daily commuting. All commuters will be impacted, and operating a multi-modal transportation system with military-like precision will be required to create positive experiences for alternative transportation options.
- (3) The campus should have multiple access points off the highway system, including at least one access point from each of I-481 and I-690 highways, and connecting into the city's street grid to improve the flow of vehicles to parking destinations. I-481 should become a major direct access point to the campus, when it currently is not, to further leverage existing park-and-ride operations from South Campus. Likewise, park-and-ride options off I-690 should be explored where opportunities currently do not exist.
- (4) The University experience begins when you exit the highway. Therefore, any major exchanges must have an aesthetically pleasing view of the city and community in addition to traffic planning to make the most of this entryway to campus.
- (5) The University has embarked on an ambitious plan to develop residential, commercial and academic infrastructure in the West Campus Planned Institutional District (PID). This area is presently boxed by the current highway configuration. Alternatives that open the Almond Street corridor to the city street grid would open the West Campus PID to the city and could provide an additional gateway to the University.
- (6) There will be major consequences for the University properties located off the main campus. We should be advocating for solutions that minimally influence the University's plans and operations for the Syracuse University Steam Station, Nancy Cantor Warehouse, 900 E. Genesee St. block, Peck Hall and Syracuse Center of Excellence.
- (7) Ultimately, there will be political obstacles, and the University should identify objectives shared by other institutions located at the University Hill and work collaboratively to achieve our common goals.

These key objectives and considerations will need quick review as the decision-making process on I-81 will soon be at a pivotal point. By the end of June, NYS DOT is expected to finalize its scope of work to conduct a comprehensive environmental impact study of alternative proposals to replace the highway. As a first step in finalizing the scope of the work—which will range from studying the impacts on transportation to the issues associated with air quality, social equity and economic development—NYSDOT is expected by June 26 to reduce significantly the 16 alternative proposals that it has presented to the public. It will be important for the University to ensure that its key interests are examined in the environmental review. The final scope of work for the environmental assessment will have a significant role in determining the final alternative to I-81, and the University should advocate that the issues highlighted in this report are taken into account.

Section 1: I-81 and the Current Decision-Making Process

Residents of Central New York have heard for nearly a decade that I-81 is “nearing the end of its useful life”—particularly the highway’s elevated sections running through downtown. Over the next decade, portions of the road will need to be replaced, reconstructed, removed or otherwise changed at a significant cost because the core structures are at the end of their useful life.

There has been a long public debate about the best approach to replacing the current I-81 structure. The future of I-81 has thus taken on great symbolic importance, especially considering how the city and region as a whole have evolved—economically, culturally and socially—since I-81 was first constructed. The decision will impact the livelihoods and lifeblood of those who live and work north of downtown. Without the highway, commuters fear long commute times and businesses fear their commercial interest will be negatively impacted. For others, the decision provides an opportunity to redress the economic, social and urban mistakes created by the original decision to build I-81. Proponents of dismantling the I-81 viaduct argue that the renewal of a structure that has its historical roots in the anti-urban policies from 80 years ago will continue to ignore the city’s needs and aspirations today. They also argue that it is vital to spur the level of investment that other post-industrial cities have seen in their core urban centers over the past decade.

The formalized, governmental decision-making process began publicly in 2010. At that time, the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC)¹ and NYS Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) began a highly publicized outreach and visioning campaign, *The I-81 Challenge*, which was intended to educate the public and gather traffic data and community feedback to help develop concepts for replacing the viaduct. One important finding was the vast majority of users of the highway do not travel through the city, but rather exit the highway at various points leading into downtown. Only 6% of the vehicles drive all the way through the city on I-81, while another 5% use the I-81/I-690 exchange to access the New York State Thruway. These findings suggest that alternatives to the current I-81 structure need to take into account the large number of vehicles heading to destinations in the city and surrounding area, including the University.

In 2013, the *I-81 Challenge* concluded its public outreach by suggesting five conceptual options for I-81: replacing the old viaduct with a modern viaduct; a depressed highway; a tunnel; a boulevard; or, a rehabilitated structure.

The decision-making process has now entered a second phase, under the purview of NYS DOT and the Federal Highway Administration. The current process includes a federally mandated environmental impact study to more rigorously examine the possible impacts that each of the

¹ SMTC is the New York State-designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) responsible for the transportation planning process in Onondaga County and other parts of Central New York. As the regional MPO for Syracuse, all transportation projects must be accepted into SMTC’s transportation improvement plan as a first step to receiving state and federal funding. SMTC develops its plans through committees composed of representatives from local, state and federal governments, elected officials, and other stakeholders. Syracuse University’s Office of Parking and Transit Services and representatives of the University’s senior leadership are often called upon to sit on SMTC’s planning committees.

proposed alternatives may have on the community. A series of community meetings, public comment periods and detailed studies has been undertaken with two community stakeholder groups established to review NYSDOT's findings impacting sustainability and economic development.

This past winter, NYS DOT unveiled 16 variations in total on the themes of a boulevard, tunnel, depressed highway or a replacement viaduct. Any of these options will likely require adjacent property acquisition and the potential integration into the street grid in order to bring the interstate highway up to modern code. Public forums continue to be spirited and divisive, and NYS DOT has been routinely under public scrutiny from all sides over their methodologies. As a parallel effort, Onondaga County, the City of Syracuse and NYS DOT are sponsoring a public speaker series to bring in national experts to discuss the experiences of other communities that have faced similar decisions.

At the end of June 2014, NYS DOT is expected to release its recommendations to the public and is expected to significantly reduce the number of alternatives prior to conducting its environmental assessment. The NYS DOT's environmental impact study will include an examination of current transportation conditions; land use; required land acquisition, displacement and relocation; community character, including cultural resource and aesthetic considerations; air quality; energy and climate change; noise pollution; natural resources and environmental hazards; and the impact of construction. Following the study's conclusion, a final decision will be made and explained in a document released to the public. New York State Transportation Commissioner Joan McDonald has indicated a decision will be made in 2015.

NYS DOT maintains a website that describes its work, the options available to replace I-81, and all related documents and public presentations: <https://www.dot.ny.gov/i81opportunities>.

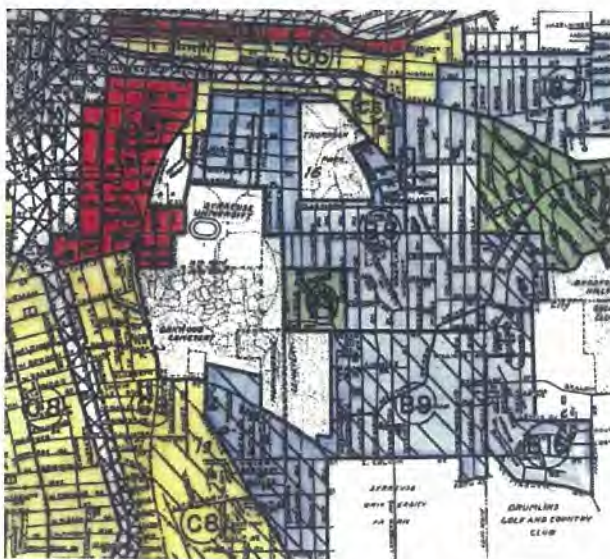
Section 2: The City and the University Hill

The 15th Ward

The development of Interstate 81 narrates a complicated history. The earliest plans for a north-south highway in the Syracuse area were first discussed in the late 1940s as the United States began a nationwide surge in infrastructure investment. The creation of the Interstate Highway System in the mid-1950s provided the framework for the decision to have I-81 pass through Syracuse. By 1958, the decision was made to build the elevated section between the University Hill and downtown Syracuse at its current location above Almond Street. Construction occurred in three stages over the course of a decade, with the final section being completed in 1969.

During this time, urban renewal, employing powers of eminent domain to seize private property, became the principal means of public land redevelopment. Like many cities with a strong industrial heritage, Syracuse embraced grand visions of modernizing its urban core as a way to reinvent itself. Urban renewal envisioned the elimination of older housing, decayed structures and other areas perceived to be in decline. In their place were proposed wider, open spaces more conducive to the automobile. Indeed, the automobile was the economic and cultural driver of what ultimately proved to be a model of redevelopment that favored commuting from suburban periphery into or through the city center. What was promised, but never delivered, was the rebuilding of the city fabric and the public amenities that are necessary to sustain mixed residential and commercial communities.

The area beneath the I-81 overpass through downtown Syracuse was once a vibrant neighborhood consisting of families, shops, schools, jazz clubs and other businesses. The area, known as the 15th Ward, underwent a remarkable transformation in the mid-20th century. It transitioned from being a largely Jewish neighborhood in the 1940s—all seven of the city's synagogues were located here—to becoming a largely African-American neighborhood by 1960. During this period, old and new mixed to form the complex social fabric of the 15th Ward.



The original "redlined" maps showing areas near the SU campus.

In 1937, the 15th Ward was one of the first areas of the nation to be "redlined," a practice used by federal authorities to control mortgage lending. Redlining a neighborhood essentially meant that banks would not lend for mortgages in the area around which the "red line" was drawn. During this same period, the 15th Ward saw the development of one of the nation's first public housing projects, Pioneer Homes.

Reflecting nationwide migration trends, Syracuse experienced a major influx of new African-American residents fleeing Jim Crow and segregation in the American South during the 1950s and 1960s. As the older generation of residents in the 15th Ward—largely second-generation families of Eastern European immigrants—left the central city for life in the emerging suburbs, the 15th Ward became the landing point for many of the African-Americans coming to Syracuse.

“Red lining” policies limited residents’ ability to borrow money for mortgages or for upkeep, and thus began a period of decline that resulted in conditions that were reported by some newspapers as slum-like. By 1965, Syracuse officials, encouraged by urban renewal policies, made “slum clearance” a priority for this area.



Residents of the 15th Ward; photos courtesy of “The 15th Ward Project”, led by Syracuse University professor Dr. Kendall Phillips.

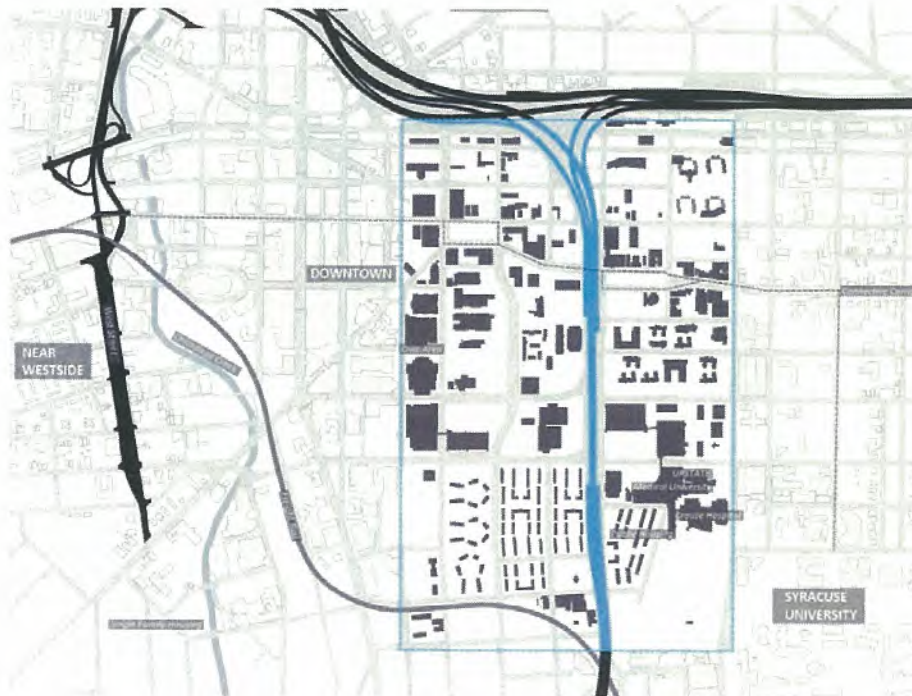
By 1965, much of the 15th Ward was almost entirely demolished; some 1,800 structures were torn down, destroying what was once one of Syracuse’s more vibrant neighborhoods. At the time, there was little public opposition to the destruction of these “rundown” neighborhoods.

Over 50 years later, relatively few of the proposed redevelopment projects meant to replace the demolished homes, small businesses and community institutions have been built. One of the most long-lasting effects of urban renewal was the dramatic reduction of neighborhood density—now considered a positive measure of urban potential and progress. Those using I-81 to access the city and University Hill are today greeted by an unattractive city fabric marked by vacant lots, surface parking and the noticeable absence of pedestrian traffic. The effect is not only aesthetic, but is decidedly economic. Buildings scattered along the I-81 periphery remain unconnected to the kinds of pedestrian-centered public and commercial areas that all experts today agree are necessary ingredients for attractive live-and-work environments.

Syracuse Before I-81



Syracuse After I-81



From *Alt 81: Infrastructure's Role in the History and Future of Legacy City Design*. Marc Norman, Syracuse University School of Architecture, Upstate: A Center for Design, Research, and Real Estate.

The University Hill

University Hill was largely ignored during the development of I-81 in the 1950s and 1960s since the institutions on the Hill were largely seen as separate from the downtown area, with no pressing need to be connected. Chancellor William P. Tolley had talks in 1965 with the City of Syracuse about an east-west crosstown connector through Syracuse University that would go from I-81 to Euclid Avenue. While we have not been able to find a record of any statement by him or other University officials on the development of I-81, the historical changes in the infrastructure around the University Hill nonetheless had a lasting impact on the campus.

At present, the University lacks an acknowledged gateway, or “front door.” Historically, the public face of the institution has been defined by the manner in which visitors first approach the University. In the early years, a cable car operated on University Avenue, connecting the University to the main train station on Erie Boulevard. University Avenue ran all the way to University Place, which operated as a city street. For those reaching the University by train or automobile, the grand plaza in front of the Hall of Languages served as the gateway to the campus.

With the opening of I-81 and I-690 and the re-location of the train station, the main entry point to campus shifted to the west. The Adams/Harrison Street exit on I-81 delivers north- and south-bound vehicles to the corner of Adams and Almond streets, where they pass through the medical campus on their way to the University. Eastbound travelers on I-690 are directed to I-81 south and get off at the same exit. Westbound travelers on I-690 get off at the Townsend Street exit, from which they make their way to Adams Street, eventually reaching the same intersection with Almond Street. On ascending the Adams Street hill, vehicles continue on to University Avenue, turn right and enter the University through the original gateway. Alternatively, they might turn right on Irving Avenue, left on Waverly Avenue, and enter the University via Crouse Avenue.

To further control the influx of traffic onto campus, the University negotiated an agreement with the City of Syracuse in the mid-1990s to shift ownership of College Place and University Place to Syracuse University, thus closing those streets to public automobile traffic. In addition, the block of University Avenue between Waverly Avenue and University Place was converted to a pedestrian mall. For drivers, the kiosks on Crouse Avenue and University Place serve as the principal gateways to the University. Those who park and walk to campus approach from a variety of paths, including the Carrier Dome stairs, Crouse Avenue, University Avenue, the passages adjacent to Bird Library, and University Place near Watson Hall.

As noted above, all current approaches to the University off I-81 are highly unaesthetic and have long been discussed as a deterrent to visitors, prospective students and their families. I-81 funnels those visitors and everyday commuters into one congested area, marked by dark and rusting steel structures, a patchwork of concrete with water dripping overhead, and eight lanes of asphalt underneath the highway with no pedestrian accommodations or green spaces. This is the experience that thousands of people in their cars are greeted with each day prior to navigating the University Hill.

Proposed alternatives to the I-81 viaduct may result in diffusion of traffic to the University to an increasing number of approaches (the boulevard option), or continue to force University traffic through a single approach. In either case, careful consideration should be given to the way in which the University would like to welcome visitors who arrive by car.



Photo by Stephen D. Cannerelli, courtesy of Syracuse.com.

Adams/Harrison Streets Interchange

Most of the vehicle traffic to and from the University passes through the intersection of Adams/Harrison and Almond streets. Much of that comes from the Adams/Harrison streets exit on I-81, which collects vehicles traveling on both I-81 and I-690. This exit also serves as the primary point of access for the three medical centers and the criminal justice complex.

Backups around the exchange are commonplace during rush hour traffic. Under normal conditions, traffic to the University is not significantly hindered by hospital employee traffic because shift-changes at the hospitals occur between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m., then again between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m. Most University employees arrive and depart from campus later than these shift changes, but nonetheless they intersect with visitors to the University Hill institutions and commuters into downtown Syracuse.

With such a heavy dependence on one interchange, major problems occur when traffic cannot be spread over time. During winter storms, the cancelling of afternoon classes in combination with afternoon shift changes at the hospitals creates gridlock at Almond Street. Major events at the Carrier Dome also have the potential to create problems at the Adams/Harrison streets exit. However, the use of Syracuse police for traffic control during Dome events significantly reduces this pressure.

A final concern regarding the current layout is the need to provide quick and efficient access for emergency vehicles. Currently, ambulances and police vehicles have to fight through traffic on Adams Street to get to the emergency entrances at Upstate and Crouse hospitals. The ability to disperse traffic effectively on the University Hill is an important consideration in the debate about the I-81 viaduct replacement.

Section 3: SU Campus Daily Operations

SMTC estimates that 45,000 vehicles use the Adams/Harrison exchange on I-81 at the base of University Hill, and a significant number of those vehicles find their way to the University campus. Moving people, supplies and equipment is a fundamental function of the University's daily operations. The University works closely with the City of Syracuse, CENTRO and other University Hill institutions to ensure that traffic congestion is mitigated, public transportation functions without delay, and parking is tightly controlled. Key facts and figures to consider in understanding what transportation-related issues impact the Syracuse University campus include:

I. Parking

- There are presently 5,436 commuters with parking permits; 3,634 faculty/staff and 1,802 students, respectively. The distribution of permits by source community is shown in the table below for the six largest originations.

Origination	Faculty/Staff	Students
Baldwinsville	128	54
Camillus	98	56
Fayetteville/Manlius	375	119
Jamesville	184	34
Liverpool	267	127
Syracuse	1640	752

- There are more parking permits issued than the 5,090 parking spaces available on the main campus. When including parking available on the periphery at locations on South Campus and Manley, the total available parking spaces jumps to 9,100. In total, there are 2,300 parking spaces in six parking structures and 6,800 in surface parking lots.
- There are approximately 2,000 temporary parking spaces at Skytop, which are largely used during Carrier Dome events. However, Parking Services is now issuing permits for everyday parking at Skytop, and it is likely that the number of commuter permits for Skytop will continue to rise.
- The University is required to maintain 1,480 parking spaces near the Carrier Dome.

II. Public Transportation

- The campus shuttle system operates approximately 41,500 hours per year, from 6:30 a.m. to 3:30 a.m. during the academic year.
- Sixteen separate campus routes carry 2.4 million passengers annually.
- The University pays for Centro riders who have a University identification on those routes that serve the campus; the free rides are limited to route locations around the University Hill, University East Neighborhood, to/from the Nancy Cantor Warehouse, and South Campus.
- The Centro City fare is \$2 per ride. A \$60 monthly unlimited pass or a \$15 10-ride pass are available, and University employees can purchase them on a pre-tax basis. An average of 57 Centro bus passes are sold to faculty/staff on a weekly basis for commuting.
- During peak travel hours, there are 22 buses deployed to handle the traffic volume operating 255 scheduled hours. Approximately two-thirds of the passenger volume is between main campus and South Campus.
- Carrier Dome events can add up to 43 additional buses.

In addition to the conditions above, the University moves about 5,000 people off the main campus to various destinations across the city. Most of these are students studying at the Nancy Cantor Warehouse or the Falk College's downtown location at Peck Hall, or students involved in programs such as the Mary Ann Shaw Center for Public and Community Service.

Adding to the complications of moving people on a daily basis is the continuous work required to maintain utilities, construction and other activities that regularly interfere with road and pedestrian traffic on the University Hill. The standard construction period runs from the day following Commencement until one week prior to the start of the fall semester. Most major work on steam lines, chilled water lines, electric services, site work and parking areas must be coordinated and completed during this construction period. However, it is not unusual that unexpected maintenance and long-term capital construction projects occurring during the academic year present problems to both vehicular traffic and parking.

Given the growth of all the University Hill institutions, having enough space for employees, students and visitors to conveniently park their cars is a growing problem. The University's strategic approach in thinking long term about transportation is to move parking away from main campus and to locations on the periphery of the University Hill in order to reduce the traffic strain in accessing the University Hill on a daily basis. Having a convenient, reliable transit system to shuttle people to and from their cars is a necessity. The decision on I-81 can be an opportunity to implement that vision, as significant resources toward developing a park-and-ride system will inevitably be required to reduce vehicular traffic due to construction regardless of the alternative that is ultimately selected. "Temporary" measures often become permanent "solutions." It is, therefore, crucial that plans for traffic management, transit and parking during the construction

period be carefully made so as not to produce undesirable long-term outcomes that might stymie campus planning efforts.

Transportation Concerns with Carrier Dome Events

Adding to the daily transportation pressures on the University Hill that impact the I-81 decision are athletic and special events at the Carrier Dome. Basketball season can be especially difficult as the University can routinely expect a minimum of 20,000 additional people accessing the University Hill to go to a game during the middle of the workweek and oftentimes when the rush hour commute is occurring. The University currently has an agreement with the City of Syracuse to mitigate traffic disruptions caused by Carrier Dome events, in which police officers are deployed during ticketed events at the Carrier Dome. The number of officers deployed is pegged to expected attendance. University personnel work with the police to coordinate parking and direct traffic.

Although the University's collaboration with the police keeps vehicles moving relatively well during high-volume times, parking pressures continue to grow. The University is required to maintain 1,480 parking spaces at all times near the Carrier Dome, but that is clearly not enough to meet demand for Dome events that can top 50,000 in attendance. Weekday Dome events interfere with faculty and staff parking. Construction of Dineen Hall and future development work in the Campus West area (further described below under campus planning) has already eliminated 300 parking spaces near the Carrier Dome and forced Athletics to restructure its distribution of parking rights near the venue for longtime season ticket holders. As a result, the plan for parking for Carrier Dome events is to shift all parking away from the main campus and toward South Campus or areas below the University Hill. The University is already restricting all parking to South Campus and the periphery for non-season-ticketed events such as the popular monster truck show and has seen positive results in reducing traffic congestion around campus and on the University Hill.

The University's position on the I-81 viaduct replacement options should be informed by current efforts to evaluate and plan for the future of the Carrier Dome. Assuming the Carrier Dome remains on campus at its current location in the long term, current transportation management efforts will continue to shift parking to locations on South Campus and below the University Hill. The prospect of accessing campus via I-481 is an important consideration in order to fully utilize the South Campus park-and-ride program. Furthermore, shifting traffic away from the current I-81 configuration and to parking locations (future and current) accessible off of I-690 should be considered.

In order to shift parking away from its current configuration for Dome events, it is essential to have a strong, reliable public transportation system in place to quickly move large numbers of people in a short period of time. Currently, a typical football game requires 43 additional buses, operating 280 hours carrying 10,300 passengers. A typical men's basketball game requires 31 additional buses, operating 130 hours and carrying 6,000 passengers.

Section 4: Campus Planning and Real Estate Holdings

Campus West Planned Institutional District

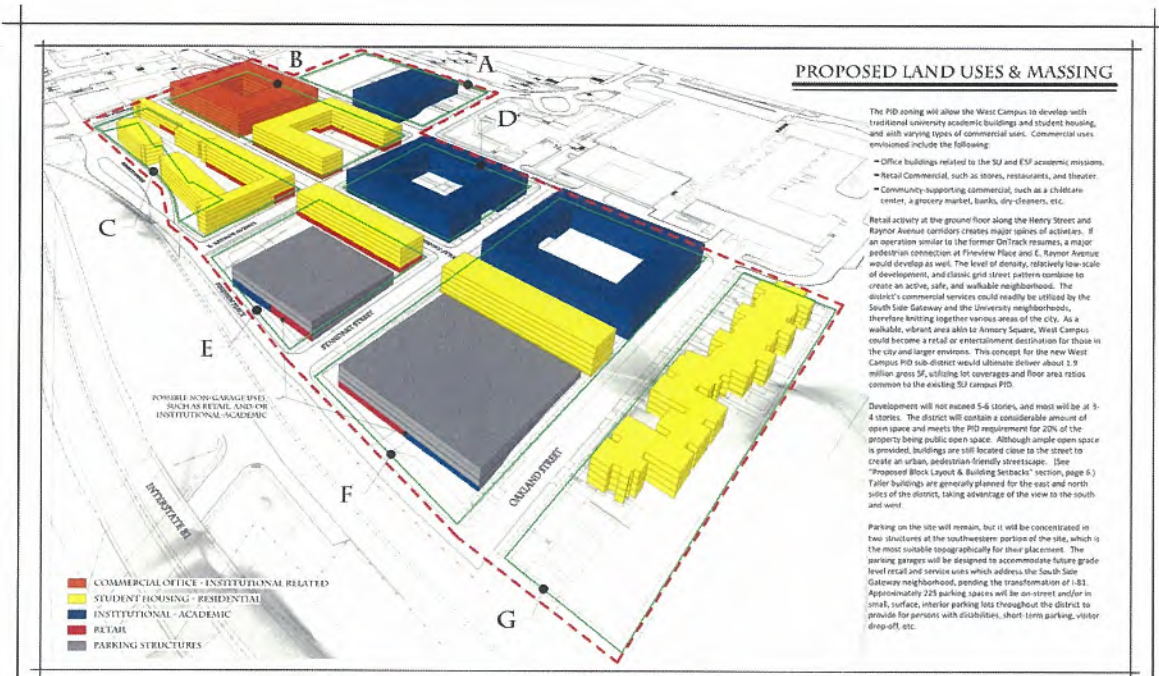
In 2011, the University and SUNY-ESF released a revised Planned Institutional District (PID) that reimagined the use for the Campus West area. The PID is a formal planning document that was approved by the City of Syracuse and serves as a master plan for a select area within the city.

Technically, Campus West is an 18-acre sub-district of the Main Campus PID filed with the city. The area is between Irving Avenue to the east, I-81 to the west, Van Buren Street to the north, and Oakland Street to the south.

In 2007, when planning work began to revise the Campus West PID, the area was nearly all composed of parking lots. When completed, it laid out a vision for 1.8 million square feet of mixed-use development, combining academic spaces with new student housing, retail, commercial/office spaces and parking. At least 20% of this space will be open to the public and include green spaces and streetscape enhancements for pedestrians and bicyclists. Buildings would be no more than six stories tall to preserve sight lines to and from the University Hill and surrounding areas.

Today, the early phases of Campus West development are being realized. The area is now home to Dineen Hall, ESF's Centennial Hall dormitory (which is currently expanding) and the Campus West Apartments. Future site development in the area is currently under consideration, with at least two projects being studied by the University and private investors.

If the institutions continue to grow on Campus West, and its vision is fully developed, the transportation pressures on the area will mount and only add to the strain that exists throughout the rest of the University Hill. There are currently 1,959 parking spaces—both surface and structured—after the reduction of 300 parking spaces due to the construction of Dineen Hall and the Campus West Apartments. The plan would require an additional 1,900 parking spaces in order to accommodate housing, new employees and retail activity. Yet access to the area is essentially limited to the existing I-81 configuration that funnels traffic to the already-congested Adams/Harrison exchange. Van Buren Street provides an alternative corridor to downtown Syracuse, but I-81 continues to limit that access point because it funnels traffic along Almond Street below the elevated highway. Complete access to the city's street grid to and from the area will be needed in order to more effectively move people to and from the area.



Real Estate Holdings

There are 41 Syracuse University properties that are potentially affected by the I-81 viaduct replacement project, including the parcels of property included in the Campus West PID. Of these properties, 31 are owned by the University and 10 are leased. About half of the properties are parking lots. Of particular interest due to their locations, which will be directly impacted by any changes to traffic due to the construction of I-81 (regardless of the alternative selected), are the Syracuse University Steam Station; Brewster, Bowland and Brockway halls; the Nancy Cantor Warehouse; the 900 block of East Genesee Street; the Syracuse Center of Excellence; Syracuse Stage; and Peck Hall (601 E. Genesee St.). Students and faculty will also be impacted in their daily commutes to the Tech Garden, home of the Student Sandbox, in downtown Syracuse.



The Syracuse University Steam Station provides steam for heating and chilled water for cooling to the University and the medical complex. Owned by the University, the Steam Station is funded jointly by the University and the hospitals. There are two major concerns regarding the Steam Station. Replacement of the I-81 viaduct with another raised viaduct will require substantial widening of the structure. There are scenarios in which the widening of the south-bound lanes would require the demolition of the existing chiller plant and construction of a new plant elsewhere on the parcel. The second concern has to do with the operation of the station, which is strategically located to assist in the flow of water and steam. The steam produced by the plant naturally rises up the University Hill, while condensate naturally returns to the station by gravity,



with no assistance needed by pumps or added pressure. The replacement of the viaduct by a recessed highway or a cut-and-cover tunnel would require the pipes to be lowered below the roadway, jeopardizing the ability to operate the system by gravity alone. Installing and operating pumps would increase the cost of the steam and chilled water.

Syracuse Stage and the properties along the 900 block of East Genesee Street (which currently house Phoebe's restaurant and academic spaces) lie in an area that sees high volumes of traffic that cross underneath I-81. The University can expect that traffic reconfiguration—either temporary for construction or long term to accommodate a selected alternative—could create additional congestion along Irving Avenue and East Genesee Street, unless mitigated by a robust public transportation system to better serve the Hill. Some of the viaduct replacement alternatives call for increasing the size of Irving and Townsend avenues to accommodate local traffic. Since the University's buildings on the 900 block of East Genesee Street have no setback from the sidewalk, expansion of Irving Avenue could potentially require their demolition.

Peck Hall is home to the Falk College's Department of Marriage and Family Therapy and the new McMahon-Ryan Child Advocacy Center. The building sits adjacent to the existing viaduct and could be affected by the widening required for a replacement viaduct. Peck Hall is also potentially impacted by new ramps to and from I-690 that will be required under some of the design alternatives. The existing (and proposed) I-81 viaduct is at approximately the same elevation as I-690, whereas the boulevard, recessed highway and tunnel would all lie well below I-690. The rise required to connect these structures to I-690 will result in longer ramps than the existing structure.

The Syracuse Center of Excellence (CoE) building, which sits just to the southeast of the intersection of I-81 and I-690, is also potentially affected by the longer ramps that may be required for the new structure. Its location on Almond Street also places it in jeopardy should Almond Street be widened that far north.

More than 500 faculty and staff travel to the Nancy Cantor Warehouse each day. Although the building is clear from any consideration of demolition due to the I-81 project, transporting people to and from campus will be impacted by any construction plan. The Nancy Cantor Warehouse lies at the western end of the Connective Corridor and houses academic programs in the College of Visual and Performing Arts. Smooth operation of the Connective Corridor transit route and other

campus-supported bus routes during the construction phase of the I-81 project will be crucial to the continued viability of the Warehouse as an academic venue.

The Nancy Cantor Warehouse also sits along West Street, officially designated as a state-owned highway. As such, West Street is potentially an alternative route for redirecting traffic from I-81, temporarily or as a permanent solution. The University has led efforts to calm traffic along West Street based on its current traffic volume and design, and has previously supported efforts by the City of the Syracuse and other community leaders to explore ways to reduce the number of lanes and slow the speed of traffic in order to enhance pedestrian safety and access to and from the downtown and Near Westside neighborhoods. The NYS DOT has been a willing partner to work with the city and the University to further improve this important pedestrian links in the area.

Section 5: Economic Development and Community Planning

Economic Development Opportunities and Challenges

One of the stated goals for the I-81 viaduct replacement project is to “enhance...the economic vitality of greater Syracuse.” As a major employer in the region, a regional center of research and innovation, and host of events that bring thousands of visitors to the city, the University plays a key role in that municipal vitality. The University understands that its well-being is tied to the health of the city and the region, and has several ongoing partnerships aimed at building bridges between campus and community. In considering alternatives for the replacement of the I-81 viaduct, it is important to assess the degree to which the various replacement options might affect the University’s relationship with the surrounding community. Likewise, downtown Syracuse provides a natural entry onto the University Hill and eventually to the Syracuse University campus. As travelers and commuters exit the highway, the urban environment that welcomes them will inevitably have a psychological impact on their perceptions for the area as they work their way to campus.

The Connective Corridor initiative is an effort to break down the psychological barriers between the University and downtown Syracuse. This initiative has brought together investments by the University, the city and the county, and the New York State and federal governments to improve infrastructure, beautify the streets that comprise the corridor, and develop arts, entrepreneurial and commercial activities that will stimulate closer ties between campus and community. The Connective Corridor passes under I-81 along Genesee Street. None of the I-81 viaduct replacement options would eliminate this crossing, but the construction phase of the project may slow or halt the momentum of the initiative by making it more difficult to travel between campus and downtown.

The potential effect of the I-81 viaduct replacement project on the Syracuse city tax base is also a concern for the city and, indirectly, for the University. Widening of the Almond Street corridor and the potential expansion of connecting ramps to I-690 will require the acquisition of taxable properties, removing them from the tax rolls. An additional concern is the effect of the project on property valuations. Predicting how property values will change under different replacement alternatives is very difficult, as there will be winners and losers in any shift of commercial and residential activity. Nevertheless, it would be in the best interest of the University for property values in our neighborhood to increase and see that the city’s commercial and residential tax base grow.

The University Hill Transportation Study

Due to increasing pressures on moving people around the University Hill, and on land use and real estate development on the Hill, SMTC initiated a comprehensive study to provide guidance for future planning efforts for the University Hill. The University Hill Transportation Study was also the first formal effort by a public agency to envision the possibility of no longer having I-81 run through the center of Syracuse.

The study emphasized that any solution to the transportation needs on the University Hill must be made along with the land-use planning decisions. It also argued that any transportation improvements cannot focus on improving access to the automobile, simply because an increase in capacity for automobile access on the University Hill was impossible. Overall, the report placed emphasis on the need to focus on moving people and goods, rather than cars, and acknowledged that governments and the institutions on the University Hill need to be strategic in addressing the cultural barriers that still favor single-occupant automobile traffic.

The study contained six key recommendations. None of the recommendations were at a level of analysis in which projects could quickly develop. Rather, the scope of the University Hill Transportation Study was to create a master plan with the intent that future decisions in transportation and land use—such as I-81—would consider these recommendations as goals to be closely studied in any future efforts. The recommendations include:

- (1) Implement a mixed-use development program:** The best way to get people out of cars, and thus control traffic, is to create the urban amenities within easy walking and public transit distances. Recommendations included the development of grocery stores, retail, entertainment venues, childcare and restaurants to be integrated within any new capital projects being planned by the University Hill's major institutions.
- (2) Implement an Integrated Parking Strategy:** Greater efficiencies could be achieved if local government and the University Hill's institutions could work closely together to create an integrated parking system. Parking on the University Hill remains a patchwork of unsightly surface parking lots and costly parking garages managed individually by each institution. Recommendations included wrapping parking garages with other uses; creating a common park-and-ride system; and developing a common parking management system. The University Hill Transportation Study also encouraged pushing parking away from the University Hill toward remote areas that have easy access, provided that reliable transit service could be established.
- (3) Create a Prioritized Public Transit Network:** An attractive, reliable public transit network is needed to better connect downtown with the University Hill and transport commuters from park-and-ride facilities. Specific recommendations included developing a streetcar service, a bus rapid transit system on highly congested roadways and/or a multi-modal hub.
- (4) Develop a Bike Boulevard Network:** A bicycle network could increase visibility of alternative means of transportation; fuel the alternative transportation demands of students and those returning to live in the city; and improve the overall appearance of the city's livable environment.
- (5) Restore city streets to two-way streets:** Long a complaint of those navigating the city and the University Hill, the University Hill Transportation Study argued for much greater coherence in navigating city streets by making all streets two-way.

- (6) **Reconfiguration of the Almond Street Corridor:** The University Hill Transportation Study was the first to envision removing the I-81 highway through the city by developing a boulevard system in its place. The study provided design concepts for adding contemporary roundabouts to replace traffic lights in order to keep traffic moving. It also recommended an overall narrowing on the Almond Street footprint to calm traffic, increase safety and accommodate streetscape improvements and urban design features.

Central New York Regional Economic Development Council (CNY REDC)

Although the CNY REDC has not taken a position on I-81, it has emphasized that the decision will have an important impact on the future of the City of Syracuse and the region. Since the release of its *Five-Year Strategic Plan* in 2011, the CNY REDC has placed great emphasis on reinvesting in the region's urban and municipal centers by, in part, rebuilding the infrastructure that serves our communities' main streets and neighborhoods. The Council has backed its objectives by awarding funding to projects that invest in housing in downtown Syracuse, streetscape improvements, walking trails in urban areas, and other capital improvement projects to help build the living and work conditions that can help a city's urban core to grow.

A Vision for the Almond Corridor With Public Amenities



Section 6: Quality of Life in the City and on the Hill

The I-81 outcome will ultimately have long-term implications on the quality of life for those living and working in the City of Syracuse. Some of those implications will directly affect the city and some will affect the city as a consequence of how I-81 impacts the University. Syracuse University faculty, staff and students live in the city, frequent its businesses and contribute to the social, commercial and civic life of the city. In addition, the University enhances the identification of the City of Syracuse as a cultural destination by hosting regional and national sporting events at the Carrier Dome, cultural events at the Setnor School of Music and Syracuse Stage, and lectures within the various nationally renowned schools and colleges. Easy access to the Syracuse University campus and the ability of patrons to easily park and attend these events will be crucial to the economic development of the city. Nearby hotels, restaurants and businesses flourish when events are held on campus.

The City of Syracuse has a reciprocal impact on the University. As noted earlier in this report, the deleterious effects of the original construction of I-81 on the City of Syracuse, and especially on the 15th Ward, have created physical and psychological divisions between the city and the University, divisions that projects like the Connective Corridor have sought to redress by focusing on two-way vehicular traffic and on bicycle paths and pedestrian traffic. Such attempts to stitch the city and the University fabric together are important and have focused on the experiential qualities of traveling from the University campus to downtown Syracuse. The Connective Corridor is a traffic path, but it is also an “urban experience” enriched by local businesses, pedestrian and bicycle paths, landscaping and an overall attention to landscape and urban design. Similar attention needs to be paid to the traffic paths that lead from where one exits the I-81 or any of the various alternatives to the University. Indeed, the experience of the University begins precisely at that exit point. This is an important consideration for the University as prospective students, visitors, faculty, staff, athletic recruits, trustees and community partners all visit the campus on a daily basis. The “gateway to our campus” has been discussed in other sections of this report; it is important because it helps to identify and distinguish the University experience. Aesthetically, it is important that ample green space be built around these “gateway” exits and that the signage is easy to read and easy to locate. Equally important are the streets and neighborhoods in and around the I-81 off ramps closest to our campus: They must be well lit, well-kept and safe. All of these attributes will affect the first impression that our campus makes to visitors. Indeed, if we think of the University experience beginning at the exits and ending at their destination on campus, the “gateway to the University” is defined by no single, fixed point, but by that entire experience from the freeway or boulevard exit to the parking location and beyond as the pedestrian makes his/her way to the individual’s final destination on campus.

Section 7: Key Considerations and Recommendations

Ultimately, the I-81 decision provides the opportunity to better manage the circulation of traffic on the University Hill, but the decision should not be thought exclusively about getting people from Point A to Point B. The movement of people throughout our community will have a lasting impact on current developments and the future aspirations of our campus as we enter a major master planning exercise. Likewise, improving the daily experiences that commuters and visitors have as they exit the highway and navigate city streets can allow for the City of Syracuse to realize its vision for offering a vibrant urban environment for all who live, work and visit the city.

In the near term, the University must look at what impacts the I-81 decision will have in simply getting people to their work, class or special event on campus when faced with a significant construction project over multiple years, no matter which alternative to replace I-81 is selected. In the long term, the University and its neighboring institutions on the University Hill have an opportunity to advance long-discussed ideas to develop a robust transit system to serve all the varying needs of employees, residents and visitors to the area. At the very least, the I-81 decision will be transformational. The University will need to be prepared to consider the following key issues and interests to ensure that such change results in positive impacts to both our campus and surrounding community:

- 1. Any campus strategic planning effort should take into account the extensive construction period that is expected to commence as early as 2017. Once construction commences on any of the I-81 alternatives, there will ensue a long and extremely disruptive period of at least five years that will require unprecedented planning and coordination with the city and the state.**

To reinforce a positive outlook on the I-81 decision, the NYSDOT project website is titled *I-81 Opportunities* as a suggestion that the final path chosen to replace the current highway can transform our city and region for the better. Indeed, the decision does provide a long-term opportunity for the community to improve upon the physical and psychological barriers that the current highway has created over the past several decades. However, no matter which alternative is selected, tackling the challenges of moving people and goods across the University Hill will be a short-term requirement once construction begins. Given the expected duration of work, the amount of resources that will be expended during that time to mitigate for traffic problems and the natural resistance of everyday commuters to change their habits, the University and its public partners should think strategically in creating a short-term plan that also accomplishes our long-term objectives to improve traffic circulation across the University Hill and city.

2. **Any alternative to the current I-81 highway needs to have a multi-modal transportation plan already in place before construction. Managing a system of public transportation, with military-like precision and convenience will influence the long-term success of the selected alternative.**

A public transit plan that accepts the reality that people will remain in their cars to get to the University Hill should be completed and implemented prior to any construction of an alternative. The University Hill Transportation Study released in 2007 outlined the need for car, bus and rail transportation (albeit less on train), as well as an alternative parking system to access campus and other destinations on the University Hill. A better transportation system than what exists now will be needed to mitigate complications that will be inevitable due to construction in the short term. In the long term, the I-81 decision provides the opportunity to fully realize the University's strategic direction in pushing parking off the main campus and to the periphery.

- a. The University is already shifting parking to South Campus where it can accommodate bus service on a daily basis and for special events. Traffic planning should accommodate parking at other locations that are convenient for commuters across the University Hill area but remain undeveloped or underdeveloped.
- b. The University Hill Transportation Study suggested the introduction of streetcar service on the University Hill as a way to overcome many of the barriers that people have in utilizing public transportation. Streetcars offer a convenient, reliable and unique mode of transportation that should be further studied and would be a reflection of Syracuse's history when streetcars regularly serviced the University Hill in the early 20th century.
- c. The On-Track rail service offered great potential for easing the daily commute to campus, as well as helping move people during Carrier Dome events from 1994-2008. However, poor planning and implementation that limited scheduling and never fully accessed parking locations and other important community destinations (such as the train station and airport) doomed this commuting line to failure. Understanding that legitimate logistical and market barriers may remain, any multi-modal system should at least reexamine the potential for utilizing this existing infrastructure.
- d. Needed steps to improve parking and transit in the short term to mitigate construction will be an enormous expense, regardless of which alternative is chosen. To use this opportunity to develop a long-term, multi-modal solution would be an effective use of resources.

3. **The University should advocate for a new major exit and entrance from I-481 and an improved access from I-690.**

The campus should have multiple access points off the highway system, including I-690 and I-481, to further leverage locations conducive to a park-and-ride system. The current transportation route is heavily based on Adams and Harrison streets without a contingency plan to reroute the heavy traffic. Therefore, multiple access points should be given to commuters and visitors, with a higher number of exits enabling them to access the University Hill in times of high traffic volumes, such as during Carrier Dome events. Having multiple access points already in place prior to the construction of I-81 is essential for the short-term and long-term planning to ease traffic complication.



4. **Any major exit and entrance to the highway must have an aesthetically pleasing experience in addition to better traffic planning in order make the most of this entryway to campus, the University Hill and the city.**

The University experience begins when a driver exits the highway, yet what currently greets commuters and visitors is dark, gray concrete; water or snow-melt running off from the highway above; noise and air pollution; and perhaps the worse safety conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists in the region. This has a lasting impact on first-time visitors to the campus, despite efforts by the University to maintain a beautiful campus on top of the University Hill.

5. **Alternatives that open the Almond Street corridor to the city street grid would open up opportunities to further develop plans for Campus West.**

Syracuse University and SUNY-ESF have embarked on an ambitious plan to develop residential, commercial and academic infrastructure in the Campus West Planned Institutional District (PID). This area is presently boxed in by the University and SUNY-ESF campuses to

the south and east, the hospitals to the north, and the I-81 viaduct to the west. As a result, Campus West is psychologically isolated and difficult to reach by automobile. Any future development under current transportation conditions will only exacerbate the congestion already experienced at the Adams/Harrison streets exchange. Alternatives that open the Almond Street corridor to the city street grid would open the West Campus PID to the city and could provide an additional gateway to the University.

- 6. The I-81 decision will negatively impact the University's properties located outside the main campus. The University needs to be positioned to advocate that the long-term costs are kept to a minimum.**

Portions of the Syracuse University Steam Station might be considered for demolition or some form of acquisition by New York State. Similarly, Peck Hall, which the University rents for the Falk College, lies in the immediate path for construction. Additionally, popular campus destinations off the main campus, such as the Nancy Cantor Warehouse, will see major disruptions in offering daily transportation service. The University should advocate for solutions that least influence these properties and best preserve the services that these properties provide to the campus community.

- 7. Ultimately, there will be political obstacles, and the University should identify objectives shared by other institutions located at the University Hill and work collaboratively to achieve our common goals.**

Issues such as having a robust park-and-ride transit system, aesthetic concerns for the design of the selected alternative to I-81, and having transportation solutions in place for our daily commuters before construction are all common concerns shared by the University Hill community. Furthermore, it should be expected that any chosen alternative will have some impact on the city's tax base, which is an issue that all institutions should be watching closely given existing pressures already placed on the city. Collective action with our neighboring institutions will help advocate for common issues and lead to outcomes that will benefit the University Hill community as a whole.

About the Authors

Michael Speaks (Chair) is dean of the Syracuse University School of Architecture. He has served as dean at the University of Kentucky College of Design and director of the Graduate Program at the Southern California Institute of Architecture, Los Angeles. He has taught in the graphic design department at the Yale School of Art and in the architecture schools at Harvard University, Columbia University, the University of Michigan, UCLA, Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, Calif., and the Berlage Institute and TU Delft, in the Netherlands. Speaks has published and lectured internationally on contemporary art, architecture, urban design and scenario planning. He has also played an important role in recent debates about city branding and alternative models of city planning, authoring a number of essays and advisory studies as well as overseeing scenario studies commissioned by city and regional governments in the United States and Europe. Speaks holds a bachelor's degree from the University of Mississippi and a Ph.D. from Duke University.

Colleen Bench is assistant vice president in the Division of Student Affairs, where she manages the administrative, financial and operational activities of the SU Parents Office. She performs an outreach role to the parent constituency by orienting parents to the institution, its organization and its processes. Bench serves as the principal coordinator for responding to student crises for the senior vice president and dean of student affairs, and also assists in the creation of development priorities and strategies for the Division of Student Affairs. A native of Central New York, she holds an associate's degree in business administration from SUNY at Canton, a bachelor's degree in marketing management from Clarkson University and a master's degree in higher education from Syracuse University. She was the founding president of the board of directors of the Association of Higher Education Parent and Family Program Professionals (AHEPPP), formerly served on the advisory council of College Parents of America, and is a frequent presenter at national conferences.

Allan Breese is the director of business and facilities maintenance services for Syracuse University. In this capacity he is organizationally responsible for the University's Campus Shuttle, Environmental Abatement Services, Mail Services, Materials Distribution, Parking and Transit Services, Physical Plant, Printing and Distribution Services, and Warehouse Services. Previously, Breese was director of purchasing at the University. He earned a B.S. in supply chain management at the Whitman School of Management and an M.P.A. at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs. He is pursuing a Ph.D. in social science. Breese is a member of the Institute for Supply Management and APPA, the association of university facilities managers.

Chris Johnson is professor and director of the Environmental Engineering Program and has served as chair of the Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering in the L.C. Smith College of Engineering and Computer Science. He teaches courses in environmental chemistry, soil chemistry, data analysis and surveying. In the Renée Crown University Honors Program, he teaches "Water for Gotham," a course on the New York City water supply system, and "The Aqueducts of Ancient Rome." Johnson is involved in a number of research projects in the broad area of environmental chemistry and is also actively involved in research on the chemistry of natural organic matter. He is a member of Phi Beta Kappa and Tau Beta Pi, and was a Fulbright Scholar in the Czech Republic in 1994.

Burak Kazaz is the Laura J. and L. Douglas Meredith Professor of Teaching Excellence and associate professor of supply chain management in the Martin J. Whitman School of Management. He is also director of the H.H. Franklin Center for Supply Chain Management, one

of the earliest endowed transportation programs in the nation. In 2011, he received the first-ever Whitman School of Management Teaching Innovation Award. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees in industrial engineering from Middle East Technical University in Turkey and his Ph.D. from the Krannert Graduate School of Management at Purdue University. Kazaz's research interests include the integration of business operations, marketing and finance, with a special interest in managing uncertainty and risk in global supply chains. Kazaz also worked at the IBM T. J. Watson Research Center in Yorktown Heights, N.Y. His work is recognized by IBM, British Petroleum and Procter & Gamble.

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet
January 16, 2014

Eva Sztechmiller
113 Herman Drive
North Syracuse, NY 13212
esztechm@gmail.com

Reg. Dir.	Asst. Reg. D.	
LT.	Construction	
Design	Fleet Admin	
Admin. Svcs.	PPM	
RECEIVED REG. DIRECTOR R-3		
JAN 17 2014		
Plan Est.	Safety	
GIS	Operations	
All GDS	All RES	
	Michelle	

Although I have waited until the last minute to document my opinion and views on the I-81 viaduct project, this issue has been near and dear to me for at least 25 years. I am a Syracuse native, born and raised. Trust me, I tried to escape, but somehow I got sucked back in, and now that I am here and I am determined to stay, willing to stay, and ready to help this city live up to its potential.

The travesty that is our I-81 viaduct inspires frustration and angst within me. Before I even knew that this issue was on the table for discussion I knew that this was a scar, left to fester, within the heart of Our Dear City. After attending your initial scoping meeting on November 13, 2013, I was able to breathe a sigh of relief because you demonstrated that there is hope, and not only that, but there are many talented and intelligent individuals working to build the great Salt City up to its forsaken potential. I would like to express my enthusiastic support for this project, especially because perpetuating the archaic design is not recognized as an option. I applaud both the depressed highway and tunnel alternatives and I see these as great opportunities to challenge ourselves with more sustainable infrastructure that considers our community's long term goals and does not sell us short with quick and easy fixes.

I will try to keep this short and concise, I can only imagine how many documents and oral recordings your team must have to evaluate. I do want to make certain things very clear:

- The current situation (as your studies have confirmed) is completely unacceptable. To have cut through the heart of the city, destroyed a historic district (South side, Victorian houses, Oakwood Cemetery, well there are nothing but crime ridden dead-ends there now thanks a lot) is nothing short of poor planning, selfishness, short sightedness, and an embarrassment to city planners and engineers. To divide the Syracuse University, the hospital district, and Downtown, essentially killing multiple historic districts and doing nothing more than inviting danger, traffic, noise, and pollution (how sad that we cannot walk within the heart of our own city because we are second hand to the infrastructure and traffic, not to mention it's dark, dirty, and scary to walk through the underpass and it shouldn't be) – it's rather sad really. I look forward to a renewal of our city and I support both the depressed highway or tunnel alternatives which will put pedestrians and our local culture first.
- The Viaduct should be the #1 priority and clearly the best option is to either sink it below street level or create a tunnel. When it comes to this, I will leave it to the experts, but suffice it to say that the infrastructure should serve the people, not

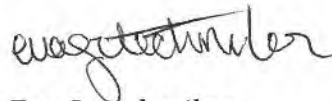
prevent them from enjoying their own city and community. Pedestrians should come first. Vehicles second. Those that contribute to our locality should be prioritized, and those just passing through, well let them pass through and let them do so without disturbing us while we keep our dollars local. Can you imagine how amazing Syracuse would look if the viaduct just wasn't there? Could you imagine walking or biking from the SU hill to downtown without fearing for your life on so many different levels? This is the priority and it **needs to be below street level at least.**

- South section should be 2nd priority. This, as mentioned before, is a beautiful historic district. All Victorian homes should be rehabilitated; the local community should be empowered, for we are only as strong as our weakest links.
- North section is not as pressing, but there is tremendous opportunity to make it beautiful. I know that Onondaga Lake Park is in the process of being expanded to connect around Onondaga Lake. Destiny USA brings in a significant amount of people annually. Our farmers market, our train/bus station, the north side, and creek walk and downtown. *So much potential, why are we taking the back seat to a damn highway- why are we sacrificing our daily quality of life for industry that only passes through and does not contribute to our local dollar base.*

Syracuse has been given an amazing opportunity to redefine itself. I support this project and I hope that it will keep us from crumbling with the rest of the rust belt. This is a great opportunity not only to lead by example, but to present ourselves to the world as a progressive, innovative, and resilient community that is not afraid of challenges and that is willing to work harder in order to make it worth the while long term. For many visitors to our city, the highway is a dominating presence and it is the worst thing we could possibly have to represent our culture. Let us create something that people will be proud of in 50 years, not ashamed of, as we are now of our current system. Let's scrape that rust off and shine like we were meant to. Let's bring back the Salt City. Let's make this interstate a celebration of our location and our history and not allow it to dominate our existence and only take from us without giving back.

I really do hope that Syracuse will become the city that I envision it has the potential to be. Either way I'll be here fighting for it tooth and nail. Please add me to your mailing list.

Sincerely,



Eva Sztechmiller

A very concerned citizen of Syracuse

ANN MARIE TALIERCIO

Ann Marie Taliercio, President
Central New York Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO
615 West Genesee Street
Syracuse, New York, 13215
president@cnylabor.org/315-415-2735

Hello, my name is Ann Marie Taliercio, President of the Regional AFL-CIO council which covers eleven counties in Central New York

Let me start by thanking you all for being here. The decision regarding what to do with Interstate-81 is a critical one for our region, so I'm glad to see so many people feel strongly enough to attend this scoping hearing.

And thank you to the DOT for hosting this event. This hearing is crucial to ensuring that central New Yorkers have a voice in the future of I-81.

As President of the Central New York Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, I am here to speak on behalf of the thousands of Central New York workers I represent.

These workers—and thousands of others like them throughout the area—have come to rely on 81 every day for quick commutes amid their busy schedules. Some have even purchased homes or chosen where they work with the highway's proximity in mind because of the easy commutes it affords.

A boulevard would add more time, miles and frustration to their commutes, while damaging businesses and putting THEIR jobs in jeopardy.

The added miles to commutes would also lead to more gas usage. With fuel prices already elevated and likely to stay that way, area workers cannot afford to spend more on gas.

A large group of the workers I represent are in the Hotel, Hospitality and Health Care industries. Many of these properties including the County Convention Center and SUNY Hospital Complexes are located right on or next to the highway and the workers rely on 81 for their daily commutes and one even one member that I know of uses 81 to do his work. To re-route 81 would take this away and complicate the lives of hard working central New Yorkers and their employers.

These frustrations would be compounded for Central New Yorkers working two jobs have come to rely on 81 to take them between multiple places of employment quickly. Replacing 81 with a boulevard jeopardizes the livelihoods of those hard-working residents as well.

In October, the Central New York Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO passed the Central and Northern New York Building & Construction Trades Council's resolution which strongly opposed the misguided boulevard plan.

We passed these resolutions because we believe that in such a fragile economic environment, the state cannot afford an I-81 solution that puts workers at risk.

Today, I am again urging state officials to thoroughly examine numerous other options for I-81, including a tunnel, depressed roadway, a new bridge into Syracuse or a rebuilt elevated structure.

Simply put, there is too much at stake not to. Thank you.

CENTRAL NEW YORK AREA LABOR FEDERATION ADOPTS RESOLUTION TO OPPOSE I-81 BOULEVARD PLAN

*CNY Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO Is Latest Regional Union Group To Reject
Boulevard And Urge State To Seek Other Solutions For I-81*

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — The Central New York Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO announced today that it has voted to adopt a resolution opposing a plan to replace Interstate 81 with a boulevard in Downtown Syracuse and re-route I-81 traffic around the city.

“Replacing I-81 with a boulevard and diverting the highway would put jobs in jeopardy and damage the region’s economy,” said Ann Marie Taliercio, President of the Central New York Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO. “Many businesses along I-81 depend on the highway as a revenue source, which ultimately supports thousands of area jobs. In such a fragile economic environment, we need to explore I-81 solutions that protect these jobs, not put them at risk.”

The Labor Federation’s vote adopts a resolution passed in September by the Central and Northern New York Building & Construction Trades Council, AFL-CIO. The resolution calls on state transportation officials to determine a solution for dealing with the aging portions of I-81 in the region that does not alter I-81’s current Interstate Highway designation through Syracuse and Central New York.

The resolution further calls on officials to thoroughly examine numerous other options for I-81, including a tunnel, depressed roadway, a new bridge into Syracuse, or a rebuilt elevated structure.

About the Central New York Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO:

The Central New York Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO represents more than 100,000 members of 200 local unions in 11 central New York counties. The mission of the Central New York Area Labor Federation is to improve the lives of working families -- to bring economic justice to the workplace and social justice to our state and the nation.

The Central New York Area Labor Federation, is a key part of the nation's largest and strongest labor federation, the AFL-CIO, which unites 10.5 million working women and men of every race and ethnicity and from every walk of life.

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CENTRAL and NORTHERN NEW YORK BUILDING and CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL

150 Midler Park Drive
Syracuse, NY 13206
Phone (315) 437-7397
Fax (315) 437-2951

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE CENTRAL AND NORTHERN NEW YORK BUILDING & CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN I-81'S INTERSTATE HIGHWAY DESIGNATION THROUGH SYRACUSE

WHEREAS, for more than 50 years, Interstate 81 has served as a backbone for the economy of the Central and Northern New York region, connecting residents, workers, and businesses; and

WHEREAS, I-81 provides vital and convenient access for thousands of area workers and their families to Downtown Syracuse, businesses, hospitals, and other key destinations; and

WHEREAS, I-81 has served a crucial role in enabling local employers to grow their businesses and create jobs; and

WHEREAS, many of the region's workers and businesses rely on I-81's current Interstate Highway designation, it is vital that a solution for I-81 does not negatively affect employment and economic growth; and

WHEREAS, although several options for dealing with the aging portions of I-81 have been discussed, I-81's current Interstate Highway designation through the City of Syracuse must be preserved, because altering this designation could harm businesses along I-81's path and potentially result in a loss of jobs for area workers; and

WHEREAS, we believe that any solution to deal with I-81's aging infrastructure must not compromise one of the most significant advantages of living, working, and doing business in the region; and

WHEREAS, we believe that I-81 decision-makers must fully and thoroughly explore a range of options for handling I-81's aging infrastructure, including a tunnel, depressed roadway, an iconic new bridge into Syracuse, a modernized elevated structure, or a different option altogether; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Central and Northern New York Building & Construction Trades Council here by rejects replacing I-81 in Downtown Syracuse with a boulevard and re-routing existing highway traffic around the City of Syracuse; and, be it further

In Affiliation with:

Building and Construction Trades Department, AFL-CIO; New York State Building Trades Council, AFL-CIO; Central New York Labor Federation, AFL-CIO

Asbestos Workers Local #30 • Boilermakers Lodge 175 • Bricklayers Local #7 • Building Laborers Locals #35, #322, #633
Carpenters Locals #147 • Electrical Workers Locals #13, #910 • Elevator Constructors Local #62 • Glaziers Local #677 • Ironworkers Locals #60, #440 • Millwrights Local
#1163 • Operating Engineers Local #545 • Painters Locals #31, #38 • Plumbers & Steamfitters Locals #73, #112, #267
Road Sprinkler Fitters Local #669 • Roofers Local #195 • Sheet Metal Workers Local #58 • Teamsters Local #317, #687

RESOLVED, that the Council memorializes its determination that Interstate 81's current Interstate Highway designation through Syracuse and Central New York must not be altered; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Council is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, to the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and to the various state legislators representing the Central and Northern New York region.

Our Workers Cannot Afford A Boulevard
By Ann Marie Tallercio & Greg Lanectte

The widely discussed idea to replace Interstate 81 with a boulevard in Downtown Syracuse could create frustration for area workers and jeopardize thousands of jobs. Transportation officials in Albany should abandon this proposal and explore other I-81 options that will preserve and grow our economy.

As presidents of the Central New York Area Labor Federation and the Central and Northern New York Building & Construction Trades Council, we represent thousands of workers throughout the area. These workers – as well as many others throughout the region – have expressed genuine concerns about the potential effects of replacing I-81 with a boulevard.

Many area workers have come to rely on the highway every day for quick commutes amid their busy schedules. Some have purchased homes or chosen where they work with the highway's proximity in mind because of the easy commutes it affords.

But a boulevard that stops traffic and puts more cars onto city streets will jeopardize this convenience for many workers and residents. Commuters will spend more time in their cars and less time at home with their families. Those living in outlying communities may need to adjust their schedules or even reconsider where they live and work if commutes become too stressful -- both difficult choices to execute for area employees.

A boulevard would also place financial strains on area workers. Adding more miles to daily commutes will lead to more spending on gas. With fuel prices already elevated and likely to stay that way, area workers cannot afford those extra costs.

These frustrations would be compounded for area residents who work multiple jobs and rely on I-81 to efficiently get them from one job to the next.

Not only will a boulevard cause headaches for area workers, it could put their jobs at risk as well. Many businesses along I-81 depend on the highway as a revenue source because it serves as a conduit for their customers to come to their stores – giving owners the ability to grow and create jobs. Rerouting I-81 would effectively cut off these businesses from a major customer base, meaning less money to retain and hire employees, many of which are our members.

And some of the workers we represent depend on I-81 to perform their jobs and fulfill the needs of their employers. Disrupting the current traffic flow could affect how area workers get their jobs done.

In October, our organizations each passed a resolution strongly opposing this misguided boulevard plan and calling on state officials to thoroughly examine numerous other options for I-81, including a tunnel, depressed roadway, a new bridge into Syracuse or a rebuilt elevated structure. We passed these resolutions because we believe that in such a fragile economic environment, the state cannot afford an I-81 solution that puts workers at risk.

Area workers and all residents – will soon have an opportunity to voice their concerns and tell state transportation officials that a boulevard is the wrong solution for our region. From 3 to 8 p.m. November 13, the Department of Transportation will host a hearing at the Oncenter during which the public will be able to submit their comments about the I-81 project for the official record.

We encourage the entire community to come to the Oncenter and make their opinions heard. The I-81 decision will shape our region's infrastructure for generations to come. We all need to speak up and make sure that the state chooses a plan that protects area workers' jobs and quality of life.

Ann Marie Taliercio is president of the Central New York Area Labor Federation, AFL-CIO. Greg Lancette is president of the Central and Northern New York Building & Construction Trades Council, AFL-CIO.

From: Ed Tarney

Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2014 3:03:05 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)

To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities

Subject: 481 corridor seems to make most sense

I favor routing the interstate along the existing 481 bypass route. There is minimal effect on through traffic if routed via 481. Traffic specifically destined for downtown Syracuse could be more efficiently routed.

We need occasional high traffic volume routes to:

- 1: Syracuse University
- 2: central downtown/commuters
- 3: Destiny/Liverpool/airport commercial area
- 4: Erie Blvd East area.

1: It would be nice to divide the access to Syracuse University by improving the access from 690, maybe around Westcott St, or from the S, off 481, around Skytop. That would allow traffic from the Eastern suburbs to stay off the present 81 corridor for those events, lightening the load on a central artery.

2: Perhaps Route 11 could be upgraded to handle local N/S traffic, the way Route 5 or Route 20 handles in-town E/W traffic in many other upstate cities

3: A lot of traffic headed to Destiny/Liverpool/Hancock airport could be routed via the existing thruway, if access from local toll plazas could be permitted toll-free or via simple access arrangements.

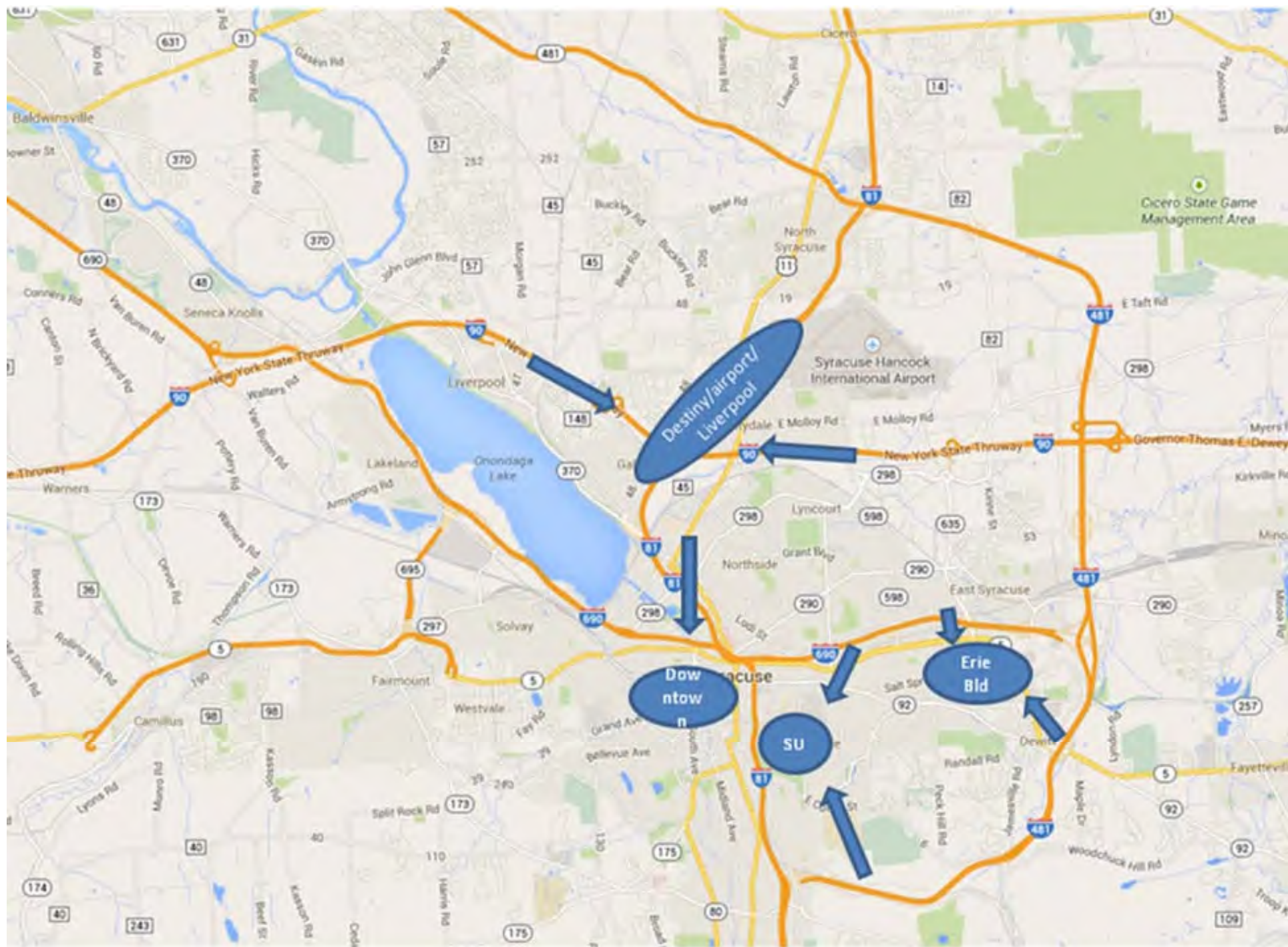
4: Current 690 exits can handle traffic to Erie Blvd.

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The argument for having through-traffic carried across the middle of the city on a viaduct so that "we don't get left in the dust" doesn't hold much water for through traffic, and for locals, as long as there is suitable local mobility, the absence of a viaduct should promote the appearance or possibility of a single continuous metropolitan area.

Ed Tarney

Baldwinsville NY



Major destination areas and proposed routes

From: Carry Lynne

Sent: Tuesday, September 2, 2014 5:22:48 PM (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US & Canada)

To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities

Subject: Re: Reminder: Scoping Comment Period is OPEN through September 2, 2014

I would like to see I-81 replaced exactly where it is. As a double decker or split into 2 different levels going thru the city.

Carolyn Terrill

216 Brooklea Place

Syracuse 13207

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: Jennifer Thayer

Address: 8673 Osage Gap Rd. City: Baldwinsville State: NY Zip: 13027

Phone: 315-720-6211 Email: jthayer@watts-qc.com

Comments: When Rt. 81 became elevated from a boulevard in the '50s, traffic volume was very different than it is now. Can we learn from how that transition took place - what the obstacles were, what unforeseen issues arose... and apply this information to assist in the upcoming design decisions that are necessary?

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

Contact the Project Team

dot.sm.webcentral

Sun 5/4/2014 6:54 PM

Managed Folders

To:dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>;

Last name - Thebige

First name - Eric

Affiliation -

Address 1 -

Address 2 -

City -

State -

Zip -

Phone -

Email Address - ericthebige@yahoo.com

Question or Comment - Hi. I am a resident of Clay, NY. I drive truck and have other commitments of transportation in the Syracuse metro area. I also have experience in commercial driving to many states in the USA. I have been reading, with great interest, the discussions of Interstate 81 reconstruction. The 16 options were an excellent read. I am writing to give my personal opinions.

The option labeled "SL-1" looks to be the most cost-effective, the least invasive, and least time-consuming of all the options. Although it re-designates Interstate 481 as Interstate 81, access to downtown area of Syracuse is not restricted, as highway spurs can be split off from both current I-81/I-481 interchanges, perhaps to be petitioned to AASHTO as I-x81 highways (i.e.- I-181 and I-381). This way, commerce and emergency traffic would be less hindered- if at all- from the current traffic pattern. This option is not uncommon to other cities, and is usually met with success. The only additional modification that needs to be made to I-481 is to build as a six-lane highway in its entirety. The current four-lane configuration for much of it would not be enough to support bypassing traffic, as much of it currently struggles to do so in some areas.

I do not take exception to rebuilding the current configuration as it stands. However, the elevated highway portion possibly met the needs of Syracuse at the time of building. Not so today. Let's face it- I-81 IS an interstate, spanning from Wellesley Island, NY to near-Knoxville, TN. Not all traffic will need to exit to Syracuse. The current I-481 will ensure that the traffic that is going elsewhere can do so without having to drive through the city, and can allow Syracuse-specific traffic to utilize the spur routes.

Thank you for allowing me to provide my personal input. I feel that option "SL-1" is most likely the best option for Syracuse, and all traffic traveling through and around it. There will be obvious inconveniences no matter WHICH is eventually chosen, but I feel this one is a long-term "win-win" situation for all. Thank you, and God Bless.

Sincerely,

Eric Thebige

From: no-reply@dot.state.ny.us
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Subject: Contact the Project Team
Date: Wednesday, March 19, 2014 3:08:33 PM

Last name - Thompson
First name - Brandon
Affiliation -
Address 1 - 3668 State Route 49
Address 2 -
City - Central Square
State - NY
Zip - 13036
Phone -
Email Address - Thompson.brandon15@yahoo.com
Question or Comment - To Whom it may concern:

I would like to propose an idea I have not heard of in the media anyway on how to improve upon the stretch of I81 through the Heart of Syracuse. My idea is to build a Tunnel but not underground but rather Above Ground level large enough to accomodate the growing DOT needs for generations to come. This would not just be any concrete tube which is typically imagined when first disucssed, This tunnel design would be unlike any of its kind in the Continental US perhaps even the world. This "Tunnel" for lack of a better description, would be an engineering Feat for sure, but if done properly you could design it in such a manner that it could be covered with grass or flowers or a combination so it would be a sort of "GREEN" Tunnel with possible park like structures surrounding it and above it. This would keep the traffic flow as we know it practically the same, but would decrease the noise level and also show a modernized vision of a roadway giving back in a sense to the environment with its Go Green Esq. design. It would elimiate the potential for a drastic Eye sore which is what the city has grown accustomed to since the Bridges were built and actually open up the downtown area to a brighter future while still keeping the interstate alive through the heart of downtown. I hope this reaches the committee or is at least discussed as a potential option because I believe with the proper computer imaging to visually render my idea, the public would more openly accept this as a design that would show an attempt to accomodate everyones needs. Syracuse could reposition itslef in the country as the "Green City" with the Destiny mall already headed that direction. Food for thought and consideration!

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

RECEIVED AUG 29 2014

Name: R. Thompson

Address: 372 OAKWOOD AVE

City: Syr

State: N.Y. Zip: 13202

Phone: (315) 478-5534 Email: _____

Comments: it would be a SHAM to get rid of all of
Syracuses history just for a highway.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

**Please submit
all comments by
September 2, 2014**

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Name: Peter Thompson
Address: 212 Locksley Road City: Syracuse State: NY Zip: 13224
Phone: (315) 446-0355 Email: peter-thompson47@hotmail.com

Comments: add a screening point ongoing cost!

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

From: no-reply@dot.state.ny.us
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Subject: Contact the Project Team
Date: Thursday, January 16, 2014 7:21:04 PM

Last name - Tinelli
First name - Gene
Affiliation - Citizen
Address 1 - 4320 Lafayette Rd.
Address 2 -
City - Jamesville
State - NY
Zip - 13078
Phone - 315.469.6096

Email Address - genet43@twcny.rr.com

Question or Comment - An idea I have not seen publicized for the route 81 dilemma would be to consider using the CSX railroad right-of-way that snakes its way from just south of the E. Adams St. I-81N.exit through the west side of the city and emerges close to I-81 near the Carousel Mall.

This might be enough of a right-of-way to rebuild I-81 so that the bulk of the roadway goes through a commercial section of the northwest side of Syracuse rather than the downtown part of Syracuse.

If this were possible, there would be two very positive side effects. This would eliminate the transporting of toxic, flammable, and explosive materials through the heart of our city. To wit, approximately 2 years ago a propane tank car fell off the tracks between I-81 and the SU Dome. Luckily it did not detonate or it could have caused serious damage and injuries. The other positive side effect is that this option would force rebuilding of two of the worst bridges in Syracuse, the railroad bridges over Onondaga Parkway and W. Genesee St.

This solution would allow a more open city center, protect the public better from hazardous materials, and still allow a relatively efficient way to get through Syracuse on I-81.

Gene Tinelli
4320 Lafayette Rd.
Jamesville, NY 13078
315.469.6096

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Name: ^{Tommy} Joseph Tommy Tomphris
Address: 1307 Almond St. City: Syr. State: NY Zip: 13210
Phone: () Email:

Comments:

My comment is to get rid of the underneath corridor and mounds of dirt. One of the roads are not being used a lot. They use the road for basketball. Big rigs should stay on the main highway. They cause a lot of the damages on the road. Worst drivers in the world.

Would attract more businesses.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation



Town of DeWitt

(315)448-3910 ext. 5

Edward M. Michalenko, Ph. D, Supervisor

FAX (315)449-0620

Town Board
Kenneth Andrews
Irene Scruton
Kerry Mannion
Anthony Albanese
Brian Schultz
Jack Dooling

5400 Butternut Drive
East Syracuse, NY
13057

May 17, 2013

On behalf of the DeWitt Supervisor, Town Board and residents of DeWitt, I'd like to express concern over this project.

First, we were led to believe the process decision making process would be much lengthier, now we are informed that New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) is down to two alternatives.

Of the two, we support the maintenance of a continuous connection of Route 81 through the City of Syracuse.

We support the City, Hospitals and University's approach to smart growth policies in improving connectivity and neighborhood enhancement.

However, not at DeWitt's expense – by rerouting Route 81 to 481, you'll just be transferring the problem not solving it.

We believe that a comprehensive approach, a regional transportation plan is necessary to ensure smart choices are made that can provide environmental, social and economic benefits to all of Central New York, one that provides alternative and mass transit options; for our suburban communities are in dire need of a traffic diet as well.

We are concerned with the impacts of moving Route 81 to 481 to our neighborhoods and quality of life.

DeWitt forms the eastern border of Syracuse and already suffers the consequences of commuter traffic to and from the City, along Routes 173, 5, 290, 298, the Thruway and 690 and 481.

Moving 81 to 481 will only exacerbate local and pass through the traffic leaving a heavy toll on already taxed resources.

Increase wear and tear on local roads and infrastructure already are insufficient and underfunded.

Increased traffic means noise, dust, toxic emissions and atmospheric deposition of pollutants on land and water, business, homes, and schools.

Increasing the distance for through traffic and increasing the stop and go of commuting traffic is not a smart growth, but rather dumb policy and anti-environmental for both the City and DeWitt.

It's polluting, inefficient and bad for the regional economy, detrimental to social welfare and the environment.

Turning Route 481 to Route 81 leaves no alternative north-south Route for national defense, national disaster, and general maintenance and repairs.

Again, we support a more balanced regional approach. One that incorporates mass transit and alternate forms of transportation. A plan that looks beyond gasoline vehicles that promotes electric cars and buses alternative fueled vehicle and an electric light rail system. A plan that will carry Central New York into the future for the next 100 years.

June 10, 2013

Resolution

**MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF DeWITT,
COUNTY OF ONONDAGA, REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING
ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE**

WHEREAS, for the last 50 years, Interstate 81 has served as a vital backbone for the economy of the Central New York, connecting commuters, businesses, tourists, visitors, and through-travelers alike; and

WHEREAS, among its important functions, Interstate 81 provides vital links with access to downtown Syracuse, all of our hospitals, Syracuse University, Destiny USA, present and future businesses and residents along 81 corridor, to business and residents within the Town of DeWitt; and

WHEREAS, Moody's Investors Service has assigned a Aa3 rating to a recent Town of DeWitt Public Improvement (Serial) Bond with the expectation of the stable tax base of approximately \$2.9 billion continuing to experience modest growth given it's close proximity to the City of Syracuse (G.O. rated A1, negative). Acting as a transfer point between the New York State Thruway, Route 481 and Interstate 81, the town has a significant commercial presence (39% of tax base) consisting of hotels, shopping centers, office buildings, manufacturing facilities, and restaurants geared in part toward travelers across these thoroughfares; and

WHEREAS, turning Interstate 81 to Route 481 leaves no alternative north-south Route for national defense, national disaster, and general maintenance and repairs; and

WHEREAS, although there are a variety of ways to deal with I-81's aging infrastructure, the existing "Interstate" function and designation must be preserved, because any solution which would remove I-81's vital function from its present alignment would irreparably harm the regional economy and corresponding employment dependent upon the highway network in addition to negatively impacting DeWitt's neighborhoods and its residents quality of life; and

WHEREAS, redirecting I-81 traffic to Route 481, transfers what the City of Syracuse sees as a problem to DeWitt; and

WHEREAS, DeWitt forms the eastern border of Syracuse and its neighborhoods already suffer the consequences of commuter traffic to and from the City of Syracuse, along local Routes 173, 5, 290, 298, in addition to the Interstate Highways including the Thruway and Routes 690 and 481. Consequently, moving Interstate 81 to Route 481 will only exacerbate local and pass-through traffic leaving a heavy toll on already taxed DeWitt resources. Namely, increasing the wear and tear on DeWitt's local roads and infrastructure that are already insufficient and underfunded; and

WHEREAS, increased traffic causes increased noise, dust, toxic emissions and atmospheric deposition of pollutants on land and water, business, homes, and schools; and

WHEREAS, redirecting Interstate 81 to Route 481 is not smart environmental policy because the distance traveled for through traffic and further stop and go intercity commuting traffic is increased. This is polluting, inefficient, requires the use of greater amounts of petroleum based fuels, hurts the regional economy, and is detrimental to social welfare and the environment; and

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for the next 100 years; and

WHEREAS, it is the consensus of the DeWitt Town Board that any decision reached by the NYS DOT should satisfy function first, and should be closely tailored to satisfy that function; and

WHEREAS, we support smart growth and the creation of a new and welcoming entrance to Syracuse, and the integration of the hospitals and university areas with the rest of downtown, we believe it must not be accomplished by compromising one of the most significant advantages of living, working, doing business and visiting Onondaga County;

WHEREAS, DeWitt supports a balanced, comprehensive approach, a regional transportation plan is necessary to ensure smart choices are made, a plan that can provide environmental, social and economic benefits to all of Central New York, one that promotes alternative and mass transit options including alternate fuels, electric vehicles, and a light rail system; for our suburban communities are in dire need of a traffic diet as well; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the DeWitt Town Board memorializes its determination that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an interstate highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Supervisor of the Town of DeWitt is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, to the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and to the various legislative members representing Onondaga County at the state level.

**Town of Otisco
1924 Barker Street
Tully, New York 13159
Phone : (315)696-4676
Fax : (315)696-4678**

November 6, 2013

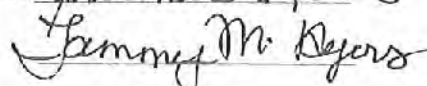
RESOLUTION # 43

Motion was made by Councilman George O. Cook and seconded by Councilman Teal Trendowski that the Town Board of the Town of Otisco passes a resolution to support and maintain I-81 as it is presently constructed and oppose having the boulevard run through the city of Syracuse.

Ayes 3 Noes 0

I, Tammy M. Ayers, Clerk of the Town of Otisco, County of Onondaga, State of New York, do hereby certify that the foregoing was duly adopted by the Town Board of the Town of Otisco, County of Onondaga, State of New York, at their regular month meeting held on the 12th day of September, 2011 a quorum was present.

IN WHITNESS WHERE OF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of my office.

Date: November 7, 2013

Tammy M. Ayers, Town Clerk

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Name: JOHN TRAEGER
Address: 481 BRATTLE RD City: SYR State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone: 315 727-3251 Email: JOHN TRAEGER@HOTMAIL.COM

Comments:

EASTERN TUNNEL
LOOKS GREAT

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

Contact the Project Team

dot.sm.webcentral

Sun 5/4/2014 11:39 AM

Managed Folders

To:dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>;

Last name - Traino Jr

First name - John

Affiliation - President, N. Syracuse Cemetery

Address 1 - 104 Windwood Road

Address 2 -

City - N. Syracuse

State - NY

Zip - 13212

Phone - 3154585328

Email Address - jtrainoj@verizon.net

Question or Comment - I grew up in the 40's on Burnet Avenue right across the street from the train depot and elevated railroad tracks that are now Route 81. All night long I could hear the coupling of the trains as they'd put me to sleep. There would be soot on the windows from the coal burning locomotives while at the same time there'd be coal that dropped on the tracks along with spilled diesel fuel along with the oil that the brakemen would "squirt" on the brakes and couplers that all went into the ground. That all ended in the 50's but what remained were the railroad tracks and whatever. There was a "mandate" that came through that stated that all those tracks had to be covered with tarvia because they were a slippery hazard. Right about that time there was a road to be run through the heart of the City that would run North and South and be called Route 81. Someone came up with the great idea to cover the tracks and at the same time save a lot of money by incorporating it into that very same highway. Now, all of a sudden what stood there for years and years is a BIG problem. What is going to be a bigger problem is that without realizing it in covering all those tracks, etc. the "stuff" underneath became "remediated" which leads to my question which becomes a simple one. What is going to happen if the decision is made that the elevated portion is to be "knocked down" and then lo and behold all the hazardous "stuff" gets uncovered? Who is going to pay for all that added expense?

John Traino, Jr. N. Syracuse

Contact the Project Team

no-reply@dot.state.ny.us

Sat 6/21/2014 12:23 PM

Retain

To:dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>;

Last name - Traino Jr

First name - John

Affiliation - President, N. Syracuse Cemetery

Address 1 - 104 Windwood Road

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John Traino, Jr.

104 Windwood Road

Syracuse, NY 13212

From: Merike Treier [<mailto:mtreier@downtownsyracuse.com>]
Sent: Monday, July 07, 2014 2:49 PM
To: Flint, Joseph A (DOT)
Subject: Clarification Needed

Hi Joe,

I left a message for you, but the reason I was calling is because I noticed in the Draft Scoping Report for the "V" and "SL" options that are moving forward, the total costs vary in the sense of what is included in the calculations. For instance, for each of the respective Viaduct options, this is the sentence used:

"The estimated cost of Alternative V-4 is \$1.419 billion, which includes preliminary property acquisition costs."

However, for each of the respective SL options, this sentence is used:

"The estimated cost of Alternative SL-1 is \$1.047 billion, including demolition of the viaduct and preliminary property acquisition costs."

Is there a reason that the demolition of the viaduct is not included in the "V" cost calculations?

Thanks so much,
Merike

Merike Treier
Executive Director



115 West Fayette Street
Syracuse, NY 13202
P [315.422.8284](tel:315.422.8284)
F [315.471.4503](tel:315.471.4503)
www.downtownsyracuse.com



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 **CENTERSTATE**
CORPORATION FOR
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

From: "Kristine Sherlock" <KSherlock@downtownsyracuse.com<<mailto:KSherlock@downtownsyracuse.com>>>

To: "Mark.Frechette@dot.ny.gov<<mailto:Mark.Frechette@dot.ny.gov>>"
<Mark.Frechette@dot.ny.gov<<mailto:Mark.Frechette@dot.ny.gov>>>

Subject: Downtown Committee I-81 Evaluation

Sent on behalf of Merike Treier:

Dear Mark:

Attached please find the Downtown Committee of Syracuse's evaluation and comments for inclusion into the public record as it pertains to Interstate 81.

Thank you for this opportunity and I look forward to continuing our work with you.

Best regards,

Merike

Kristine Sherlock
Assistant to the Executive Director

[dtc-sig]

115 West Fayette Street

Syracuse, NY 13202

P [315.470.1952](tel:315.470.1952)

F [315.471.4503](tel:315.471.4503)

www.downtownsyracuse.com<<https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v1/url?u=http://www.downtownsyracuse.com&k=ppNirDwWpcp60F64Pj2f9Q%3D%3D%0A&r=3AoNcnqVlaaFa6UtqcyPDowaCTufUdEuUpWMOq7rR%2FQ%3D%0A&m=igZzc2datcPSsTPK%2FcLU9qu%2F3NqYqSPDPRhS4iFPPBg%3D%0A&s=4a0393125f2056d68325962b885726713c995eebab10e512ff755a43f39bf636>><<http://www.downtownsyracuse.com/><<https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v1/url?u=http://www.downtownsyracuse.com/&k=ppNirDwWpcp60F64Pj2f9Q%3D%3D%0A&r=3AoNcnqVlaaFa6UtqcyPDowaCTufUdEuUpWMOq7rR%2FQ%3D%0A&m=igZzc2datcPSsTPK%2FcLU9qu%2F3NqYqSPDPRhS4iFPPBg%3D%0A&s=a2f4144aaf5ed44176aff0ef7c60f08409505bf710dda17b8aa68986c53f6da9>>>

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<<http://www.facebook.com/DowntownSyracuse><<https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v1/url?u=http://www.facebook.com/DowntownSyracuse&k=ppNirDwWpcp60F64Pj2f9Q%3D%3D%0A&r=3AoNcnqVlaaFa6UtqcyPDowaCTufUdEuUpWMOq7rR%2FQ%3D%0A&m=igZzc2datcPSsTPK%2FcLU9qu%2F3NqYqSPDPRhS4iFPPBg%3D%0A&s=de0219f4f61a1a9a6659534e7a89ed6f651f3511a1b737e2157a5990b51da6db>>>

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[CEO-wide-500px]



James V. Breuer, Chair
Merike L. Treier, Executive
Director

September 2, 2014

Ms. Joan MacDonald
Commissioner
New York State Department of Transportation
50 Wolf Road
Albany, NY 12232

Mr. Mark Frechette
Director
New York State Department of Transportation
I-81 Viaduct Project
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Dear Commissioner MacDonald and Mr. Frechette,

The Downtown Committee of Syracuse, Inc. is a private, not-for-profit, professional downtown management organization, representing all property owners and tenants within the central business district. Our mission is to encourage Downtown Syracuse's revitalization and as the steward of the Downtown Special Assessment District, we undertake programs to improve downtown's image, strengthen its economic base, increase its attractiveness, and assure that it's clean, safe, and accessible. Our boundaries are I-690 to the north; I-81 to the east; Adams Street to the south; and Onondaga Creek to the west.

We play an active role on the Economic Development and Sustainability Working Groups with both staff and Board Members participating in each. We value the work that NYSDOT has undertaken to date, as well as the opportunities provided to engage the public. We also appreciate the continual release of information, which is key to ensuring that this process is transparent, and that the community has the tools it needs to make an informed, intelligent choice.

We have reviewed the Final Scoping Document that was released on June 26th and have attended the public meetings that have been held on the topic of I-81. We would like to provide the following comments for inclusion in the public record:

Downtown Committee of Syracuse Evaluation

At the start of the process, the Downtown Committee identified a series of goals which are critical to ensuring Downtown's revitalization and measured each proposed alternative against

these goals. We have attached these goals, along with an evaluation of each of the alternatives to this document as Appendix A.

By measuring our goals against the information presented to date, **the Downtown Committee of Syracuse has determined that the Street Level alternatives provide the greatest opportunity to support Downtown's continued revitalization because of the opportunities for increased connections between neighborhoods, increased tax revenue and new development that a Street Level alternative provides.** However, while SL-1, SL-2, and SL-3 provide a good starting point, we do not believe that these are the final design answers and we support NYSDOT's process to conduct further evaluation, engineering and design work for the alternatives identified, as will take place in the EIS process. Further, we wish to state that building a new or wider viaduct is not the answer and would be detrimental to our community by continuing to serve as a barrier between neighborhoods, creating more dead space, removing more properties from the tax base, and lowering property values of areas adjacent to an elevated structure.

We are in the midst of an urban renaissance in our center city, which is also the area directly surrounding the I-81 project area. Development investments underway total more than \$1.4 billion. Therefore, we believe it critical for NYSDOT to foster continued growth in these rapidly growing neighborhoods and develop a solution that improves the center city and avoids demolition and property takings, restores connections to neighborhoods - both to each other and to our suburban partners - that will not lead to dead-ending of streets and street closures, encourages pedestrian mobility, and most importantly, provides an opportunity through aesthetics and design to encourage economic growth and the return of urban properties to our tax base.

We support NYSDOT's removal of the Tunnel and Depressed Highway proposals, the Western Bypass, and the Salt City Circuit from further analysis. We believe these alternatives do not further the goals we've articulated for a future transit system. Specifically, many of them do not meet key criteria of building connections to neighborhoods, given their requirement to sever or dead-end several streets and/or demolish properties to provide land area that accommodates a wider roadway. Nor would they encourage further land development that would generate more revenue for this community given the disruptive nature of cutting off roadways.

Appendix A provides a visual that demonstrates how each alternative proposed by NYSDOT aligns with our criteria. The following sections outline our review, comments, and recommendations related to our criteria:

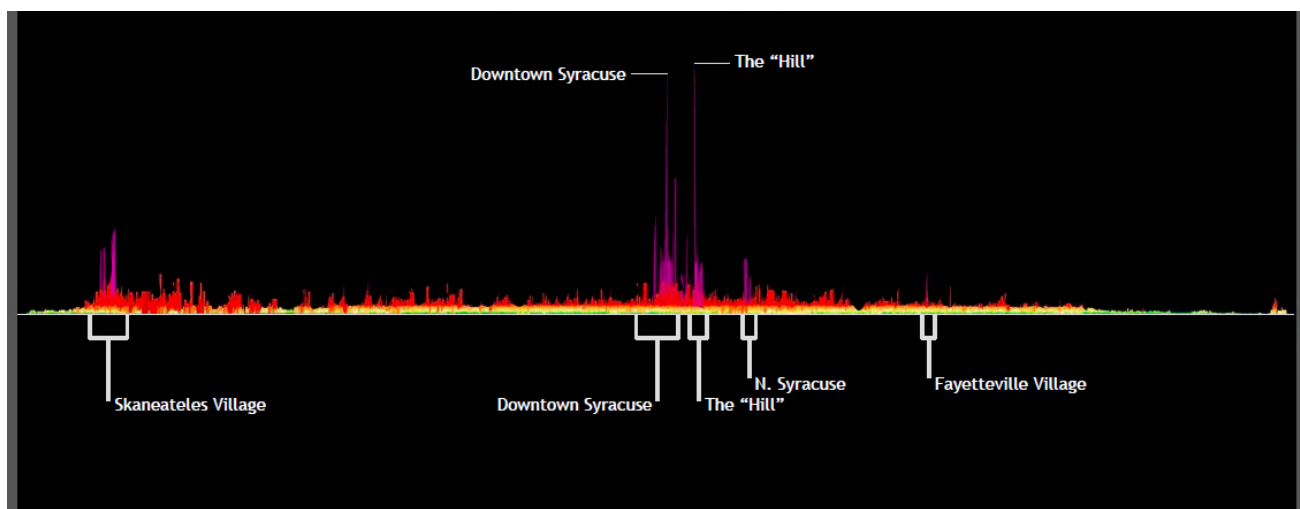
I. Restore Connections to neighborhoods - Eliminate visual and physical barriers

We are pleased that NYSDOT has identified local travel needs, connectivity, and access to key destinations among the items to be addressed during this process. We urge NYSDOT to place a high value on the accessibility needs of the local population and ensure that these needs are paramount to decisions that will be made on the future of I-81. We would like to see an

improved utilization of the entire city street grid and traffic light synchronization to encourage more efficient movement of cars. Our community needs to design a transportation system (including considerations for cars, mass transit, bike and pedestrian access) that meet the needs of our population and reflects a growing desire to both live and work in a walkable, urban environment, but also with an eye to the future transportation trends.

- We request that NYSDOT review and share with the community information on traffic counts for the local street grid to determine capacity, and improvements that can be made to the existing system to more efficiently handle traffic.
- We ask that NYSDOT propose ways to disperse traffic onto multiple routes and not look to a one road solution to manage traffic as part of this process.
- We ask that NYSDOT help us to understand how it came to the determination of numbers of lanes needed for the SL alternatives.

With 27,000 workers who travel into Downtown Syracuse daily, we are the employment hub of the region. Neighboring University Hill houses the region's largest employers. The current viaduct structure creates a visible and psychological barrier that impedes development adjacent to this roadway. As evidenced by the valuation model below based on 2013 real property data from Onondaga County, on an assessed value per acre basis, property values decrease the closer a property is located to the viaduct. Downtown Syracuse and University Hill are the two peaks shown on this map. The valley between represents the path of I-81. It is evident that the values decrease the closer a property is to the highway on both the eastern and western sides of the highway. We share this with you to provide context as to the negative impact the elevated highway has on our tax base.



This is a side profile of Onondaga County that demonstrates assessed value per acre. The highest valued real estate is located in Downtown Syracuse and University Hill. The valley between the two peaks represents the path of the 81 corridor.

We understand that NYSDOT is exploring two ways to connect the elevated I-81/I-690 interchange to the SL alternatives and that elevating Erie Blvd may be a solution to achieving that goal.

- We ask NYDOT to further study and share information about potential dead ending of streets as the Downtown Committee's preference would be to leave the street grid in place as much as possible.
- We ask that NYSDOT review design opportunities to connect the SL alternatives to I-690 using existing on-ramp locations such as Teall Avenue, to avoid dead-ending of existing through streets.

II. Create the Opportunity to transform the current land area into a vibrant, new neighborhood

To facilitate this goal, we urge the City/County Planning Agency to encourage zoning/planning for the appropriate scale development. This includes allowance for dense, mixed commercial and residential uses, installation of sidewalks, and other amenities that will support further tourism and residential growth.

As part of this process, NYSDOT and the FHWA should identify ways in which it can support the municipality in providing long-term maintenance support of this area, which will help it to thrive.

We ask NYSDOT to review and take into consideration the CNY Regional Economic Development Council's (CNY REDC) Strategic Plan, which is the structure that New York State created for regions to identify goals and priorities for how public funds are spent. Among the top three priorities outlined the CNY REDC plan to guide our regional actions and investments was to *Revitalize our Urban Cores and Main Streets*.

The current path of I-81 has done significant harm to the urban core. We do not support any plan which will do more damage to our neighborhood fabric. We believe there are significant opportunities for NYSDOT to transform our urban center in to a vibrant, accessible location. In fact, a recent housing market analysis conducted by RMS Strategies, Inc. has determined that downtown residential housing is at capacity (99.7% occupancy) and there is a current demand for 900+ more units, illustrating the demand that exists to live in our burgeoning neighborhood. Urban redevelopment is key to our region's continued growth. Therefore, it's critical that NYSDOT avoid alternatives that will destroy more of our urban fabric.

We urge NYSDOT to design a complete transportation system to allow for uses that attract, encourage and promote pedestrian activity and walkability, fostering neighborhood growth. Mass transit opportunities currently appear to be absent from the materials that have been released. The SL alternatives allow for infill developments and vibrant corridors by freeing up land for the types of mixed-use developments that are so successfully revitalizing our urban core.

- We ask that NYSDOT undertake a competitive analysis of the land values adjacent to the current path of I-81 and compare these values to other communities who have removed elevated structures from their communities to determine the impact of removal of an overhead structure, similar to this viaduct, on the tax base of a community.

III. **Create Transportation Alternatives**

We look to NYSDOT to ensure this process results in improved access to downtown from University Hill and other neighborhoods through multiple access/egress opportunities. NYSDOT has stated that in all street-level alternatives, the goal would be to maximize use of the existing street grid, which the Downtown Committee feels is critical to improving existing conditions.

- We request NYSDOT look at multiple points of access to University Hill from roadways such as I-481, Teall Ave, Colvin Street and street-grid options.
- We request NYSDOT ensure that the final solution is designed in such a way as to allow opportunity for efficient mass transit and bicycle options. The amount of commuters relying on cars for their sole means of transportation is decreasing. We ask NYSDOT to look at national trends of distances traveled per licensed driver, per vehicle, and per household to determine if this number is increasing or decreasing. A recent study by Michael Sivak of the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute examined driving trends in the U.S. from 1984 to 2011 and has published a report detailing that those figures have plummeted since 2004. NYSDOT needs to look ahead to the future and not design alternatives solely for today's mode of travel.
- We request NYSDOT ensure a comprehensive vehicular wayfinding signage program results from this project.
- We ask that NYSDOT look at larger dispersion model, utilizing more of the City's street grid and not just the 1 to 3 streets identified in the SL-1, SL-2 and SL-3 alternatives. It is critical that NYSDOT view this area from a citywide approach and strive to improve multiple routes in the City's street grid to encourage better traffic flow. This cannot be a one-road solution.
- We ask NYSDOT provide a regional traffic analysis and master plan to address through-traffic needs for this corridor, incentives for waste haulers to remain on the interstate which we know to be a concern of suburban communities, and emergency access routing from I-690 to the hospitals. Included with that should be coordination with Syracuse University for a new campus entrance off I-481 and other dispersion techniques to alleviate congestion at Adams Street.
- We ask that NYSDOT undertake further investigation on regional dispersion strategies to maximize use of our transportation system.

IV. Consider Design Aesthetics

The historic architecture in Downtown Syracuse is iconic and strongly contributes to our community's identity. New construction, both in Downtown Syracuse and on University Hill, has created innovative, unique landmarks that complement the existing historic urban fabric. Aesthetic creativity must be prioritized along with functionality to ensure that a transportation solution is created that reflects the community's soul. A basic design that is unspecific to our architectural assets will not suffice.

- We request NYSDOT challenge their consulting team to produce designs that prioritize aesthetics. Aesthetics are important to future of our community and this should be explored in more detail as part of the working group process.

V. Project Cost

National trends show a reverse of suburban sprawl and a focus on urban development, sustainability, and walkable communities closer to public transportation. NYS and federal funds should be spent on sustainable solutions for the future and reflect the current trends of in-migration to cities. While NYSDOT has identified Project Cost in its presentations, there has not been any information shared of ongoing maintenance costs associated with each alternative that has been recommended to move forward for further review. This is a critical issue for our community.

- We ask that NYSDOT share maintenance cost information with the community so that we understand how much a street level versus a viaduct alternative will require of our community in ongoing maintenance costs, and this cost needs to be projected over the lifespan of the roadway (lifecycle costs).
- We ask that NYSDOT undertake financial modeling to ensure that an unsustainable financial situation is not created as a result of this project. Maintenance is key, and while NYSDOT and the FHWA will provide the upfront costs, NYSDOT needs to tell us if NY State can commit the resources to repair an elevated roadway over the next 75 years, which, at the end of its useful life, will require an even larger investment than what would be needed today.
- Minimize Demolition – NYSDOT needs to consider the effect of demolishing buildings and seizing properties on Syracuse's tax base by undertaking an analysis of its impacts on Syracuse and Onondaga County. Syracuse needs more tax-paying properties to create an economically sustainable future and more wealth for the community. Based on the renderings put forward by NYSDOT at the June 26th scoping meeting, a rough estimate provided by the organization "Rethink 81" estimates that viaduct option V-2 has the potential to remove \$3.3 million, annually, from our tax base.
 - We request that NYSDOT provide more specific information about demolition of buildings and effect on tax base with the various solutions proposed.

VI. Generate New Tax Revenue for the City/County and Ensure Long-term Sustainability

In 2014, the Downtown Committee engaged a firm to take a closer look at what Downtown Syracuse returns to the community via property and sales taxes. We found that it is a significant revenue generator: on a value per acre basis, Downtown Syracuse makes up nearly 2% of the City's taxable land, yet it produces nearly 10% of the City's tax revenue. Downtown is also part of the County, so it pays Onondaga County property taxes. On a county-wide basis, downtown consumes 0.1% of the land area, yet it produces 1% of the property taxes. This is a ten times ratio of potency. Or, another way to think about it: one employee doing the work of 10 people, from a tax productivity standpoint. This provides incredible returns to the community.

With the Street Level alternatives, the opportunity exists to create a roadway that encourages the types of mixed-use developments that have so successfully spurred downtown's revitalization. The SL alternatives would remove a visible and physical barrier between University Hill and Downtown and free up tax-exempt land for development opportunities. NYSDOT has stated that a street-level option could present opportunities for revenue due to the increased land available for development.

- We request that NYSDOT focus on opportunities to improve our tax base, generate revenue, and generate long-term wealth for Syracuse, such as the opportunities for infill development presented by the SL alternatives. As analyzed by "Rethink 81," the SL opportunities presented could add more than seven acres of land for redevelopment, increasing property taxes, sales taxes, employment and residential opportunities.
 - We request that NYSDOT undertake an analysis to determine how much land the various alternatives will return or take away from the tax rolls.
 - We request that NYSDOT review and share information from case studies to compare land use/development patterns adjacent to SL alternatives such as has been presented to date, as well as land use/development patterns adjacent to elevated highways.

NYSDOT has referred to local jobs associated with projects such as I-81 and referenced labor opportunities, as well as businesses needed for supplies and transportation once the project begins.

- While temporary jobs are part of the discussion, we request that NYSDOT look beyond the 'project' phase and prioritize long-term community impacts –permanent jobs and residents for new buildings in areas that can be rebuilt. We need a solution that will ensure long-term positive impacts for our community, and is not solely focused on the construction period.

VII. Property Takings

It's critical that NYSDOT minimize the number of properties taken as a result of this project. The Downtown Committee's sole mission is downtown's revitalization - demolishing buildings for the creation of a wider roadway is counter-productive to the re-densification work

underway. With more than \$356 million in investment downtown now, seizing and demolishing properties in an area of the community that is driving significant investment that benefits the rest of the community does nothing but economically hurt Onondaga County in the long-run.

- We ask that NYSDOT make public the list of affected properties for all of the alternatives proposed.
- We ask that NYSDOT provide tax information on all affected properties so that the community can understand the opportunity cost associated with each alternative.
- When considering alternatives for the future of I-81, NYSDOT needs to consider the impact of the design on our building stock.
 - Additional buildings should not be demolished as it decreases revenue generation opportunities for our community. The fiscal health of the region depends on the vitality of Downtown Syracuse.

VIII. Construction

We ask that NYSDOT be more definitive in sharing construction timelines and processes associated with the proposed alternatives. In order to cause minimal traffic and financial disruption for businesses in the area, NYSDOT needs to minimize the construction period by implementing a phased approach.

- We request more detailed analysis of a construction phasing approach. Information shared by NYSDOT to date states that the Street Level Alternatives offer the most attractive strategy in this regard as construction can start while the viaduct is still standing. Additionally, work can be done to I-481 and the street grid to prepare for the increases in traffic volume.

According to NYSDOT, if a street-level alternative was chosen, work to I-481 would be completed first, most likely over a summer. Construction on a street-level alternative would be able to start sooner than a bridge alternative because construction on a new viaduct would be more intensive. This aligns with the Downtown Committee's goals of minimizing negative impacts to businesses.

NYSDOT has also stated that studies estimate 60,000 vehicles use the viaduct daily and, of those, 10% are through traffic, so only 10% would need to use I-481 to continue north during construction. NYSDOT has estimated that detour routes would be set up during construction and that I-690 would be a major detour area. NYSDOT studies indicate that I-481 has the available capacity to handle additional traffic.

- This will be a disruptive time for the community. It's critical that NYSDOT implement a mitigation strategy to support businesses through this transition. We ask that the NYS assigned Working Groups provide recommendations as to the contents of a mitigation plan.

Conclusion

It is imperative that the transportation solution selected provides opportunities for increased tax revenue, opportunities for new development, and opportunities for better connectivity between Downtown Syracuse and University Hill, the County's most valuable land from a property tax generation standpoint. The health of our entire community, not just Downtown Syracuse, depends on this.

We appreciate NYSDOT's consideration of our comments, and we look forward to continuing to work with NYSDOT in the next phase of planning to bring about transformational change in our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Merike Treier", is positioned above the printed name.

Merike Treier
Executive Director

Cc: Downtown Committee Board of Directors

Enc.

Appendix A

GOALS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE INTERSTATE 81 VIADUCT																			
Key: RED = Does not align Yellow = Appears to align, need more info Green = Does align Regular text = taken from NYSDOT report <i>Italic text</i> - question	Cost			Number of Properties Taken	Length of Construction	Restore Connections to neighborhoods	81 Corridor to be a vibrant, new neighborhood		Create Transportation Alternatives by ensuring this will not be a one-road solution					Generate New Tax Revenue for the City/County			Facilitate growth of major employers by allowing ease of access, and offering vibrant communities for employees, residents & visitors	Consider Design Aesthetics	Notes
	Construction	Eminent Domain/Legal	Ongoing Main-tenance			Eliminate visual and physical barriers	Encourage zoning/planning for the appropriate scale development	Allow for uses that attract, encourage and promote pedestrian activity and walkability that fosters neighborhood growth	Improve Access to Hill	Allow for more access /egress opportunities to roadways	Allow for efficient mass transit opportunities	Enhance vehicular way-finding signage	Improve street grid to encourage better traffic flow	Increase land development potential	Activate more down-town acreage	Develop vacant land and buildings			
	No Build Alternative																		
	V-1: Rehabilitation	\$800M	n/a																
V-2: New Viaduct	\$1.438B	Prelim property acquisition costs included in \$1.438		30-40		16' wider than existing viaduct		Enhancements may include Color to define pedestrian and bike areas, bollards, traffic islands, bumpouts to make ped crossing easier	Teall Ave interchange being considered as an alternate Madison St dead ends – no access to Almond	NYSDOT to look at ways to enhance local connections to streets	Coordinate with Centro on improvements that could enhance Centro's alternatives.		Local street improvements would include exploration/consider -ations for pedestrian and bicycle safety and connectivity.					DOT would look to use diff structure types and lighting	Estimated 30-40 buildings would be taken.
V-3: New Viaduct Substantial Design Improvements	\$1.423B	Prelim property acquisition costs included in \$1.423		25% fewer than V-2.				Enhancements may include Color to define pedestrian and bike areas, bollards, traffic islands, bumpouts to make ped crossing easier	Madison St dead ends – no access to Almond										V3 tighten curves, reduces real estate takings by 25% compared to V2.
V-4: New Viaduct Considerable Design Improvements	\$1.419B	Prelim property acquisition costs included in \$1.419B		40% fewer than V-2				Enhancements may include Color to define pedestrian and bike areas, bollards, traffic islands, bumpouts to make ped crossing easier	Madison St dead ends – no access to Almond										Variation of V3. (tighter curves). Speeds down to 50 mph. Property takings 40% less than V2.

GOALS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE INTERSTATE 81 VIADUCT																			
Key: RED = Does not align Yellow = Appears to align, need more info Green = Does align Regular text = taken from NYSDOT report <i>Italic text</i> - question	Cost			Number of Properties Taken	Length of <i>Construction</i>	Restore Connections to neighbor-hoods	81 Corridor to be a vibrant, new neighborhood	Create Transportation Alternatives by ensuring this will not be a one-road solution					Generate New Tax Revenue for the City/County			Facilitate growth of major employers by allowing ease of access, and offering vibrant communities for employees, residents & visitors	Consider Design Aesthetics	Notes	
	Construction	Eminent Domain/Legal	Ongoing Main-tenance			Eliminate visual and physical barriers	Encour-age zoning/ planning for the appropri-ate scale develop-ment	Allow for uses that attract, encourage and promote pedestrian activity and walkability that fosters neighborhood growth	Improve Access to Hill	Allow for more access /egress oppor-tunities to roadways	Allow for efficient mass transit oppor-tunities	Enhance vehicular way-finding signage	Improve street grid to encourage better traffic flow	Increase land develop-ment potential	Activate more down-town acreage	Develop vacant land and buildings			
SL-1: Boulevard	\$1.047B	The estimated cost includes demolition of the viaduct and preliminary property acquisition costs.		5-10		Initial NYSDOT traffic studies indicate 6 lanes needed to maintain an efficient flow between neighborhoods. <i>What is data source?</i>		Color to define pedestrian and bike areas, bollards, traffic islands, bumpouts to make pedestrian crossing easier			Work with Centro to enhance Centro’s initiatives in project limits.		Boulevard would end around Erie Blvd. median barrier on Water St prevents East West access. But can access Water St. McBride Closed between Water and Burnet				Sufficient space to allow for vehicles, bikes, pedestrians, wide park-like medians, other improvements		Viaduct replaced with Boulevard along Almond St. All SL options could require some property acquisition but fewer than new viaduct solutions All SL options require enhancements to 481
SL-2: Both Streets are one-way	\$1.067B	The estimated cost includes demolition of the viaduct and preliminary property acquisition costs.		5-10				Bike and pedestrian facilities to improve connectivity between multi-use paths within the project limits. Color to define pedestrian and bike areas, bollards, traffic islands, bumpouts to make pedestrian crossing easier	Because Almond would be fewer than 6 lanes, crosswalks would be shortened.	Almond (headed north) connects to 690. Traffic dispersed though city. <i>Will there be improvem ents to these streets?</i>	Work with Centro to enhance Centro’s initiatives in project limits.		Changes would be made to some of the North South paired streets identified. <i>Street grid will be utilized but what kind of improvements would NYSDOT make to rest of city grid?</i>				Sufficient space to allow for vehicles, bikes, pedestrians, wide park-like medians, other improvements		Use of Almond Street (one way) and a combination of one or more local roads

GOALS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE INTERSTATE 81 VIADUCT																			
Key: RED = Does not align Yellow = Appears to align, need more info Green = Does align Regular text = taken from NYSDOT report <i>Italic text</i> - question	Cost			Number of Properties Taken	Length of Construction	Restore Connections to neighborhoods	81 Corridor to be a vibrant, new neighborhood		Create Transportation Alternatives by ensuring this will not be a one-road solution					Generate New Tax Revenue for the City/County			Facilitate growth of major employers by allowing ease of access, and offering vibrant communities for employees, residents & visitors	Consider Design Aesthetics	Notes
	Construction	Eminent Domain/Legal	Ongoing Main-tenance			Eliminate visual and physical barriers	Encourage zoning/ planning for the appropriate scale development	Allow for uses that attract, encourage and promote pedestrian activity and walkability that fosters neighborhood growth	Improve Access to Hill	Allow for more access /egress opportunities to roadways	Allow for efficient mass transit opportunities	Enhance vehicular way-finding signage	Improve street grid to encourage better traffic flow	Increase land development potential	Activate more down-town acreage	Develop vacant land and buildings			
SL-3: Both Streets are two-way	\$1.067B	The estimated cost includes demolition of the viaduct and preliminary property acquisition costs.		5-10			Bike and pedestrian facilities to improve connectivity between multi-use paths within the project limits. Color to define pedestrian and bike areas, bollards, traffic islands, bumpouts to make pedestrian crossing easier			Traffic dispersed though city	Work with Centro to enhance Centro's initiatives in project limits.		Changes would be made to some of the North South paired streets identified. <i>Street grid will be utilized but what kind of improvements would NYSDOT make to rest of city grid?</i>				Sufficient space to allow for vehicles, bikes, pedestrians, wide park-like medians, other improvements		Use of Almond Street (2 way) and a combination of one or more local roads
T-1: Almond Street Tunnel (MLK East to Butternut – 2 miles)	\$2.651B			Multiple streets	Cut-and-cover		5 dead-end streets	5 dead-end streets						Potential to improve near Harrison St, will damage near 690	Potential to improve near Harrison St, will damage near 690	Potential to improve near Harrison St, will damage near 690	Cuts roadways off		Dead ending streets near 690.
T-2: Almond Street Tunnel (MLK East to E. Genesee – 1 mile)	\$1.761B			Multiple streets	Cut-and-cover		5 dead-end streets	5 dead-end streets						Potential to improve near Harrison St, will damage near 690	Potential to improve near Harrison St, will damage near 690	Potential to improve near Harrison St, will damage near 690	Cuts roadways off		
T-3: Townsend Street Tunnel	\$2.643B			Substantial															Would require multiple property acquisitions

GOALS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE INTERSTATE 81 VIADUCT																			
Key: RED = Does not align Yellow = Appears to align, need more info Green = Does align Regular text = taken from NYSDOT report <i>Italic text</i> - question	Cost			Number of Properties Taken	Length of <i>Construction</i>	Restore Connections to neighbor-hoods	81 Corridor to be a vibrant, new neighborhood		Create Transportation Alternatives by ensuring this will not be a one-road solution					Generate New Tax Revenue for the City/County			Facilitate growth of major employers by allowing ease of access, and offering vibrant communities for employees, residents & visitors	Consider Design Aesthetics	Notes
	Construction	Eminent Domain/Legal	Ongoing Main-tenance			Eliminate visual and physical barriers	Encour-age zoning/ planning for the appropri-ate scale develop-ment	Allow for uses that attract, encourage and promote pedestrian activity and walkability that fosters neighborhood growth	Improve Access to Hill	Allow for more access /egress oppor-tunities to roadways	Allow for efficient mass transit oppor-tunities	Enhance vehicular way-finding signage	Improve street grid to encourage better traffic flow	Increase land develop-ment potential	Activate more down-town acreage	Develop vacant land and buildings			
T-4: Tunnel on Eastern Alignment (81’ Below Syracuse)	\$3.298B			Substantial			Existing corridor area could benefit	Existing corridor area could benefit – opportunity to enhance Almond St corridor		Only inter-changes would be with 481, 690 and the former 81 at Bear St									Would require multiple property acquisitions near Lincoln Hill
DH-1: Depressed Highway (Adams to Butternut)	\$1.751B									Would sever Fayette, Washing-ton, Water, Willow, McBride Streets									Several overpasses at key locations would be built, but otherwise open to top. <i>What are the key locations?</i>
DH-2: Depressed Highway (Adams to East Genesee)	\$1.503B									Would sever Fayette, Washing-ton, Water, Willow, McBride Streets									Several overpasses at key locations would be built, but otherwise open to top. <i>What are the key locations?</i>
O-1: Western Bypass	\$2.446B			More than 100 buildings															
O-2: West Street	\$1.326B			70-90 buildings		Cut off from NWS, but improved access to Hill		Cuts off from NWS, but improved access to Hill											No real detail presented with boulevard and West St. impacts

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: JAMIE TREY VETTE

Address: 210 REVERE ROAD

City: SYR

State: NY

Zip: 13214

Phone: 315 637-4119

Email: JAMIE TREY VETTE@GMAIL.COM

Comments: PLEASE DON'T BUILD ELEVATED OPTION
I'M CONCERNED OPTIONS DON'T REALLY IMPROVE
OR RESOLVE Q90. I THINK THE SHORT ~~BY~~ TUNNEL
FALLS SHORT TO THE NORTH GIVEN IT'S ~~EXPENSE~~
EXPENSE. I WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE GRADE
LOWERED AT THE OLD OAKWOOD ENTRY. IT'S ON
THE HISTORIC REGISTER. I WANT TO KNOW MORE
ABOUT HOW LANDSCAPING WILL BE DONE TO
EASE THE BUILD UP OF LITTER. THE CURRENT
HIGHWAY IS VERY HEAVILY LITTERED W/ TRASH.
HAS THE IDEA OF A FUND FOR CONTINUAL
CLEAN UP & MAINTENANCE BEEN ~~PROPOSED~~
THE END RESULT SHOULD IMPROVE PEOPLE'S
VIEW OF SYRACUSE, HIGHLIGHT OUR ASSETS,
AND MAKE OUR CITY ACCESSIBLE TO BUSINESS.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name:

GREB TUTTLE

Address:

9450 CHALKSTONE CRSE. BREWERTON

City:

State: NY

Zip:

13029

Phone:

315 430-9409

Email:

TUTTLE GREB @

HOTMAIL.COM

Comments:

TEAR DOWN RT. 31 &
MAKE A BOULEVARD
THROUGH THE CITY
RE-ROUTE TRAFFIC
ONTO RT. 481.
THIS WOULD BOTH
"SPUR" ECONOMIC
GROWTH IN THE
CITY AREA AND
ALONG THE
RT. 481 CORRIDOR.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation



the hill
UNIVERSITY HILL CORPORATION

Dr. Paul Kronenberg, Chairman

David A. Mankiewicz, President

September 2, 2014

RECEIVED SEP 02 2014

Mr. Mark Frechette, PE
Project Director, 1-81
NYS Department of Transportation
State Office Building
333 E. Washington Street,
Syracuse, New York, 13202

Dear Mark,

The University Hill Corporation is a not for profit organization whose membership includes the medical and educational institutions, the business organizations, the religious institutions and the major stakeholders in the University Hill area of Syracuse. Our members include:

Syracuse University, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, SUNY Upstate Medical University, New York State Office of Mental Health's Hutchings Psychiatric Center, Crouse Hospital, Veterans Affairs Medical Center, East Genesee Regent Association, Crouse Marshall Business Association, University United Methodist Church, Grace Episcopal Church, Temple Concord, Syracuse Housing Authority, Housing Visions Unlimited, Planned Parenthood of Central and Western New York, Sheraton Syracuse University Hotel, Ronald McDonald House, Syracuse Stage.

Our members are directly affected by the proposed project for Interstate 81, as the University Hill area is immediately adjacent to the elevated portion of the viaduct as it passes through the city of Syracuse. In addition to our own process, several of the institutions and organizations which are members of the University Hill Corporation have internal review processes underway and it is expected that they will communicate directly to you their findings and recommendations. These institutions may offer different perspectives individually or may additional issues other than those identified by the collective work of the University Hill Corporation members. As these are some of the largest educational and medical institutions, employers and social service providers in this region it is important that NYSDOT addresses the issues most pertinent to them.

In our comments we have emphasized elements of the plan and criteria that are important to us. We request that NYSDOT consider these elements in its analysis of each option, and apply these additional criteria to the matrix that you will use to make the final decision. As an area that represents some of the largest users of the current and resulting system, we believe this additional information must be considered in the decision making process.

We appreciate the effort that the Department has put into this analysis, and University Hill Corporation and its members look forward to continuing to work with you in this process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul Kronenberg".

Paul Kronenberg, Chairman

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dave Mankiewicz".

Dave Mankiewicz, President

CC: Mr. Jonathan D. McDade, Federal Highway Administration

Hon. Andrew Cuomo, Governor

Ms. Joan McDonald, Commissioner of the New York State Department of Transportation

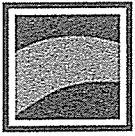
Hon. Joanie Mahoney, County Executive

Members of the Onondaga County Legislature

Hon. Stephanie Miner, Mayor of the City of Syracuse

Members of the Syracuse Common Council

Members of the New York State Legislative Delegation



Comments on the Draft Scoping Report for the I-81 Viaduct Project

University Hill Corporation

September 2, 2014

The University Hill Corporation is a not for profit organization whose members include the educational and medical institutions, business groups, religious organizations, leading not for profit organizations and major stakeholders within the University Hill area of Syracuse. Collectively, our members educate over 25,000 students per year, attract over 53,000 inpatient visits per year, over 1,400,000 outpatient, emergency room and clinic visits per year, and employ over 20,000 people. We have one of the largest hotel room blocks in the community between the Sheraton Syracuse University, the Woodbine Group of hotels and the Crown Plaza. Almost one million people attend events at the Carrier Dome each year. The University Hill area is one of the major destinations for people using the existing I-81 viaduct. The University Hill institutions and members serve clients and visitors from the Pennsylvania border to the Canadian border. The future of I-81 is extremely important to us.

Thousands of people work, receive services, or visit University Hill members every day. Given the nature of member- provided services, traffic to the University Hill area has to operate smoothly 24 hours a day, seven days a week, no matter what the weather conditions are. The members of the University Hill Corporation must always be open and able to handle critical services to the community. Any solution adapted for this section of the highway must be able to meet those demands.

There are five issues about which the members have reached consensus and it is asked that NYSDOT include these as a part of the scope of work for the draft environmental impact statement. These five issues are:

1. Resolving the safety concerns of our employees, students, patients, visitors, and residents of the University Hill area.
2. Addressing the needs of Syracuse's housing vulnerable population living in close proximity to the highway.
3. The need for, and timing of, transit solutions to be put in place prior to the I-81 construction.
4. Vibration and other significant (e.g. noise, dust, utilities) environmental impacts on the institutions during construction.
5. Development of increased access and gateways to University Hill, and ensuring that these access points to the interstate system and routes to the facilities of the University Hill members are of high aesthetic quality.

In addition, University Hill Corporation requests that NYSDOT provide additional information which will be helpful to our members and the community as they consider the various options for this project.

1. Resolving the safety concerns of our employees, students, patients, visitors, and residents of the University Hill area.

In the draft scoping report, safety is emphasized by NYSDOT as a key concern for the replacement of interstate 81. Often the measure of safety is described as it is at the bottom of page 2-1 and page 2-2; that highway design features that no longer meet current standards have contributed to a high number of accidents on the viaduct, particularly where the I-81/ I-690 interchange is located.

It is appreciated that in the description of the various options for the replacement of the highway, NYSDOT has acknowledged the need to address “incomplete routes, missing or inadequate crosswalks, and pedestrian signals under and near the I-81 viaduct...inadequate lighting and pedestrian refuge locations”.

While in agreement that these are critical factors in the safety considerations for the project, they are not the sole factors, and it is requested that NYSDOT use a broader definition of safety and use additional metrics to measure the safety impact of the resulting highway infrastructure. For example:

- Many of our members have significant facilities on both sides of I-81, and as sites in University Hill are built out, and it is anticipated that additional facilities will be located on the west side of the interstate. This will lead to an increased number of pedestrian, bicycle, and auto crossings over or under whatever solution is adopted. It is asked that NYSDOT design components that will address this anticipated increase in crossing traffic and develop and analyze metrics to measure pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle safety at grade crossing through the location of the current viaduct.
- As four of the community's acute care hospitals are located adjacent to the interstate, it is asked that a specific study be done to analyze and protect emergency vehicle access to the health care institutions. This may be a particularly acute problem during the construction period. Most of the community's emergency room capacity is located within a quarter mile of the interstate. Not only must ambulances get to the emergency rooms, but so must the doctors, nurses, technicians and support to provide the services on which this region depends.
- Access to the City of Syracuse's Fire Department is important for all of our members. While the University Hill area can be accessed from several locations in the city, the closure of SFD's Station 7 has left the fire department's closest station to University Hill on the west side of I-81 at Adams Street. This concern will be particularly acute during the construction period.

- Air quality is an important concern to all of University Hill, but particularly to the medical institutions. Hospitals have significant needs for fresh air intake, and the New York State Department of Health closely regulates air quality in hospitals and nursing homes. These air intake locations also are close to I-81, and many are oriented toward the highway. This will be a concern with the likelihood of increased dust and particulate matter created during construction. An increase in particulate matter occasioned by construction or by the implementation of the various options, is a significant issue for the safety of patients. It is requested that the EIS specifically address this problem, as it proposes to do for sensitive receptors such as residences, as described on page 4-15 and on 4-19.
- To be able to operate our utility connections are critical. Many of our member institutions are dependent for heat, steam and chilled water on the services of the Syracuse University steam plant, located on the west side of interstate 81. Much of our electrical power reaches us from substations on the west side of interstate 81. These critical utility services must operate continuously and must be protected during construction and after completion of the project.

2. Addressing the needs of Syracuse's housing vulnerable population living in close proximity to the highway.

The Syracuse Housing Authority (SHA) shared their concern with respect to the scope and need for relocation which may occur as part of any highway replacement project. I-81 is lined by important public housing projects such as Pioneer Homes and Toomey-Abbot Towers. We would ask that NYSDOT clarify how many and which of the properties will be needed to implement the various options under consideration. SHA has estimated that given the close proximity and limited access to some of these units that even if they are not required for the ultimate solution chosen there will likely be requirement to relocate tenants during the period of construction as noise, dust, vibration and limited access render them uninhabitable while the construction is under way. Significant lead time is an absolute requirement to relocate these individuals and families. Many have physical limitations and/ or no vehicles and need to live near medical services, jobs in downtown or University Hill. Many of these residents are elderly, or have special needs. Given NYSDOT's desire to move forward rapidly with this project, there is little time remaining to build replacement units. To relocate these tenants existing units will be required that meet HUD quality standards. That supply of affordable housing is already stressed as many tenants had to be relocated from projects such as Cherry Hill, Kennedy Square, Townsend Tower and Harrison House, which no longer were fit for occupancy. It is asked that NYSDOT provide a minimum of a year's notice to help the community find suitable relocation units for these tenants and immediately engage all of the relevant state agencies such as Housing and Community Renewal to form a task force with NYSDOT and local public and private leaders to devise a workable relocation scenario.

As part of any solution NYSDOT should build into project funding sufficient funds to restore units that had to be temporarily closed to facilitate construction. Experience has proven that units such as these are expensive to renovate and re-occupy once they have been taken out of service for long periods of time.

3. The need and timing for transit solutions to be put in place prior to I-81 construction.

It is understood that the Syracuse Transit System Analysis is underway on a parallel path to the I-81 Viaduct Replacement Study. While we understand the concern that there is not likely to be time to implement some of the transit solutions now being reviewed in greater detail in the study, the construction of the viaduct replacement is the ideal time to implement new, permanent mass transit services such as Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) or Light Rail Transit (LRT).

However it is believed that given the level of disruption likely to be caused during construction, no matter what option is selected, it is imperative that a series of workable transit solutions be put in place and working prior to the I-81 construction. The construction of the project is a great opportunity to substantially increase the number of transit riders. To address that issue, it is requested that NYSDOT immediately convene a committee of state and local transit experts, as well as major employers located close to the construction in order to plan for reasonable transit alternatives. Since our area has a large concentration of employees and students, it is a primary area for greater transit service. We believe that transit should be an integral component of the both the short range (during construction) and long range solution for the replacement of the I-81. This study should emphasize access of all types to the city center including transit, bicycle and pedestrian, in addition to the highway analysis. Options which can accommodate alternate forms of access should be given a priority for implementation.

While specific solutions are not recommended in this letter it is noted that SUNY Upstate had considerable success with park and ride solutions during the construction of its garages with the shuttle operating from parking lots surrounding the NBT Bank stadium. Opportunities for park and ride were already identified in the University Hill Park and Ride Analysis completed with SMTC in conjunction with University Hill Corporation.

In addition, given the large number of hospitality providers on University Hill, it is also asked that city officials, county officials (particularly in conjunction with the operation of the Onondaga County Convention Center Complex and the NBT baseball stadium), the Carrier Dome, the Convention and Visitors Bureau, and other tourism venues be convened to address the needs of tourists and visitors to our region during construction.

4. Vibration and other significant environmental impacts on the institutions needs to be addressed

Several of our member institutions have brought to our attention the sensitivity of equipment used in research and medical diagnostics and treatment to vibration. For example, considering

the immediate adjacency of services such as the new Cancer Center at SUNY Upstate Medical University to I-81, it will be important to address this issue when precision is needed in these procedures. Many of the institutions use specialized construction techniques to minimize vibration near their facilities. It is critical to maintain the integrity of institutional research and the safety of medical treatment that such environmental impacts be addressed prior to construction.

With the location of the hospitals including the region's leading inpatient psychiatric center in close proximity to the highway, we are also concerned with the impacts of noise, nighttime construction, lighting to support nighttime construction, and the impacts of dust on the patients of these institutions. It is asked that NYSDOT agree to do specific research in the EIS to determine potential impacts from these environmental disturbances, and mitigation measures to address these concerns.

5. Creation of enhanced access and improved gateways to the University Hill institutions.

Currently the major point of access to all of the institutions is the Harrison/Adams off ramp from I-81. There is no direct access to University Hill from either I-690 (either the Teall Avenue or Townsend Street exits are the closest) or I-481 (Brighton Avenue) without circuitous paths through adjacent commercial, residential, or industrial neighborhoods. It is our opinion that given the critical nature of medical services in this district, having one major access point to the interstate system is not adequate. None of the options as they are currently drawn resolve that problem. This condition should be addressed under this project. The largest traffic movement to and from the I-81 viaduct is at the Harrison/Adams interchange. The current condition results in frequent traffic back-ups on the viaduct, dangerous weaving as drivers have to cross paths in short distances to get to I-81 or I-690. In the afternoon rush, vehicles often back up on Harrison Street, Irving Avenue and Crouse Avenue trying to access the interstate. Much of this traffic could be diverted away from the viaduct altogether by:

1. Developing a dedicated interchange for University Hill from I-690, or significantly improving the existing ones. This would take I-690 traffic off the viaduct altogether resulting in significantly safer conditions, facilitating traffic movement, and eliminating congestion.
2. Building a dedicated I-481 interchange to University Hill, which could remove unnecessary traffic from the viaduct and the Adams/Harrison interchange, and could facilitate new park and ride services and Carrier Dome access options from University and other parking areas.
3. Making sure that the access is improved not only at the highway, but all the way to the doors of the institutions. For example, it is imperative that traffic signals are coordinated, no matter who operates the system on which they are located, to ensure smooth traffic flow through the University Hill area.

As part or all of these projects, these new entrance gateways should provide an enhanced experience to visitors to our region. Rather than a mass of concrete and steel exiting to a

multilane roadway, the opportunity should be taken to create attractive new entrances to the institutions and major employers. The current viaduct detracts from the experience of our campuses, our community, and our region. The solution should be an asset to the appearance of the community. The current viaduct divides our community and discourages linkages between the University Hill area and its adjacent neighborhoods. No project should be put in place which will continue this condition. The design of the future condition needs to be an asset, not a detriment to the community.

6. More information is needed to assist the state and the community in making the decision

Through this process our members have shared information with the planning entities on our employment and on our customers. It is believed that in order to make the appropriate decision, the state should conduct an origin/destination study of the users of the current viaduct to get a better understanding of how traffic wants to flow to and through the center city. Given the scale of this proposed capital investment, NYSDOT should have all the necessary information to help them, and the constituents using the viaduct, to make a decision about its future.

It is requested that NYSDOT provide information on the impact of the options on the land available in the city for institutional needs, and the needs of the community for economic development. Many University Hill Corporation members have very limited sites in which they can grow their enterprises, and a reduction in land driven by the needs of the interstate system could make it much more difficult for us to sustain our future growth, and for the commercial and residential projects that locate in close proximity to our members and provide the city with a significant component of its tax base. As far as feasible, the state should minimize the demands for additional land for highway solutions, and seek solutions that could increase the amount of land for development to contribute to the city's fiscal sustainability.

It is requested that NYSDOT provide more definitive information about the time required to design, finance, and construct each of the options to replace the viaduct. The amount of time that the community will experience disruption should be minimized, and preference should be given to projects that would take less time.

The University Hill members are also interested in the proposed solution to use sections of the current I-481, I-690 and I-81 to meet the needs of this project. This solution has the potential to be built and operating before the viaduct is demolished, such that a working alternative could be in place before any closures are required. It is requested that this option is given the same consideration as the others which NYSDOT is recommending for further analysis.

It is also asked that NYSDOT clarify the type of maintenance and annual cost of It required for each of the options. It is understood that there will likely be a

significant variation in the ongoing maintenance costs of the options and the amenities associated with them, and there must be responsibilities assigned and a specific plan put in place to fund these ongoing costs so that which is built can be maintained.

The replacement of the I-81 viaduct is very significant to this community. Not only is there an opportunity to improve traffic conditions and increase transportation choices, there is an opportunity to enhance economic development and the quality of life for everyone in the region. It is asked that NYSDOT consider all of these opportunities and issues as part of the I-81 process. The University Hill Corporation looks forward to further dialogue, constructive engagement, and solution development prior to the beginning of the construction.

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name: Dominic Valletonga

Address: 758 Euclid Ave

City:

State:

Zip: 13210

Phone: ()

Email:

Comments:

Thank you for showing such a wide range of options, however my opinion is that NO MORE properties should be removed nor should any more streets be closed!

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

P. S. Mr. Granger
Suggested I write my
concern down.

Name:

Joy F. Varden

Address:

155 7th North St City: Syr. State: NY Zip: 13208

Phone: (315) 292-8726 Email:

stilljoy@gmail.com

Comments:

Cell only
As you see by my address
I live on 7th North St and
there are ~~th~~ many, many 18-wheel
trucks that come off 90 onto N81
at exit 36 on their way to the
liquor warehouse at Court St &
Heale. They are unlawfully traveling
above weight on 7th North & they
(barely) are able to make a L turn
onto Court.

The city police officers have cited
many doing this according to my
neighbor & leaders of our Neighborhood
Watch Group (7th North St below Court).
Her name is Diane Bourgon at
159 7th North St.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Thank you for allowing my input

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name:

Chris Voner

Address:

123 Meyers Rd City: Liverpool State: NY Zip: 13088

Phone: (315) 451-8598

Email:

tkmama12@gmail.com

Comments:

Thank you for having the scope meeting & someone (Tom) took me to each poster & project idea & explained it in more detail.

I'm still not sure what the best idea is for the I-81 project. But what I do not want is for 481 to become 81. This would take away from all the business, hotels & restaurants & stores that have placed their business where they can get on & off 81 easily. I am fairly sure the tunnel idea is very complex with the drainage, ventilation & accessibility in & out if there is an accident. Please make 81 better, safer. I think I would like to know more of the depressed 81 ^{viaduct} going thru Syracuse. easy access to Hospitals & University.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Comments (continued from front):

We have a unique chance to make a difference for the best & let's do it. I have lived & worked in this Syracuse area all my life I want it to be better, a chance to improve. I'm not sure what is best but make it better. Let it be a shining example of how to improve its structure & design.

I will be following the progress. I am happy that you are including the community. This is above my scope of knowledge but I am also listening & learning. I want to make a difference in my community.



Edward J. Wagner
Supervisor

Robert A. Shaw
Clerk



RECEIVED

JAN 13 2014

Operating Division

Council:

Michael J. Aldrich
Anthony Gucciardi
Richard J. Knaul
Terrence Lattimore

2 BRISTOL AVENUE, AUBURN, NEW YORK 13021

PHONE: (315) 253-9021 • FAX: (315) 253-2683

E-Mail: Owasco1@centralny.twcbc.com

January 9, 2014

Mr. Jonathan McDade
New York Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Building
7th Floor, Room 719
Clinton Avenue and N. Pearl Street
Albany, New York 12207

Ms. Debra Nelson
NYS DOT
50 Wolf Road
Albany, New York 12232

Re: I-81 Project – Syracuse Area Corridor
Dear Mr. McDade and Ms. Nelson:

On behalf of the Town of Owasco, we thank the Federal Highway Administration and New York State Department of Transportation for allowing us the opportunity to formally submit our input for consideration in deciding the future of Interstate 81 in Central New York. This is a watershed moment for the entire region, and as such, it is crucial that those directly affected have a stake in the decision making process.

In this submission you will find the Town of Owasco's resolution rejecting the state's proposed plan to replace Interstate 81 with a six-lane boulevard through the City of Syracuse. It is clear that many area residents and elected official are deeply concerned with the negative consequences re-routing Interstate 81 will bring to the entire Central New York region. These negative effects include declined economic growth, increased traffic congestion, longer and more stressful commutes, and compromised public safety.

We hope the Department of Transportation and other decision-makers will thoroughly consider our viewpoints when deciding the best plan for Interstate 81. Our resolution should be made part of the FHWA/NYS DOT NEPA and SEQRA record. While we are open to many of the ideas presented, we firmly believe the best option will maintain Interstate 81's current function and designation as an interstate highway through Syracuse. If FHWA and NYSDOT determine to continue to pursue the proposed boulevard option, the critical issues raised in this resolution need to be carefully and thoroughly weighed by FHWA and NYSDOT.

Thank you,

Edward J Wagner
Supervisor Town of Owasco

Edward J. Wagner
Supervisor

Tammy Flaherty
Clerk



COUNCIL:
Michael J. Aldrich
Anthony Gucciardi
Tim Kerstetter
Richard Knaul

2 BRISTOL AVENUE AUBURN, NEW YORK 13021
PHONE (315) 253-9021 FAX (315) 253-2683
Owasco1@centralny.twcba.com

May 9, 2014

Resolution 13-092

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF OWASCO, COUNTY OF CAYUGA, REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for generations to come; and

WHEREAS, it is the sense of the Owasco Town Board that any decision reached by the New York State Department of Transportation should satisfy function first including safety, efficiency of transportation for personal and commercial use and provide and minimize unintended consequences.

IT IS THEREFORE

RESOLVED, that it is the opinion of the Owasco Town Board that the unintended consequences of creating any significant changes to Route 81 including, creating a boulevard, could potentially alter the flow of heavy commercial traffic and increase truck traffic flow through the Town of Owasco, State Rt. 38A and thereby causing safety issues and decreasing the quality of life for Owasco residents; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Owasco Town Board Requests that the New York State Department of Transportation seek a solution to the Route 81 redesign that does not pose negative effects to smaller outlying communities; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an Interstate Highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk of the Town of Owasco is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council and the Cayuga County Legislature.

Motion by Councilperson Aldrich: Second Councilperson Lattimore.

Roll call vote:	Councilperson Aldrich <u>Yes</u>	Councilperson Gucciardi <u>Yes</u>
	Councilperson Knaul <u>Yes</u>	Councilperson Lattimore <u>Yes</u>
	Supervisor Wagner <u>Yes</u>	

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name: Kathy Wallace
Address: 223 Leonard St City: Melville State: NY Zip: 13211
Phone: () Email: KAWmoggies@hotmail.com

Comments:

Thanks alot. Things get a little
clearer with every meeting.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: Elaine Walter

Address: 801 Broad St

City: Syracuse State: NY Zip: 13210

Phone: ()

Email: e1f48@twcny.rr.com

Comments: I am concerned ^{that} whatever option is chosen needs to fully address the pedestrian access between the university area & downtown. The current area under & around the viaduct is unsightly and very difficult to cross as a pedestrian. I worry that the voice of businesses, while important, will drown out the voice of individuals who walk and bike into and in the city. Suburban commuters certainly have a need to safely drive into and out of the city but not at the expense of those who daily try to navigate the area without a car. We should be encouraging more people to live in or near the urban area & not do anything to further encourage sprawl without growth. Making it too easy to drive directly into or through downtown at 65 miles per hour does not help our economy or our environment. Providing access into downtown at lower speeds, at grade level or below would be my preference, as well as re-routing thru traffic via 481. If they are not stopping in Syracuse anyway, it is no hardship to drive around at highway speed. Please continue comments on back if needed. Those who are interested in

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:
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Syracuse, NY 13202

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US Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Comments (continued from front):

Supporting local businesses will continue to do so more easily if the entrances to downtown are at modest speeds & at grade level. Those who suggest that the current viaduct design helps local business are clearly not talking about downtown or university business since the viaduct discourages anyone from exploring the downtown/univ. areas.

Environmentally and for our health, we should be encouraging people to walk & not rely on cars for short trips & errands. We need to consider that walking a few blocks to our offices and businesses is perfectly acceptable rather than expecting to be able to park in front of any destination.

It would also be helpful to consider linkages and improvements with public transportation so that a journey of many blocks can be made easier and accessible without personally driving. Smaller, maneuverable mini-buses would be a great addition.

I look forward to continuing updates on alternatives & their various pros & cons.



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name: Mark Watkins

Address: 300 Roe Ave.

City: Syr

State: NY Zip: 13210

Phone: (315) 471-3445

Email: mark1937@twcny.rr.com

Comments: For those living south of downtown and south of S.U. and the Medical Complex, e.g., Outer Comstock and the Valley, there are only two streets connecting us northward to Downtown and I-690. One is I-81; the other is Comstock Ave., which is 2-lane.

To disconnect us from Downtown and I-690 and the Airport by severing I-81 would be a major inconvenience for residents in the Southeastern and Southern neighborhoods of the city, as well as southern suburbs.

The problem of traffic would be especially acute when there is a Dome event, and thousands of cars are parked on Skytop or at Manley Field House. Much of this traffic enters I-81 northbound at E. Colvin St. If I-81 becomes a city street north of Castle St. There would be major back-ups.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

From: [Michael Watrous](#)
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Subject: I-81 Construction Process
Date: Wednesday, November 20, 2013 10:51:13 AM

I have been to several of the I-81 meetings and I have not heard anyone raise the question of how NYS DOT will help the City of Syracuse mitigate additional traffic and infrastructure stress during the construction phase of the I-81 project.

Regardless of which path is chosen for I-81, construction is likely to last many years. During that time, drivers will avoid construction by using local streets to access our urban jobs centers, university events, and hospitals.

I'm sure you are aware that many of our city's streets have poor traffic light timing, inadequate markings, and are in general disrepair due to a current lack of funding. Without improvements, additional traffic counts on local city streets will produce traffic delays, increase motor vehicle accidents, delay emergency response times, decrease pedestrian access and safety, and further degrade local infrastructure.

As a resident of Syracuse, I encourage the NYS DOT to assist with improvements to our local street infrastructure to mitigate the pain caused by construction on the I-81 viaduct.

--

Michael Watrous

601 Salisbury Park Drive
Syracuse, New York 13224
518.321.3376
mwatrous@buffalo.edu

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name:

Joshua Werbeck

Address:

116 Boise Dr.

City:

SYR

State:

NY

Zip:

13210

Phone: (315) 863-9019

Email:

JoshuaWerbeck@gmail.com

Comments:

I think expanding 81 footprint at
G90 is undesirable.

From the North

I think the blue option will make
getting to the Hill very difficult, which
is a problem for public health because that's
where the hospital are.

I think we should build a tunnel.
I'll pay extra taxes.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

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New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name: Lauren Wetterhahn

Address: 925 7th North St. Apt. C59 City: Liverpool State: NY Zip: 13088

Phone: (315) 221-1214 Email: wetterhl@upstate.edu

Comments: I spoke with a project staff member regarding my concerns about the potential health impacts of the various options. I was told that the EIS contains analysis of all options that make it past the scoping phase in terms of air quality, sound, & opportunity for physical activity. I remain concerned that if an entire class of options fails to proceed past scoping (say, no depressed highway alternatives make it), then the remaining options will only be evaluated on their health impacts relative to each other. The worst case scenario would be elimination of the healthiest option (which we would not know) leaving only a range of less healthy ones, from which the least unhealthy would appear to be "best." Additionally, special attention should be paid to the impact on emergency response time to the impacted hospital emergency departments, an aspect I

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
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Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

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Information Hotline:

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Comments (continued from front):

of health that is not readily teased out but ought to be considered given heavy reliance on local EDs by Syracuse's most marginalized, inner city inhabitants.



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

WHITE & WHITE

*18 East Genesee St.
Skaneateles, N.Y. 13152
(315) 685-7733*

Points to investigate and evaluate when considering options for reconfiguring Route 81

- 1.) Loss of Federal Highway designation- maintenance costs transfer to Syracuse if boulevard option is chosen
- 2.) Rerouting traffic around Rt. 481 will most assuredly push downstate New York, Connecticut and New Jersey garbage haulers to revert to Rt. 41, 41A, 38, 38A routes endangering Skaneateles and Owasco Lake water quality- could possibly require multi-million dollar filtration plant at Syracuse and other taxpayer's expense.
- 3.) Damage to commercial activity in Skaneateles Village and Town, Owasco Town, Auburn City and Aurelius Town due to increased truck traffic.
- 4.) Concerns of western, southern and northern Onondaga County emergency services relating to increased response times to hospitals on east side of any boulevard.
- 5.) Pollution increase (noise, smell and toxicity) in neighborhood where traffic is lowered to street level.
- 6.) Pollution level increases elsewhere with additional miles driven and relocation of traffic.
- 7.) Relocation of residents displaced by building removal or alteration caused by wider boulevard.
- 8.) Ground vibration caused by additional traffic on nearby city streets- additional maintenance by city crews.
- 9.) Local neighborhood disruption caused by commuters and commercial shoppers, clicnts, employees, etc. as they try to find shortcuts to their destinations.
- 10.) Loss of business for hotels, restaurants, retail stores, etc. when lots of traffic is routed past them on Rt 481. Think downtown, south side, and Liverpool areas.
- 11.) Additional cost of deliveries to and from local businesses who would have to navigate a boulevard or use Rt 481.
- 12.) Worsening of pcdestrian crossing situation from Syracuse University and Hospital Complexes if a wider boulevard is in place.

13.) Loss of opportunity to make a statement for Syracuse by creating a visually appealing and efficient highway which will benefit all of central New York.

14.) I'm a 73 year old resident of Central New York who grew up near, worked at jobs in, and had many friends who lived in what we called the 15th ward. I can assure you that Rt 81 didn't divide Syracuse. That process was already in place with Salina Street and its businesses separating the more affluent west side from the poorer residents of the 15th ward. Creating a boulevard as wide as presently anticipated would further exacerbate existing neighborhood division. Please don't make a bad situation worse.

Stephen E. White
20 State Street
Skaneateles, N.Y. 13152

Whitebev2@verizon.net

RECEIVED

JAN 1981

Operating Unit

Hi folks, thanks for listening! I'm Steve White and I represent Citizens to Preserve the Character of Skaneateles, The Village and Town of Skaneateles and the merchants and businesses housed on Route 20 in the Village and Town of Skaneateles.

Both our Town and Village have passed resolutions requesting you to abandon any plan to create a boulevard of Route 81 going through Syracuse- and for good reasons. First the amount of garbage haulers going through our town on route 20 had a severely negative impact on customer volume, pollution (smell, noise, dirt and vibration) and therefore sales. I personally had a 17 year term of participation on the local truck traffic committee. Our second concern, and one which potentially impacts not only us but all the citizens of Syracuse is hazardous waste traveling on both sides of Skaneateles Lake- the source of free and clean water for our Village and Syracuse. Your familiarity with traffic should allow you to quantify the probability of accidents per truck mile driven on Routes 41, 41A, 38, and 38A. I personally responded to 2 spills of toxic material near the lake in my seven year experience as a first responder and active fireman for the Borodino Fire Department. Syracuse (and therefore Skaneateles Village) currently has a federal Filtration Avoidance Certificate with no expiration date- One or more serious spills of noxious substances could void that certificate and force Syracuse (and therefore Skaneateles Village) to build and maintain a filtration plant to treat that tainted water. 20 years ago I recollect an estimate of 50 million dollars for construction of such a plant. Who knows how much today. Owasco and Auburn face a similar problem. Our village also had to pay for repairing the sewer hook up twice for our building (among others) because of vibration caused by approximately 20 trucks per hour (1 every three minutes) passing our door. The environmental repercussions of a boulevard and rerouting those trucks on 481 to 690 on their way to Seneca Meadows Landfill would be disastrous for Skaneateles and could be for Syracuse as well. You know those haulers wouldn't accept those extra miles and travel time and would find their way back through our town. Why would you, who finally came to our rescue and helped us eliminate approximately 75% of that noxious truck traffic, want to reverse course and put all those trucks (some with toxic waste) back on roads bordering Skaneateles and Owasco Lakes- the drinking water source for about a quarter of a million New York State residents?

And speaking of environmental repercussions, please consider the effect of lowering the present source of Rt 81 traffic pollution to street level in downtown Syracuse. The noise would be magnified by echoing from building to building. The exhaust smell and toxicity would be concentrated around nearby residences instead of a partial dissipation by wind to settle in diluted amounts in a far greater area. Folks (lots of kids included) living in that area shouldn't have to accept that burden. Others will be more specific about increasing the street level width of the present street to a boulevard and its impacts on neighborhood life. Your published data identifies only 2500 vehicles passing through- imagine a great proportion of the other 80,000 Rt 81 users sitting at boulevard lights at morning and evening drive times- why would rerouting only 3%-5% of total Rt 81 users around the city make sense while the other 95% would be trying to

navigate in and around the city on already crowded streets? And speaking of in and around the city, where would approximately 1,000 people displaced by building eradication or alteration relocate. In human decency terms that may be the most devastating consequence of creating a boulevard.

Some are advocating the boulevard option as a stimulus for downtown business revival. Please note that a center city revival is well underway with Rt 81 just as it is.

I'd like to add one other negative consequence which others may expand upon. I've spoken to members of many of the emergency services covering the southern and western parts of Onondaga County and even some from Cortland and Cayuga Counties. They all express concern relating to travel time to hospitals all but one of which rest on the east side of any proposed boulevard.

I'm one of the original members of save81.org. Certainly each of our members has personal and financial reasons for opposing a boulevard. However as you have and/or will hear from us we also represent the interests of thousands of residents, workers, volunteers, business people, drivers, commuters and water drinkers who would be negatively impacted by the creation of a boulevard.

If you'd like some empirical evidence of the results of changing streets to a boulevard take a look at your own West Street arterial here in Syracuse. Joe Flint, who did a splendid job moderating the west side neighborhood meeting at Fowler High School, ran into a buzz of dissatisfaction with that situation- ask him!

Please put that option to rest and come up with a plan which enhances traffic flow, keeps pollution to a minimum and has a positive visual impact. We understand you supported such a plan in Rochester. We expect no less in our community and we offer our help and local expertise to accomplish something suitable.

Again- thanks for hearing our concerns.

Stephen E. White
20 State Street
Skaneateles, N.Y. 13152

White and White Antiques
18 East Genesee Street
Skaneateles, N.Y. 13152

Whitebev2@verizon.net

RECEIVED

JAN 18 2014

Operating Division

**TOWN OF SKANEATELES RESOLUTION
NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE**

WHEREAS, for the last 50 years, Interstate Route 81 has served as a vital backbone for the economy of the Central New York region, connecting commuters, businesses, tourists, other visitors, and through-travelers alike; and

WHEREAS, among its important functions, I-81 provides vital access to downtown Syracuse, all of our hospitals, Syracuse University, Destiny USA and all of the residents and businesses clustered along its route; and

WHEREAS, although there are a variety of ways to deal with I-81's aging infrastructure, the existing "Interstate" function and designation must be preserved, because any solution which would remove I-81's vital function from its present alignment would irreparably cripple the regional economy and corresponding employment that has grown up around the highway network; and

WHEREAS, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for the next 100 years; and

WHEREAS, quality of life is important to residents of Onondaga County, and few, if any, major cities offer the range of opportunities for our citizens and allow them the convenience to access those assets in 20 minutes or less; and

WHEREAS, the freedom to commute between work, home and leisure activities without fighting the gridlock of traffic is a major advantage to living in Central New York, and it is illogical and contrary to the best interests of our citizens to compromise one of our finest assets; and

WHEREAS, we have spent decades promoting Greater Syracuse as a destination for sports, medicine, the arts, education, recreation, shopping and commerce, and denigrating easy access to those destinations now would be unthinkable and counter-productive; and

WHEREAS, citizens require easy and quick access to emergency medical services; first-responders require expeditious routes for the public's safety and well-being, businesses need efficient routes for commercial transport and convenient access to customers; and

WHEREAS, many of our communities and businesses have grown-up because of I-81's function and alignment, it is imperative that we do not create new problems in an attempt to solve an existing problem, further, it is critical that the selected solution does not burden the taxpayers with unintended and costly consequences; and

WHEREAS, I-81 and the New York Thruway are the economic lifeblood of our community, and cutting off one of our major arteries now would jeopardize an already fragile business climate; and

WHEREAS, it is the sense of the Skaneateles Town Board that any decision reached by the NYS Department of Transportation should satisfy function first, as form can and will naturally follow, and should be closely tailored to satisfy that function; and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED, that it is the opinion of the Skaneateles Town Board that unintended consequences will arise from creating any significant changes to the configuration of I-81, particularly creating a boulevard that halts traffic flow with a series of traffic lights, and will likely alter the flow of heavy commercial traffic and increase

truck traffic through the Town of Skaneateles via State Routes 41, 41A and 20 compromising the safety and well-being of its residents and negatively impacting their quality of life; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Town Board rejects the concept of replacing I-81 with a boulevard that halts traffic flow with a series of traffic lights; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that this Town Board requests that the NYS Department of Transportation seek a solution to the I-81 redesign that will not impose negative effects to smaller, outlying communities that have not developed in a manner to handle increased commercial traffic; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Town Board memorializes its determination that the exiting I-81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an interstate highway must not be removed or impaired; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Town Clerk of the Town of Skaneateles is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, to the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and to legislative officials at the County, State and Federal levels who represent the Town of Skaneateles or hold leadership positions.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that at a meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Skaneateles, Skaneateles, New York, on May 16, 2013, the foregoing Resolution was duly moved by Councilor Keyes and seconded by Councilor Murray, a quorum of four (4) members of the five-member Board being present, and each voted on the Resolution as follows:

Supervisor Teresa Roney	Absent
Councilor James Greenfield	Yes
Councilor Nancy Murray	Yes
Councilor Steve McGlynn	Yes
Councilor Rick Keyes	Yes

The Resolution was, therefore, duly adopted.

Dated: May 17, 2013


Janet L. Aaron
Town Clerk
Town of Skaneateles



Points to investigate and evaluate when considering options for reconfiguring Route 81

- 1.) Loss of Federal Highway designation- maintenance costs transfer to Syracuse if boulevard option is chosen.
- 2.) Rerouting traffic around Rt. 481 will most assuredly push downstate New York, Connecticut and New Jersey garbage haulers to revert to Rt. 41, 41A, 38, 38A routes endangering Skaneateles and Owasco Lake water quality- could possibly require multi-million dollar filtration plant at Syracuse and other taxpayer's expense.
- 3.) Damage to commercial activity in Skaneateles Village and Town, Owasco Town, Auburn City and Aurelius Town due to increased truck traffic.
- 4.) Concerns of western, southern and northern Onondaga County emergency services relating to increased response times to hospitals on east side of any boulevard.
- 5.) Pollution increase (noise, smell and toxicity) in neighborhood where traffic is lowered to street level.
- 6.) Pollution level increases elsewhere with additional miles driven and relocation of traffic.
- 7.) Relocation of residents displaced by building removal or alteration caused by wider boulevard.
- 8.) Ground vibration caused by additional traffic on nearby city streets- additional maintenance by city crews.
- 9.) Local neighborhood disruption caused by commuters and commercial shoppers, clients, employees, etc. as they try to find shortcuts to their destinations.
- 10.) Loss of business for hotels, restaurants, retail stores, etc. when lots of traffic is routed past them on Rt 481. Think downtown, south side, and Liverpool areas.
- 11.) Additional cost of deliveries to and from local businesses who would have to navigate a boulevard or use Rt 481.
- 12.) Worsening of pedestrian crossing situation from Syracuse University and Hospital Complexes if a wider boulevard is in place.
- 13.) Loss of opportunity to make a statement for Syracuse by creating a visually appealing and efficient highway which will benefit all of central New York.
- 14.) I'm a 73 year old resident of Central New York who grew up near, worked at jobs in, and had many friends who lived in what we called the 15th ward. I can assure you that Rt 81 didn't divide Syracuse. That process was already in place with Salina Street and its

businesses separating the more affluent west side from the poorer residents of the 15th ward. Creating a boulevard as wide as presently anticipated would further exacerbate existing neighborhood division. Please don't make a bad situation worse.

Stephen E. White
20 State Street
Skaneateles, N.Y. 13152

Whitebev2@verizon.net



Over the last several months several members of Save81.org have met to discuss and learn about the options and opportunities related to the re-building of I-81. As a diverse group of business owners, elected officials, union representatives, public safety professionals, and other concerned citizens, we found many common concerns and questions related to this project. Of the options publically discussed so far, we have determined that the "boulevard" option holds the most potential for damage to our community, livelihood and property values.

We are hopeful that a thorough evaluation of the facts will lead to the dismissal of this concept and that a more thoughtful and transformative solution identified.

Our concerns include the following:

TRAFFIC FLOW

Residents depend on I-81 for fast commutes and easy access to key destinations. A boulevard could lead to as much as 88 percent of I-81 traffic onto city streets, creating a traffic nightmare that would undermine Syracuse's reputation as a "20-minute city."

Syracuse is known as a "20-minute city" where residents and visitors can reach many key destinations in 20 minutes or less.

That kind of accessibility is rare for a city the size of Syracuse, and it is a feature that many of us who live and work here depend upon. For some of us, it may have been a deciding factor for where we live and work.

There's little question that replacing a high-speed Interstate Highway with a six-lane boulevard that stops traffic with lights and crosswalks will cause traffic congestion.

Area residents who rely on I-81's current traffic flow through Syracuse to get around just about every day will now have to worry about how a spike in traffic will affect their quality of life.

- Federal officials have warned that the boulevard could result in as much as 88 percent of the current I-81 traffic moving onto Syracuse city streets.
- This means residents from the suburbs traveling to Downtown Syracuse are going to see added time and gas costs because of a boulevard, not to mention traffic headaches.
- We've all experienced the major delays caused by construction and tractor-trailer accidents on I-81. Imagine these traffic nightmares every day during rush hour on a boulevard.

PUBLIC SAFETY

A congested boulevard would add precious minutes to response times for first-responders in times of emergency, which could mean the difference between life and death. Adding six lanes of street level traffic could also endanger pedestrians and bikers trying to reach downtown destinations. Put simply, a boulevard would be bad news from a public safety standpoint.

- The public safety hazards a boulevard presents would affect our entire region and put residents' lives in danger. With so much at stake, we cannot afford for the state to make the wrong choice.
- Whether an ambulance is taking a patient to a downtown Syracuse hospital, or police are answering a distressed call, or a fire needs immediate attention, each day our first-responders use I-81.
- Movement of public safety vehicles through and around central Syracuse, the county, and the region would be adversely affected.
- Paramedics and emergency medical technicians rely on the quick and efficient access I-81 provides to city hospitals.
- The state's plan to replace I-81 in Downtown Syracuse with a boulevard could impede the ability of first-responders to quickly reach emergency scenes.
- Precious minutes would be lost as emergency personnel try to navigate increased traffic and congestion associated with a highway.
- As first-responders know, these minutes could be the difference between life and death in an emergency.
- A boulevard could also make pedestrian and bike accesses to Downtown Syracuse from surrounding neighborhoods and institutions dangerous. There are enough pedestrian-motor vehicle accidents. A boulevard with six-lanes of traffic and bike lanes will undoubtedly increase the number of these accidents.

- And in different ways, diverting I-81 around Syracuse poses a serious public safety threat to the smaller outlying cities and towns of Central New York.
- If large commercial vehicles like trash trucks are re-routed, do we really expect they won't start using local roads? This was a problem for many of the smaller outlying communities, and one that their local officials worked hard to stop.
- A boulevard would encourage trucks to start using these smaller roads again to save time and gas. Imagine those huge trucks trying to maneuver local roads. They greatly increase the risk of motor vehicle and pedestrian accidents.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

More traffic means more idling, which means more vehicle emissions and increased air pollution in downtown neighborhoods. Onondaga and Cayuga county towns would be at risk for increased trash-hauling truck traffic, and just one accident and spill near a lake could contaminate drinking water for thousands of area residents.

- A boulevard will increase fuel usage, thereby endangering air quality in Downtown Syracuse and the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Slower moving traffic – excepting most hybrids – generally operates less efficiently at speeds less than 50 miles per hour. The traffic now traveling at a higher speed on I-81 will be forced to slow down for a boulevard-only configuration and will be less efficient. This will contribute to more air pollution per mile.
- Diverting I-81 and replacing it with a boulevard would be a step backward in moving large trucks quickly and efficiently through our area. Diesel particulate is a known carcinogen, and diesel emissions are known to cause asthma that requires a lifetime of treatment.
- The boulevard alternative will change the energy consumption, travel time and accident costs for people seeking access to Downtown Syracuse or passing through town.
- Outside Syracuse—and even outside Onondaga County into Cayuga County—local officials are concerned with the environmental impacts of a boulevard. Re-routing traffic from 81 onto our local roads poses environmental dangers.
- The increased air pollution from the increased traffic congestion due to re-routed traffic and threat of spills would threaten Owasco Lake and other nearby Finger Lakes. These lakes are a crucial source of drinking water for many area residents.

LOCAL ECONOMY

I-81 makes it easy for residents and visitors to reach key destinations and businesses throughout the region. Making it more difficult for customers to reach these locations will lead to a loss of revenue for employers, which means less money to expand business and hire and retain employees.

- There is no disputing that I-81 has served the Central New York region well economically. Thousands of visitors travel to our area each year—whether for Syracuse University basketball or the New York State Fair. And I-81 brings them right to our hotels, gas stations, restaurants, shops and entertainment complexes.
- For Downtown Syracuse business owners, I-81 has become our Main Street. We depend on 81 to grow our businesses, hire new employees and attract potential customers who use 81 to travel through our region.
- Local business owners like myself have come to rely on I-81 because its route through Syracuse makes access to shops and stores convenient for local residents.
- Diverting I-81 traffic could do irreparable damage not only to these Syracuse businesses, but our entire regional economy.
- Local residents will not have the patience to navigate traffic and new routes to reach our downtown stores.
- Through-travelers would follow the new 81 path away from Syracuse, no longer stopping in the city for food, gas, and other services.
- Maintaining I-81's current path is crucial for the region. If you re-route the highway and cut businesses off from that customer base, there will be negative consequences: A loss of revenue for employers, which means less money to hire and retain employees. This puts jobs at risk.
- While the economy is rebounding from the national downturn, we're still in the midst of a tough economic climate in which every sale counts.
- This is especially true for small businesses. We cannot afford to make it more difficult for customers to reach us.
- Downtown Syracuse must remain easily accessible and convenient, or we risk losing our businesses we have worked so hard to build.

TOURISM

I-81 serves as a major arterial for visitors to Syracuse and Central New York, connecting visitors with destinations such as the Oncenter, Syracuse University, the Carrier Dome, DestinyUSA. Replacing I-81 with a boulevard and diverting traffic could impede access to these destinations, as well as hotels and other businesses.

- Tourism plays an important role in our region's economy, and I-81 serves as a major artery for visitors to Syracuse and Central New York.
- I-81 provides easy access to destinations such as the Oncenter, Syracuse University, the Carrier Dome, DestinyUSA and other major attractions throughout the area.
- Replacing I-81 with a boulevard and diverting traffic could impede access to these destinations, as well as hotels and other businesses.
- Diverting I-81 around Syracuse will add miles to visitors' trips to our region and cause unnecessary confusion.
- Think about the traffic and congestion following a Syracuse basketball or football game at the Carrier Dome. A boulevard will only add more time and frustration for visitors trying to get home after a game.

Many visitors to our region are "stopover" visitors who stop at businesses along the highway for gas, restaurants and lodging. Diverting this traffic could damage such businesses along the highway

NEIGHBORHOOD IMPACT

The boulevard plan would have an adverse impact on local neighborhoods. Some Syracuse residents have expressed serious safety concerns about a boulevard, including increased street-level traffic that could endanger pedestrians, especially children. And officials in areas outside the city worry that a boulevard would lead to more truck traffic in their towns -- leading to more accidents, pollution and damage to the infrastructure.

- Some residents have expressed serious concerns about the possible affects of a boulevard on their neighborhoods and towns.
- For example, some residents of Pioneer Homes development in Syracuse are concerned about the affects a street-level boulevard would have on pedestrian safety, especially for children.
- A boulevard frequently stopped by lights and other signage would increase idling and release more vehicle emissions, damaging air quality in neighborhoods along the boulevard.

- Diverting I-81 and replacing it with a boulevard would be a step backward in moving large trucks quickly and efficiently through our area. Diesel particulate is a known carcinogen, and diesel emissions are known to cause asthma that requires a lifetime of treatment.
- Officials in Cayuga County have worked for years to reduce heavy truck traffic on local roads. A boulevard has the potential to reverse those efforts.
- Replacing I-81 with a boulevard and re-routing the highway could result in more heavy truck traffic barreling down local roads in Cayuga County towns -- leading to more accidents, pollution and damage to the infrastructure.

LABOR PERSPECTIVE

Area workers have built their lives around I-81 over the past few decades, even deciding where they live and work based on proximity to the highway. A boulevard would add more time, miles and frustration to their commutes, while damaging businesses and putting jobs in jeopardy.

- Many area workers have built their lives around I-81 over the past few decades. They've purchased homes near the highway because of the convenience it affords. They use it to quickly get to and from work amid their busy schedules, which means less time in the car and more time with their families.
- These workers -- and thousands of others like them throughout the area -- rely on I-81 every day. And they have genuine concerns about what it would mean if I-81 were replaced with a boulevard in Downtown Syracuse.
- Many local businesses have come to rely on I-81 as a key source of customers and revenue, which helps drive economic growth and supports jobs for thousands of area workers.
- Diverting that revenue source could irreparably damage those businesses and jeopardize jobs. In such a fragile economic environment, the state must explore I-81 solutions that protect area jobs, not put them at risk.
- The added miles to commutes would also lead to more gas usage. With fuel prices already elevated and likely to stay that way, area workers cannot afford to spend more on gas.
- Central New Yorkers working two jobs have come to rely on 81 to take them between multiple places of employment quickly. Replacing 81 with a boulevard jeopardizes the livelihoods of those hard-working residents.

- The traffic flow through I-81 has provided an economic lifeline to the northern and southern Syracuse suburbs. Cutting this artery would risk an already fragile economy.
- Diverting 81-traffic would hinder economic development for the region, especially for the northern and southern suburbs.
- Increased commercial and truck traffic travelling through smaller communities would cause safety issues while decreasing the quality of life for town residents.
- Over the past few years, outlying Syracuse communities have worked to address the large trash hauling truck traffic through the town and surrounding area, and agreements have been made between landfill operators and truck owners to reduce the volume of trash hauling trucks through the town. However, if I-81 were re-routed, these trash-hauling trucks would very likely once again seek shorter and quicker routes through smaller towns.
- The infrastructure of these towns cannot handle a high volume of big trucks. As these large vehicles attempt to maneuver local roads, they increase the odds for motor vehicle and pedestrian accidents, and their large size would contribute to faster deterioration of infrastructure.
- Local officials are also concerned for the preservation of the nearby Finger Lakes. If I-81 were re-routed, the increased air pollution and threat of spills would threaten the source of drinking water for many area residents.

FINANCIAL IMPACT TO GOVERNMENT

Without I-81 sending people near towns surrounding Syracuse, local governments could see a decline in tax revenue and reduced business expansion. For example, Moody's expects the Town of Salina's tax base to grow in part because of its proximity to I-81 and the many businesses — hotels, gas stations, restaurants, etc. — located there to serve I-81 travelers. These local governments cannot afford the loss in revenue.

- Without I-81 sending people near towns immediately north and south of Syracuse, local government could see an erosion of their tax base and reduced commercial expansion.
- For example, Moody's Investors Service expects the Town of Salina's tax base to grow in part because of its proximity to I-81 and the many businesses — such as hotels, gas stations and restaurants — located there to serve I-81 travelers.
- If I-81 were re-routed, large trash-hauling trucks would likely seek shorter and quicker routes through smaller towns with infrastructures incapable of handling such strain. As a result, local governments will in the future be forced to divert more resources toward renovation and repair, straining local budgets.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Many local businesses rely on I-81 as a Main Street that brings customers through their doors, making the highway a vital artery for our area. Cutting off that revenue source would damage businesses located near the highway and jeopardize jobs at a time when we can least afford it.

- I-81 is an economic backbone for our area, a vital artery that links city neighborhoods and suburban and rural areas with Downtown Syracuse and many key destinations.
- Over the past 50 years, many businesses, including hotels, restaurants and gas stations have been strategically located near I-81.
- Diverting I-81 traffic around Syracuse would rob these businesses of customer traffic and lead to a decline in revenue that could result in a loss of jobs for our region.
- Through-travelers would follow the new I-81 path away from Syracuse, no longer stopping in the city for food, gas, and other service -- cutting off a key revenue source for many businesses located along the highway.
- Our economy is still digging itself out of the devastating hole caused by the nationwide economic downturn. Local businesses -- especially small businesses -- cannot afford any more setbacks.

While I did not write this letter myself, I was involved in discussions and research leading to its preparation. I concur with its context and conclusions

Stephen E. White

WHITE & WHITE
antiques & interiors
Incorporated
18 East Genesee St.
Skanateles, NY 13152

From: no-reply@dot.state.ny.us
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Subject: Contact the Project Team
Date: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 11:14:04 AM

Last name - Whitfield

First name - Paula

Company name -

Address 1 - 1106 1st North St

Address 2 - Apt 3

City - Syracuse

State - NY

Zip - 13208

Address 2 - Apt 3

Email Address - paulawhitfield50@gmail.com

Message - Concerned citizen

Question or Comment - The viaduct should be replaced using state-of-the-art construction materials that will provide a quality roadway for at least 60+ years. The design should include widening of the lanes for maximum safety. I don't see any alternatives that would be superior to this solution, although I welcome any new innovative ideas. Thank you for reading this!

Additional Information 1 -

Additional Information 2 -

Additional Information 3 -

Additional Information 4 -

Additional Information 5 -

I81 reconstruction

wigglesx@verizon.net

Sat 7/5/2014 10:32 AM

Retain

To:dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>;

Dear Sir/Madam,

The only logical method to rebuild the I81 corridor through Syracuse, NY is to basically leave it in it's present configuration. Of course there can, and should be, minor modifications to improve traffic flow, and to ease exit/off-ramp bottlenecks. However for the most part, now that the original disruptions were done during the initial construction of the roadway, it does not make sense to carve out and change other undisturbed areas of the city.

Of course the project should utilize the latest innovations in technology and materials. It would be advantageous to use methods to protect the pavement and steelwork from the corrosive effects of road salt. Utilize methods to minimize potholes in pavement, reduce corrosion of exposed and reinforcing metal.

If possible, try to reroute traffic by closing an entire north or southbound section, reroute traffic to the other roadway(divided by concrete barriers).

I realize one of the directions of travel in the rerouted roadway would not have access to entrance/offramps. However by rebuilding shorter sections

of roadway at one time, it would minimize the downtime of that portion of the roadway. In the meantime the disadvantaged motorists who are not

allowed to access on ramps/off ramps(and would have to travel further north or south, and backtrack), would not be as inconvenienced for as long

of a period of time as would be experienced with other methods.

It is inevitable that any method of recontruction will cause major inconvenience, however it is desirable to reduce the overall time period of inconvenience.

If the project is allowed to drag on for many years, residents and motorists will soon become impatient with the entire process.

Sincerely,
Jerry Wiggins
Auburn,NY

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Name: Joshua Wilcox

Address: 6112 Cobblestone Dr. Ell

City: Cicero

State: NY Zip: 13039

Phone: (315) 454-7678 Email: j.wilcox526@gmail.com

Comments: With all of the worry around what to do with 81, downtown, we forgot to think about the suburbs and the commuters. We need to look at the long term and the possibility of a mass population increase in and around the city of Syracuse.

Light rail transit systems should be an option to provide relief to the thousands of commuters that do face traffic and will face even more local and congested traffic in the future, no matter what option is pitched.

We are a rail town and can utilize the existing rails and roads we have. Connect North Syracuse and Liverpool along the current 81 footprint and old Liverpool Rd / Park Way.

TRAFFIC to downtown will increase as well as downtown.

Connect downtown to the southside and university and we create a diversified and sustainable city capable for future growth.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

Bill Winnewisser

From: "Bill Winnewisser" <winbutton@twcny.rr.com>
To: "letters" <letters@Syracuse.com>
Sent: Monday, October 28, 2013 3:31 PM
Subject: Letter re: I-81 Issue
 Dear Editor,

As a 40 year successful business founder, owner and operator in and around Syracuse, I would like the opportunity to weigh in on the I-81 issue.

Out of all the choices put forward so far, it appears to me that the general leaning is toward tearing down the existing bridge over Syracuse and rebuilding it. This leads me to a single question. If the original bridge has a life span of 50 years, won't the new bridge have a similar lifespan? If that course is chosen, won't Syracuse be faced with this same "what to do about the bridge" dilemma in 50 years again?? Rebuilding the I-81 bridge could be the easiest to accomplish, cheapest and fastest but nothing more than a temporary fix which ignores significant future problems down the road.

However, there is a permanent fix that, in my mind, is being ignored or overlooked for some unknown reason. That fix is to maintain the current footprint of I-81 and drop it below grade into an open air trench. Naysayers immediately say "That can't be done because Syracuse is built upon a swamp." Well, if that truly is the case, please consider the following:

First, when you drive down I-81 from the north and pass the Liverpool on-ramps, please take note that I-81 already drops down below grade into an open air trench with high side walls, flat grade level bridges that cross overhead for Hiawatha Boulevard, Court, Bear and Butternut Streets with an on-ramp for Bear Street and an off-ramp for Court Street. The trench continues for full 1/4 to 1/2 mile. It's in place and it works. My suggestion is to continue the open air trench for another mere mile thru Syracuse along I-81's current path past the Upstate/Golisano Medical Center and emerging at some point between there and the Brighton Street exit. And my further comment to the naysayers is simply this. Folks like you said for many years that a tunnel couldn't be built under the English channel and guess what? If there is a will, engineers can figure out a way.

In my mind, there are very real advantages to this approach. First and foremost, it is a one-time, do-it and done permanent fix to the problem. There will be nothing to replace in 50 years. Secondly, by keeping I-81 on the same path, hotel, motel, restaurant and business owners along the route will not be compromised economically. Thirdly, Syracuse will not be faced again in 35 years with an aging bridge structure that will require frequent deck repair and replacement to the tune of millions of dollars and constant lane closures snarling traffic that will drag on for 15 to 20 years as we have faced in recent times. Let's get the whole problem over with once and for all.

Finally, I would like to address the other "solutions" under consideration. First - the tunnel. Nice idea but it is overkill financially and unnecessary especially in view of the fact that the open air trench is already 20% completed. Second-the boulevard thru the city. Taking that approach would force traffic around and away from downtown Syracuse by way of either 690 or I-481. That would be economically hurtful to our city. I will use the NYS Thruway (I-90) as an example of what I mean. Businesses along Rt. 20 (which parallels the I-90 route) were thriving until I-90 was constructed. When I-90 opened, so much traffic was diverted from Rt.20 that many businesses including motels and restaurants either failed or were down sized even to this day years later.

In conclusion, cheap and easy is not always the answer. Especially not in this case.

Sincerely,
 Bill Winnewisser
 201 Clayton Manor Dr.South, #7
 Liverpool, NY 13088
 Tel: 315-413-0664

From: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities
Subject: FW: Route 81 Wee, the people.docx
Attachments: [Route 81 Wee, the people.docx](#)
[ATT00001.txt](#)

From: Brian wood <briansartgallery@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 07, 2014 2:55 PM
To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities
Subject: Route 81 Wee, the people.docx

To whom it may concern,

The following letter was written for the January 17th scoping process.

With Respects,
Brian K. Wood

Wee, the People

It seems that with every passing day and every passing bill, the voice of the people is weaker and fainter. Citizens and constituents are becoming wee, small people. Our opinions matter less and less. We are compelled through taxation to support decisions and programs that reflect neither the will nor the best interest of the majority.

Every local resident, voter and tax payer should have a voice on the Interstate 81 proposal? It is so much more than a decision affecting merchants and mall owners.

The negative impact on local business people by re-routing Interstate 81 traffic is undeniable and immeasurable, but pales by comparison to the impact on every resident and taxpayer.

Imagine that every single entrance ramp onto 81 was closed-barricaded. What route would residents now take to their doctor, hospital, hair dresser, barber, gym, church, shopping, theater, entertainment, bank, fast food, family, restaurant, school, grocer, library etc., etc.

If the proposal is not rejected because of the multi-billion dollar price tag, consider the disruption and tax implication to every resident in the City of Syracuse and surrounding areas.

Syracuse and adjoining towns are relatively small. Every merchant and resident is dependent upon services and revenue derived from nearby communities. The average 10 to 15 minute commute via route 81 makes the service and revenue sharing possible. Four, six and eight lane highways serve only to slow traffic and extend commuter's time.

The proposed boulevard could include as many as 12 lanes of highway. Consider the nightmare of eminent domain alone. Imagine

the number of property owners forced to vacate a swath twelve lanes wide through the city. Calculate the number of traffic lights and

additional travel time. How can a traffic flow that wounds our hospitals, university, and sports arena possibly be in the best interest of the community.

Few businesses could survive the extensive construction phase. Who makes up the lost revenue derived from property, income and sales tax? "**Wee, the people.**"

Some propose added pedestrian and bike paths. The lure is lost on a state where nearly two out of "four" seasons are winter. More parks? We can't maintain our existing parks.

During heavy snow storms route 81 is virtually the only highway that is truly cleared. Nearly every side road and boulevard remains mealy, icy and some impassable.

If we do no more than accept the fact findings and conclusions of our elected town and county representative, we must agree that preserving Interstate 81 is in our best interest. Auburn, Salina, Dewitt, Owasco, Skaneateles, Fleming, Moravia, Geddes, Aurora, Onondaga and Cayuga county legislators have all urged state officials to preserve 81.

Why rush into a ruling this month on a project that is years away, before. "**Wee, the people**" have been informed and heard.

Brian K. Wood
Lifelong Resident
Owner of Brian's Gallery

Reg. Dir.	Asst. Reg. D.
LT.	Construction
Design	Fleet Admin.
Admin. Svcs.	PPM
RECEIVED REG. DIRECTOR R-3	
JAN 09 2014	
Real Estate	Mayor
Traffic	Operations
All GDs	All RES
	Michells

Brian's Custom Framing & Gallery

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Design	Fleet Admin.	
Admin. Svcs.	PPM	
RECEIVED REG. DIRECTOR R-3		
JAN 09 2014		
Real Estate	Safety	
Traffic	Operations	
All GDs	All RES	
	Michelle	

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Brian K. Wood
Lifelong Resident
Owner of Brian's Gallery

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RECEIVED
2014
3 2014
Operating Division
Operating Division

From: no-reply@dot.state.ny.us
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Subject: Contact the Project Team
Date: Wednesday, November 13, 2013 7:32:34 AM

Last name - Wood

First name - S Penelope

Company name -

Address 1 - 6086 Bay Hill Cir

Address 2 -

City - Jamesville

State - NY

Zip - 13078

Address 2-

Email Address -

Message -

Question or Comment - Unable to attend meeting at the Oncenter, 11/13, but wish to state on record that I support the Boulevard plan.

Additional Information 1 -

Additional Information 2 -

Additional Information 3 -

Additional Information 4 -

Additional Information 5 -

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name: BRIAN Woods

Address: 321.5 Westcott Apt 7 City: Syracuse State: NY Zip:

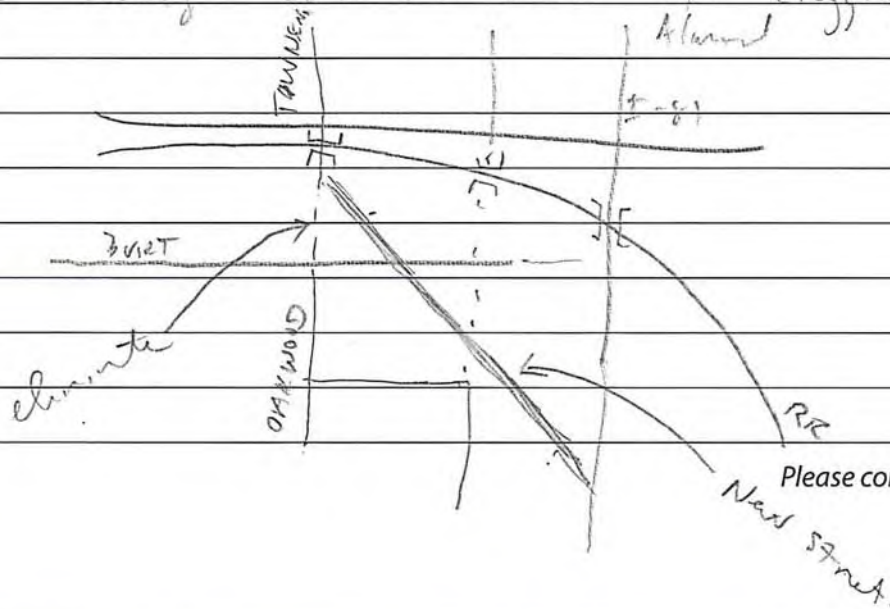
Phone: () Email: brianwoods405@gmail.com

Comments:

V-4 is best viaduct because of least impact.

V-5, it's not better to make it taller

I like S-3 the best but I think you should consider making a better connection between Townsend & the current I-81. This would allow drivers to go straight onto the street w/o clogging side streets



Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name:

Dick Woodcock

Address:

162 Spaulding Ave

City:

Syr.

State:

Zip:

13205

Phone: ()

Email:

Comments:

We built 81 to manage traffic N-S etc. Everyone I speak with does not want a Blvd. Rebuild 81 wider + safer. 81 did not divide neighborhoods. They were streets + State did Eminent Domain.

481 - not an option:

too far around

burn too much gas + waste energy.

481 Crowded now + terrible in bad weather.

People do not want to drive + stop on a Blvd. Create an N-S + E-W mess. People do not want Blvd. + go through city streets + "hood." If 81 is gone I'll leave from the City + go to north of County of Oswego. Bad for SU events + hospital if we lose highway.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

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New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Comments (continued from front):

Bldg. will not bring shoppers + sales to downtown.

People for the Bldg. like Van Robinson did not live here before 81. He. 81 did our city, neighborhoods, slums + S of a favor.

We need + want 81 highway!

P.S. Van Robinson comments were wrong. The Common Councilors I spoke with want a highway - not a stop - backward Bldg.



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

Contact the Project Team

no-reply@dot.state.ny.us

Tue 8/26/2014 8:16 PM

Retain

To:dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>;

Last name - Woodworth

First name - Cheryl

Affiliation -

Address 1 - 162 Spaulding Ave.

Address 2 -

City - Syracuse

State - NY

Zip - 13205

Phone -

Email Address - cwoodworth22@verizon.net

Question or Comment - As a long time resident of the Valley section of Syracuse, I would like to voice my opinion on tearing down 81 through the center of the city. I, along with many of my female neighbors and friends in the Valley section will not travel through the crime ridden areas of the city to get North. The tearing down of Rt. 81 would virtually cut us off from traveling north. Fine that you say to take Rt. 481 - but what if we want to go to Carousel Mall or Liverpool - Rt. 481 will not take us there! You also say that you have to consider the noise level in the city. People who live there have CHOSEN to live there. I used to work on Harrison St. and was used to the comings and goings of traffic noise. Now that I have retired, I wish to be able to shop, and seek entertainment without worrying about driving down S. Salina St. to get there. I would not feel safe doing so. Please think about the many residents in the Valley when making your decision.

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Reg. Dir.	Asst. Reg. D.
LT.	Construction
Design	Fleet Admin.
Admin. Svcs.	PPM
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JAN 13 2014	
Real Estate	Safety
Traffic	Operations
All GDs	All REs
	Michelle

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: RICHARD C WOODWORTH
 Address: 162 SPAULDING AVE. City: SYRACUSE State: N.Y. Zip: 13205
 Phone: () Email: JAVELINKID@VERIZON.NET

Comments:

The I-81 was built to flow traffic thru the city. I've had two full-time jobs and two part-time jobs in my life. In all of them I drive thru the city to & from work. I drive thru the city to go to our camp in the summer. I drive thru the city to go to all my relatives who live in the northern part of the county.

Going 481 is way out of the way - very expensive wasting gasoline and that road is slippery and dangerous in the winter.

We need and want I-81. All my friends + neighbors think a boulevard is stupid. People do not want to drive thru neighbor-hoods on a boulevard.

We need the I-81 more than ever with all the SU events and larger demand for health care. →

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Comments (continued from front):

The backups to and from I-81 events is long + dangerous now. How can emergency vehicles ambulances + fire trucks get through.

With an growing population we need I-81 more than ever.

We a wider road, better entrances + exits and a look-up between I-81 S and 690 W to go to the NYSE. We need an exit on Colvin Street for I-81 / Manley etc.

A recessed road would work. A replacement road (I-81) would be great. An elevated road would please many parties.

The boulevard would be disruptive to the future.

It would set NYC back decades. It did not divide neighborhoods. It used eminent domain to tear down downtown slums. The nearby areas that escaped were where the racial roots were + housing burnt. That part of the City is better with I-81 - not worse.

I am a live long resident of Syracuse and would move to Northern Onondaga or Southern Oswego County with no I-81.

Save I-81. Rebuild it - We need it and we need to preserve gas + energy. Absolutely no no boulevard.

ACW



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

RECEIVED AUG 29 2014

Name:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Phone: ()

Email:

Comments:

Please read attached

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

RECEIVED AUG 29 2014

Dear Route 81 Decision Maker:

August 25, 2014

Mark F. Frechette

RE: PLEASE READ

ROUTE 81 WAS CONSTRUCTED TO MOVE TRAFFIC NORTH & SOUTH. Yet I have heard in government circles for nearly 10 years and now read in between the lines on everything reported that you people minds are made up to shove the boulevard on us. I talk to relatives, friends, neighbors, and college students and not one can believe OUR city without 81. They do not believe you are seriously thinking about not having a raised highway through Syracuse.

People do not want to drive through the city for the waste of time and gas. They are concerned about commute time, emergency trips to hospitals and even bigger traffic jams.

Have you ever been rushed to a downtown hospital in an ambulance??? Or a family member?

People do not want to drive through those neighborhoods. Route 81 did not ruin neighborhoods as reported. It construction tore down slums that had race riots in the city.

Populations are going to continue to grow. Houses have more cars than in the mid 60's. Last year for an exhibition SU Basketball Game traffic was back up now on our current 81 for miles. Now you want to make it worse - to and from all directions while we are taking an even bigger stadium in because of our new ACC Games. Really look at the traffic problems we have now and you wasn't to make it even worse for the rest of our and our children's lives.

The state paid good money per Eminent Domain for relocation and other financial assistance to relocate and integrate Syracuse. We cannot erase that and bring back the old neighborhoods. Van Robinson has been on this crusade and he never lived here before 81.

False information has been put out there about the percentage of people who are going downtown and not through downtown. Most people go through downtown whether they are going North/South or turning east. People do not want to go 481 - it is already overcrowded, dangerous and very slippery during the winter, wasting more gas when we should be thinking of conserving. Watch the traffic now.

The neighborhood meetings in the housing downtown were bias because they are mostly people who really do not have a vehicle to use 81. They will receive more pollution with a boulevard.

The Syracuse Newspaper (the Post-Standard) has already ruined our downtown traffic by urging the closing of Eric Blvd. East & West so they could have their park next to their building.

PLEASE SAVE OUR 81 - WE WANT IT! WE NEED IT. NO BOULEVARD PLEASE IT WILL BRING US BACKWARDS! A boulevard will hurt Syracuse. I personally will have to relocate outside of the city rather to make a boulevard trip twice a day.

Sincerely,

Dick Woodworth
Dick Woodworth

USA



Mr. Richard Woodworth
162 Spaulding Ave
Syracuse, NY 13205-3219



SYRACUSE NY 130

28 AUG 2014 PM 3 L



Mark Frechette
81 - Project Director
N.Y. S. Dept. of Transportation
333 E. Washington St.
Syracuse, NY 13202
9809142299

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

RECEIVED AUG 29 2018

Name:

Address:

State:

Zip:

Phone: ()

Email:

Comments:

Please read attached.
GCL

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

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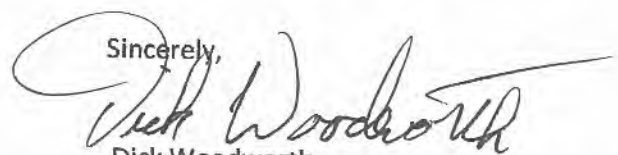
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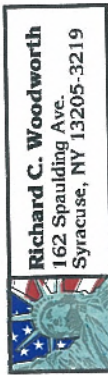
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Sincerely,


Dick Woodworth



Richard C. Woodworth
162 Spaulding Ave.
Syracuse, NY 13205-3219

Watt Oja

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Comments (continued from front):

RECEIVED AUG 29 2014

Please read attached -

QCD



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

RECEIVED AUG 29 2014

August 25, 2014

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Sincerely,

Dick Woodworth

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

RECEIVED AUG 29 2014

Name: Vera Hall
Address: 1106 S. McBaine St City: Syr State: NY Zip: 13041
Phone: (315) 476-1314 Email:

Comments:

Please continue comments on back if needed.

**Please submit
all comments by
September 2, 2014**

Mail comments to:
I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:
www.i81opportunities.org
Information Hotline:
toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)

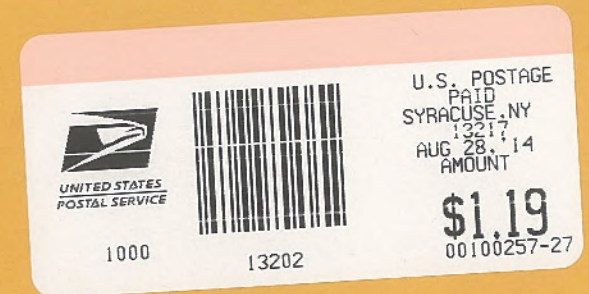


U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration

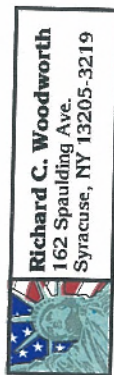


New York State Department of Transportation

ACTS
910 Madison St.
Syracuse, NY 13202



I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State
Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202



Richard C. Woodworth
162 Spaulding Ave.
Syracuse, NY 13205-3219

Joe Lisko

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Comments (continued from front):

RECEIVED AUG 29 2014

Please read attached.

G. Ch



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

RECEIVED AUG 29 2014

Dear Route 81 Decision Maker:

Mike Stanton

August 25, 2014

RE: PLEASE READ

ROUTE 81 WAS CONSTRUCTED TO MOVE TRAFFIC NORTH & SOUTH. Yet I have heard in government circles for nearly 10 years and now read in between the lines on everything reported that you people minds are made up to shove the boulevard on us. I talk to relatives, friends, neighbors, and college students and not one can believe OUR city without 81. They do not believe you are seriously thinking about not having a raised highway through Syracuse.

People do not want to drive through the city for the waste of time and gas. They are concerned about commute time, emergency trips to hospitals and even bigger traffic jams.

Have you ever been rushed to a downtown hospital in an ambulance??? Or a family member?

People do not want to drive through those neighborhoods. Route 81 did not ruin neighborhoods as reported. It construction tore down slums that had race riots in the city.

Populations are going to continue to grow. Houses have more cars than in the mid 60's. Last year for an exhibition SU Basketball Game traffic was back up now on our current 81 for miles. Now you want to make it worse - to and from all directions while we are taking an even bigger stadium in because of our new ACC Games. Really look as the traffic problems we have now and you wasn't to make it even worse for the rest of our and our children's lives.

The state paid good money per Eminent Domain for relocation and other financial assistance to relocate and integrate Syracuse. We cannot erase that and bring back the old neighborhoods. Van Robinson has been on this crusade and he never lived here before 81.

False information has been put out there about the percentage of people who are going downtown and not through downtown. Most people go through downtown whether they are going North/South or turning east. People do not want to go 481 - it is already overcrowded, dangerous and very slippery during the winter, wasting more gas when we should be thinking of conserving. Watch the traffic now.

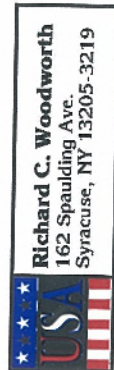
The neighborhood meetings in the housing downtown were bias because they are mostly people who really do not have a vehicle to use 81. They will receive more pollution with a boulevard.

The Syracuse Newspaper (the Post- Standard) has already ruined our downtown traffic by urging the closing of Eric Blvd. East & West so they could have their park next to their building.

PLEASE SAVE OUR 81 - WE WANT IT! WE NEED IT. NO BOULEVARD PLEASE IT WILL BRING US BACKWARDS! A boulevard will hurt Syracuse. I personally will have to relocate outside of the city rather to make a boulevard trip twice a day.

Sincerely,

Dick Woodworth
Dick Woodworth



Mike Stanton

RECEIVED AUG 29 2014

Dear Route 81 Decision Maker:



August 25, 2014

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Dick Woodworth



Mr. Richard Woodworth
162 Spaulding Ave
Syracuse, NY 13205-3219



Robert Foley

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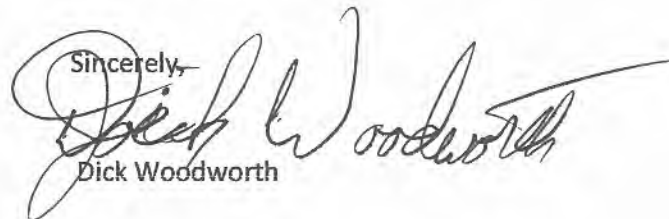
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Sincerely,


Dick Woodworth

Joe Zucko

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: Timothy J Wright
Address: 321 W Fayette St ^{BMT} 4 City: Syracuse State: NY Zip: 13202
Phone: 315-243-7102 Email: WrightTimothy203@yahoo.com

Comments:

I would like see a Bike trail go all over Syracuse from the Su Hill to downtown from downtown to South to Park to North and West to Oh to New York City. Syracuse also need some garden too so we can use them. Syracuse needs a train service too in the city and out side place in city to downtown Syracuse. Syracuse also needs more place to Eat and shops and parks Syracuse also needs some dog Parks too. Syracuse got have some walking and Running trails too and shops and Eating Place on the walking Running and Bike trails they also need a better way for cars and trucks around the city too. Syracuse got to have a Better way to get around to sporting Events Fest and more place to parking lots too. and more better lighting on borders too.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

Mail comments to:

I-81 Viaduct Project
New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Submit comments online:

www.i81opportunities.org

Information Hotline:

toll-free: (855) I81-TALK (481-8255)



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Comments (continued from front):

They also needs another way
to get on and off I81 to the Dome for SU
games and better ways for cars and trucks to
in and out for games and Events on the Syracuse
UNIV HILL.



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Name: Ruth Yaman
Address: 428 Greenwood Pl City: Syracuse State: NY Zip: 13210
Phone: () Email: _____

Comments: Street-level options better value our
downtown -

(The speaker was dandy boring, his song I didn't
just look at the posters)

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

Contact the Project Team

dot.sm.webcentral

Mon 7/21/2014 1:41 PM

Retain

To:dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>;

Last name - Yost

First name - Kevin

Affiliation -

Address 1 - 1474 Middle Road

Address 2 -

City - Rush

State - NY

Zip - 14543

Phone -

Email Address - yostk321@yahoo.com

Question or Comment - The Boulevard Alternative is best. Also, 1-690 should be made into a boulevard downtown as well.

From: no-reply@dot.state.ny.us
To: I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov
Subject: Contact the Project Team
Date: Friday, January 17, 2014 6:22:19 AM

Last name - Zamojski
First name - Ronald
Affiliation -
Address 1 - 2979 Rose Hill Road
Address 2 -
City - Skaneateles
State - New York
Zip - 13152
Phone - 3156739182
Email Address - zamojski@windstream.net
Question or Comment - Syracuse is the crossroads of CNY due to 81.

A boulevard would create a hazardous chokepoint that would divide the area much worse than an elevated highway. Don't slow down access to our hospitals!

I-81 Viaduct Project Comment Sheet

Initial Scoping Meeting

November 13, 2013

Name: Peter Zurek
Address: 403 Winton St. Apt 9 City: Syracuse State: NY Zip: 13203
Phone: (315) 715-7311 Email: peter33@gmail.com

Comments: Factors that must be considered are
maintaining thru-traffic in the downtown
area while accommodating the needs of
pedestrian traffic. A depressed highway could
meet both these needs and would not
be as costly as a ~~thru~~ tunnel. Pedestrian
walk ways and streets could cross over
the highway promoting easy access to
all of downtown while not hindering
thru thru traffic. I feel the quality and
the safety of the community will rise if
this option is utilized. Promoting pedestrian
traffic is vital to improving not only the
financial and environmental health ~~of~~ of
downtown, but the physical health of it's
citizens as well. Syracuse has the opportunity

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Please submit
all comments by
January 17, 2014

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I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Comments (continued from front):

to create and promote an ideal environment for health promotion with this option. Healthy People 2020, sponsored by the U.S. Gov't, sets goals for the health of the nation, and if utilized wisely, Syracuse could develop a model downtown that would help the city, state, and nation meet these goals. I highly and strongly support the depressed highway option.



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

I-81 Viaduct Project

Comment Sheet

Name: Bob + Jean Ann Zenger

Address: 103 Mercury Circle City: Liverpool State: NY Zip: 13088

Phone: (85) 451-9742 Email: jzenger41@verizon.net

Comments:

V-4, V-3, V-2 look recent

I don't want to lose 81 through the city.

But try to improve the downtown + street level environment.

Please continue comments on back if needed.

Mail comments to:

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New York State Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

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U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration



New York State Department of Transportation

Contact the Project Team

dot.sm.webcentral

Thu 6/26/2014 5:14 PM

Retain

To:dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>;

Last name - Zizzi

First name - Annamarie

Affiliation - none

Address 1 - 4054 Winterpark Dr

Address 2 -

City - Liverpool

State - New York

Zip - 13090

Phone - 3156223953

Email Address - annamarie5050@aol.com

Question or Comment - I do not think it's a good idea to have a tunnel.

the boston tunnel is horrible. it's clostraphobic it

leaks and it cost way more than they said it would.