Appendix M-6
Letters S --
SMTC through Z

Part 7

Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council
100 Clinton Square
126 N. Salina Street, Suite 100
Syracuse, New York 13202
Phone: (315) 422-5716
Fax: (315) 422-7753
www.smtcmpo.org

October 8, 2021

Mark Frechette, P.E.
Project Director
New York State Department of Transportation, Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, New York 13202

Dear Mr. Frechette:

The staff of the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) respectfully submit the following comments on the I-81 Viaduct Project Draft Design Report/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DDR/DEIS):

Editorial / miscellaneous comments

- Chapter 5, page 5-138, table 5-45. Please remove the three notes about current proposal by SMTC to change classification. The functional classification adjustments were submitted by SMTC to NYSDOT and FHWA in 2017. FHWA approved the changes in 2018, and the information in Appendix C-6.5 should be updated to reflect these. The most current functional class and NHS designations can be found on the maps on the SMTC's website https://smtcmpo.org/data/pdf-maps/
- Chapter 5, regarding terminology related to ITS and the National ITS Architecture. "Market packages" changed to "service packages" several years ago.
- Chapter 5, page 5-4. Noted projects should be reviewed with responsible entity. There are some that may no longer be applicable/desired and would therefore be removed from inclusion in the final EIS.
- Chapter 5, 5.3.1, page 5-5. This subsection on functional classification references project funding under the STP. Although the STP is one of the primary funding programs, currently, it is not the only federal transportation funding program where functional classification is used to determine federal aid eligibility. The National Highway Performance Program is another example where a roadway's classification is considered. Suggest rephrasing the applicable sentence.
- The DEIS should differentiate between the "SMTC model" (i.e. the TransCAD model that was originally shared with NYSDOT in 2013) and the "NYSDOT model" (i.e. the current iteration of the TransCAD model, which we assume has been heavily altered by NYSDOT's consultants from the 2013 model and which does not include any of the updates made by SMTC staff to our internal model in 2017).

Community impacts

- Has NYSDOT considered the possibility of relocating the STEAM at Dr. King school to a new building farther away from the Business Loop 81? What is the attendance pattern for that school (where are students walking from) and how will that be impacted by the proposed roundabout?

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities

- The DEIS identifies "I-81 Project Proposed Bicycle Facilities" – which includes a shared use path between I-81, Lodi, Hiawatha, and Bear Street. The DEIS does not indicate if the path would cross the Hiawatha bridge (over I-81) to link the Northside to the Lakefront.
  - Consider extending the "I-81 Project Proposed Bicycle Facilities" over Hiawatha bridge to the Onondaga Creekwalk to link the Northside and the Lakefront, as identified in the SMTC's 2020 Regional Transportation Center-Regional Market Area Mobility Study.
  - Consider potential on- and off-road bicycle and pedestrian improvement options (under I-81 at Park Street and at Harborside Drive) identified in the same SMTC study.
- Existing and ongoing studies support extending the Bear Trap Creek Trail south to the Ley Creek Trail (and the future Loop-the-Lake Trail), and north under I-81 towards the Syracuse Hancock International Airport (Airport). Consider including trail extensions as identified in these studies, along with a physical barrier along I-81 to protect trail users from I-81-related crashes:
  - SMTC's 2020 Regional Transportation Center-Regional Market Area Mobility Study – discusses two potential options (one on-road, one off-road) to extend south to the Ley Creek Trail.
  - SMTC's 2013 NYSDOT Bicycle Commuter Corridor Study – identifies potential options to extend south to the Ley Creek Trail and north towards the Airport.
  - SMTC's US 11 Mattydale Mobility Study (in progress) – SMTC anticipates completing the study during the summer of 2022. Currently, SMTC is reviewing potential on-road and off-road options to extend the trail to the north towards the Airport. The Town of Salina has also expressed safety-related concerns that stem from the lack of a physical barrier to protect existing trail users from I-81-related run-off-the-road crashes.
- The shared path from the roundabout to Leon Street should be extended to at least Oakwood Ave.
  - The path is on the property of Dr. King School, which would be easier to work with than private property, and would add protection to users accessing the neighborhood.
  - Reducing the use of sharrows is vital as recent studies have shown that they may actually increase crashes involving cyclists.
- Protected bike lanes should be used as often as possible.
  - The National Transportation Safety Board recommend the use of separated lanes whenever possible as a way to reduce serious injuries and deaths among cyclists.
  - Although any increase in bike infrastructure is welcome, a project of this scale should emphasize the best practices currently available – especially as biking is seen as one of the best ways to reduce our emissions quickly.
- SMTC's South Geddes Street and West Fayette Street Complete Streets Review includes a recommendation to extend existing bike lanes from Erie Boulevard West heading south. It also recommends extending the trail through Lipe Art Park to the westside of the City of Syracuse via a trail along the NYS&W railway. This trail should also extend east to connect with the Connective Corridor in Armory Square.
  - Figure 3-18 shows the NYS&W railway (City proposed trail). NYSDOT should consider an extension of the Lipe Art Park trail to reach the Connective Corridor under the West Street bridge. This area under the bridge is tight and keeps bicyclists/pedestrians from traveling between Armory Square and Tipperary Hill/West Side locations.
- In Chapter 3, "Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Other Improvements to local Streets", starting on page 3-23. Consider connection to Jamesville through Oakwood Cemetery to provide additional commuter options as well as bicycle touring opportunities:

- Consider Creekwalk extension: improve Ballard Avenue, Cortland Avenue, Kennedy Street, Oakwood Avenue for bike/ped travel, and then connect to Oakwood Cemetery via tunnel under I-81 to Oakwood Cemetery Historic Entry Gate.
- And/or connect the Creekwalk via Dr. Martin Luther King Boulevard (formerly Castle Street) following Renwick Avenue, Fineview Place, follow County/railroad ROW to reach the Oakwood Cemetery Historic Entry Gate
- Use either of these options to set the stage for future bike/ped trail connections to Jamesville via Colvin Street, Moore Ave, Smith Lane, Jamesville Avenue, to NYS&W railway. Potential for rail with trail here along OCIDA-owned property that the railway runs along.

- Figure 5-16:
  - The routing shown for NYS Bike Route 11 is incorrect. The existing bike route 11 signs have the cyclist turning onto East Taylor Street, then onto South Salina Street to head south. Several years back, this routing was changed (by main office DOT) from Burt St to Taylor St, as no left turn is allowed from Burt St onto S Salina St. Figure 5-16 in the DEIS shows the route as turning onto Raynor, which is incorrect. *Please note: this same location is also **incorrectly shown** on NYSDOT's website (Bike Route Viewer). SMTC has tried a few times nearly every year between 2011 and 2019 to get this route corrected on the state website with no luck.*
  - The Empire State Trail through Syracuse is complete, so the legend should not say "existing unsigned route" nor should it include a "proposed route." Remove these.
  - The legend should simply say existing and proposed bike facility (SMTC does not own any infrastructure – including bike facilities – so should not be referenced in the legend).
  - There are several discrepancies between Figure 5-16 and Figures 6-4-2-2/6-4-2-3. Based on the dates on the figures (top left corner) it appears that the figures in Chapter 6 were never updated with newer information.
- We suggest that Community Grid bike lanes connect to existing infrastructure, not just proposed City routes, or consider implementing some proposed City routes to provide a completed bicycle connection as part of the Community Grid.
  - Proposed Community Grid connections should connect to existing bike lanes on Fayette Street and the Empire State Trail either via
    - North Salina Street, by implementing the proposed City bicycle facility along South Salina Street (ideally connections should also be included south along Salina St.)
    - Or State Street.
  - Connect the new West Street bike lane to the Creekwalk via Erie Blvd West by implementing the proposed City bicycle facility along Erie Blvd West.

Highway design

- What techniques are being used to slow traffic transitioning from BL 81 to Almond Street approaching downtown from the south?
  - As proposed, 12-foot lanes on BL 81 will encourage speeds higher than 30 mph.
  - This is evidenced by existing issues in the Village of Liverpool, where signs indicate that the speed limit drops from 55 mph to 30 mph within just a few hundred feet, but the physical design of the roadway does not change. Signs alone will not slow traffic adequately entering a village or city core.
  - What is the major benefit to portions of the grid being designated a Qualifying Highway (with 12-foot lanes) versus an Access Highway (with 10-foot lanes)?
  - The landscaped buffer on each side of Almond Street as proposed is a generous 10-22 ft in width. A standard 10-foot width would be more than enough for landscaping and protection while providing additional land back to the community.

- Page 3-33 states that Van Buren Street would serve as the main entrance from the south to University Hill. What is the projected volume at that location? Does Van Buren Street have the capacity to act as the "main entrance"? How will this impact the VA Medical Center parking garage that is built over Van Buren Street?
- Page 5-139 lists new and replacement signal locations under the Community Grid alternative. Were roundabouts considered for any of these locations, especially the new signal locations?
- Page 5-148 states that "demand reductions to account for changes in telecommuting behavior were not applied to the analysis of the completed Community Grid Alternative under ETC and ETC+30 conditions." Why were these reductions not applied? Ignoring this trend will lead to overdesigning the future infrastructure.
- Adding a fourth northbound lane on BL81 North improves LOS from a D to a B, but one of the main issues in this section currently is the frequency of exits. The Community Grid plan simplifies the exits and entrances, which should improve traffic flow without the additional lane.
- The additional lanes added to Lyndon Corners are likely to only increase traffic, not improve flow. How will pedestrian and multi-modal accessibility be improved in this area? SMTC's 2017 Central DeWitt Mobility Plan made some recommendations for this area.

Transit

- Constructing high-quality shelters, whether BRT related or not, along with loading platforms should be included in all street designs. Currently many Centro bus stops lack a concrete landing pad or even a sidewalk, which should be corrected within the study area.
- Chapter 5, Transit, page 5-64. One of the project's objectives is to "maintain access to existing local bus service and enhance transit amenities within the project limits in and near Downtown Syracuse." The DEIS states "It is expected that both STSA and SMART 1 would help Centro establish the basis to pursue Federal Transit Administration (FTA) New Starts, Small Starts, or Very Small Starts funding. Since the determination of specific transit enhancements and their relation to the I-81 Project Area is unknown at this time, it is important for the I-81 build alternatives to have flexible roadway configurations, which would not preclude any future transit system improvements such as setting aside potential right of way for future dedicated bus lanes or other recommendations that may physically alter the streets."
    - The SMART 1 project was finalized February 2018 and recommends BRT-Mixed Traffic along two corridors primarily in the City of Syracuse as the project's Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) and is denoted as such in the area's Long Range Transportation Plan. As an outcome of the SMART 1 study, BRT-Mixed Traffic is the SMTC's definition of enhanced transit. The LPA includes numerous capital and operating activities, such as but not limited to hours of operation, headways, and stations. Although this would be a new, more efficient type of transit service, the BRT-Mixed Traffic service would greatly reduce and/or replace "local bus service" routes currently along the two corridors. The SMART 1 LPA overlaps the I-81 project area in numerous locations and should be included in any I-81 design and construction plans. Also, the total capital costs identified through the planning effort fall inline with the "Small Starts" category (e.g., Total project cost is less than $300 million and total Small Starts funding sought is less than $100 million), not "New Starts." Lastly, "Very Small Starts" no longer exists as a distinct project category; reference should be removed.

Regional travel patterns and expected diversions under the Community Grid alternative

- It is still not clear to the community at large how much traffic uses the existing I-81 viaduct, where that traffic originates and terminates, and how that traffic may be diverted to other routes under the Community Grid alternative.

- The discussion of "Alternative Routes" on page 5-2 states that "two basic trip types travel on I-81 in the Project Area": through trips and non-through trips. This is a fair assessment at the highest level, but it must be acknowledged that some of those "non-through" trips also utilize the existing I-81 viaduct.
- Later in Chapter 5 (p. 5-150), the DEIS states that "most I-81 traffic is destined for Downtown and University Hill" but "most" is not quantified. How many of the non-through trips currently utilize the I-81 viaduct and what is the likely alternate route for these trips?
- Figures 5-30 and 5-31 attempt to answers questions about traffic diversions under the Community Grid alternative, but these figures are difficult to interpret and leave many questions unanswered.
    - We suggest that Area 5 on Figures 5-30 and 5-31 be extended to capture trips on Onondaga Lake Parkway and Old Liverpool Road. This would account for trips that might divert to Route 57, Henry Clay Blvd, or Morgan Road then use Onondaga Lake Parkway or Old Liverpool Road to access BL 81 to/from downtown and other destinations to the south.
    - Area 2 should be further refined. How much of the traffic on I-81 is expected to continue utilizing BL 81 south of downtown, and how much is expected to divert to the other parallel local streets within Area 2? Splitting Area 2 into a zone just for BL 81 (comparable to Area 6) and another zone for all the other local roads would give a more accurate picture of the expected traffic pattern in this area.
    - The anticipated diversion of 22-35% of current I-81 traffic at Screenline A to "new I-81" (i.e. current I-481) seems high, given that data collected in the "pass through study" completed as part of The I-81 Corridor Study indicated only about 6% of I-81 traffic passing through the region.
        - There is a brief statement on page 5-152 regarding this diversion: "Traffic volumes on the new I-81 would increase and include additional pass-through trips that currently use northbound or southbound I-81, as well as trips to and from Westcott, Eastwood, and East Syracuse that currently use northbound I-81 to eastbound I-690 (or westbound I-690 to southbound I-81)." This use of I-81/I-690 to move between locations in the eastern and southern parts of the city needs to be explored more. Where do these trips currently get on and off the interstate system, and are they currently utilizing the viaduct? For example, a trip that gets on I-690 at Thompson Road and then uses I-81 southbound beyond the existing I-481 interchange seems likely to divert to the "new I-81." But how many trips currently travel between the Teall Avenue exit on I-690 and the Brighton Avenue exit on I-81, for example? These trips seem unlikely to utilize I-690 EB, to "new I-81" SB, to BL 81 NB as an alternative. What would be alternate routing on local streets for those relatively short, local trips that currently utilize the viaduct?
    - A more complete, and more accessible, presentation of existing traffic flow patterns in the region and the expected flow patterns under the Community Grid option is needed. This is necessary to both assuage concerns about future mobility and counter arguments being made in the public that a very small number of downtown streets will be inundated by upwards of 80,000-90,000 vehicles each day.
- Table 5-6 lists existing 2013 traffic volumes at "key locations" – but does not include the I-81 viaduct (i.e. the point on I-81 between the Adams and Harrison street ramps), which seems like *the* key location in the whole study area!
    - AM and PM peak hour volumes are shown for this segment in Appendix C-3, so the reader is left to infer the AADT on the viaduct segment (2-way PM peak hour total of 4,523 vehicles, so probably about 45,000-55,000 vehicles per day on the viaduct?). Same comment for similar tables listing 2026 and 2056 volumes for the Alternatives.

Streetlight data review

SMTC staff reviewed Streetlight data for all of 2019 for a selection of zones on the interstate system in our region, and compared these results to the information presented in the "Traffic Redistribution due to Removal of the I-81 Viaduct" section starting on p. 5-150 (and Figures 5-30 and 5-31). Our review of Streetlight data indicates the following:

- Volumes on I-81 north of I-690 are at least twice the volumes on I-81 south of I-481 (Exit 16A). And of those volumes on I-81 north of I-690, the majority (about 70%) get off at an exit that does not require traveling on the viaduct.
- About 45% of total daily trips southbound on the I-81 viaduct exit at Brighton Avenue and the same percentage of trips northbound on the viaduct get on at either Brighton or Colvin. This suggests the viaduct is being used not just for regional pass-through trips but for access to/from the south and southwest parts of the City of Syracuse or adjacent towns south/southwest of the city.
- Of the daily trips southbound using the viaduct, only about 10% get on I-81 north of I-481 or on NYS Route 481 and continue on I-81 south of I-481 (Exit 16A). These trips seem likely to divert to "new" I-81. (This supports the earlier conclusion about pass-through trips from The I-81 Corridor Study.)
- The remaining daily trips southbound using the viaduct seem much less likely to use "new" I-81, and more likely to find alternate routes. These southbound viaduct trips include:
    - About 15% that get on I-81 somewhere between the northern I-481 interchange and State Street, and exit at either Brighton Ave or Rock Cut Road.
    - About 15% that get on I-81 between the northern I-481 interchange and State Street, and continue on I-81 south of I-481 (Exit 16A).
    - About 18% that get on I-690 at Geddes St, West St, Teall Ave, or Midler Ave and exit at either Brighton Ave or Rock Cut Road.
    - About 12% that get on I-690 somewhere west of Geddes St and continue on I-81 south of I-481 (Exit 16A).
    - (Data for northbound viaduct trips shows a similar pattern but in reverse.)
- Overall, the Streetlight data suggest that the viaduct is used, in large part, by local commuters making relatively short trips through the City of Syracuse or to/from nearby suburbs. Without the viaduct as the "path of least resistance" these commuters may choose entirely different routes depending on their actual origin/destination. A more straightforward graphical representation of existing flows in the region and future alternate routing (rather than the screenline diversions modeling analysis shown in Figures 5-30 and 5-31) would go a long way towards helping the public understand how their daily travel will be impacted by the Community Grid alternative.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the DDR/DEIS.

Sincerely,

James D'Agostino
Director

cc: Rick Marquis, Division Administrator, FHWA

RECEIVED
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BY:

Kathleen Stribley
Monticello Dr. N.
Syracuse, NY 13205

August 16, 2021

Mark Frechette and NYSDOT Staff/Consultants
Project Director, I-81 Viaduct Project
NYS Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington St.
Syracuse, NY 13202

Re: Errors/omissions regarding City Line Brook and associated Valley environments in the I-81 DDR/DEIS Water Resources section 6-4-7 and General Ecology 6-4-8 sections (as well as other sections) related to I-481 South Study Area

Dear Mark Frechette and NYSDOT Staff/Consultants:

I am writing to alert you to errors and omissions in the DEIS related to the Valley neighborhood which is within the I-481 South Study Area and immediately adjacent to the I-481 South Project Limits as defined in the DEIS Figure 2-1.The project setting chapter seems to ignore the fact that the entire area west of I-81 south of Ballantyne Rd. is actually the North Valley (to Seneca Turnpike) and then South Valley (south of the Turnpike), not Outer Comstock (which is northeast). These are two different areas with vastly different socio-economic characteristics – the North Valley is substantially lower income, more elderly and minority vs. Outer Comstock. Southeast of the interchange the neighborhood is known as Brighton Hill and it is comprised of SU students and elderly residents.

However, while important issues of project setting and socio-economic characteristics need to be corrected in the DEIS, this letter focuses on discrepancies and/or errors in the water resources and ecology chapters that are within and directly downhill to the west of the Project Limits and within the Project Area of the I-481 South Study Area. These comments relate mainly to the reconstruction of the 81/481 interchange in the Grid Option however they also apply to other options for this zone. I submitted an online comment regarding this issue in 2019 and spoke to one NYSDOT staff member, however the contents of the DEIS have not been altered since the previous version (Attachment 0).

City Line Brook and Associated Springs

In the Water Resources section 6-4-7, the DEIS states that City Line Brook (Tributary #4 of Onondaga Creek referred to as CLB) is completely "undergrounded" or "piped or diverted underground" in the Project Limits. Figure 6-4-7-50 shows the entirety of CLB undergrounded along with all other Valley streams. CLB is in fact above ground within the Study Area except for a small segment that connects the brook to Onondaga Creek after the creek was moved west and channelized in the 1950's. (Attachment #1 shows the annotated mapping of the CLB channel) Other Valley streams such as Cold Brook south of Seneca Turnpike are also above ground, contrary to this graphic and other portions of the text/tables.

The reason that CLB is not visible within the Project Limits is that it emanates from bedrock-sourced springs through carbonate rock fractures to the east and south directly below the Project Limits the I-481South Study Area. It is not piped in any way. Therefore stormwater drainage from I-81 and I-481 which is not piped percolates through the bedrock to the valley floor via contributing springs of CLB, its tributaries, and stormwater drainage in the Valley neighborhood to Onondaga Creek. The main CLB springs are located west of the Loretto property – in an area known as the "Glen", with one spring directly west and downhill of the Cunningham Building, and at least three others northwest of the Cunningham and further down-slope (See photos in Attachment #2). The Glen springs were approximately located in a Syracuse City Engineer's report (Attachment #3) that was prompted by flooding conditions at 411 E. Glen Ave. in 2019. There may be additional springs within the "Glen" for which Glen Ave. is named. CLB is a class B stream – according to water samples taken during a 2010 ESF Master thesis by Kacie Gehl, the water was the most "pristine" in her collection of samples[1]. There are also springs located along the Valley wall to the south associated with the southern tributary of CLB.

Water Quality/Composition Analysis: USGS hydrologist Bill Kappel (now emeritus with USGS) sampled the brook at the sluice located at the end of E. Glen Ave. (lower street segment) in 2001-2002 and found that the composition of the brook is mineralized with high amounts of calcium, sulfate, sodium and chloride (Attachment #4 – CLB water sample spreadsheet). It also contains a high level of oxygen and Dr. Don Siegel (former chair of the SU Geology Department) and Bill Kappel both assessed that the water comes from deeper carbonate rock fractures. Dr. Siegel also states that the water must have been traveling through fractures for at least a couple of years to accumulate the amount of dissolved minerals that it contains. Don Siegel visited the springs in September, 2019 and compared them in regional significance to the Saratoga Springs. See his assessment of the Glen and the springs as a regional resource in a letter that he submitted to the CNY Nature Conservancy (Attachment #5).

The brook deposits some of its mineral accumulation within the sloping "Glen" in layers and dams of "tufa" rock (see photos in Attachment #2) within the streambed all the way from the springs into the lower neighborhood. Bill Kappel feels that CLB is unique in the volume and rate of tufa deposition in comparison to other Onondaga Valley springs. Tufa dams caused flooding in 2019 at 411 E. Glen Ave. (first house downhill of the springs) and at 301 Springbrook. Minor interventions have corrected recent flooding but tufa accumulation is ongoing and creates obstructions in the streambed within a couple of

years (according to residents' experience and an environmentally-qualified previous resident of 411 E. Glen, current head of Pennsylvania Department of Natural Resources). The brook deposits a large amount of tufa on the slope from E. Glen Ave. down to Springbrook Ave. just north of the Monticello Dr. North/East Glen Ave./Springbrook intersection. This mound is a solid rock formation created by deposition over and around which the brook flows on a continuous basis.

CLB watershed and flow volumes: The ground watershed and stream flow volumes of this brook are unknown – Bill Kappel has proposed studies which could be conducted in coordination with NYSDOT and SU to answer these questions (See Attachment #6). The DEIS speculates that CLB has a very small watershed but since the watershed includes travel through deep carbonate rock fractures that conclusion is likely incorrect. The DEIS also shows overland flow from the southeast (Figure 6-4-7-50) to the Valley – historic aerial photos and mapping does not show any overland flow from east of the spring. All the flow is through bedrock fractures. Bill Kappel has examined the NYSDOT I-81 preconstruction borings in the Rock Cut Road vicinity and identified a deep bedrock trough which might indicate underground contributions from the I-481 crosscut channel to the east. I created an estimated ground-level watershed based on pre-81 topography which shows the watershed extending to the southeast along Lafayette Rd. (See Attachment #7) and enveloping portions of the 81/481 interchange area.

Karst Topography and Sinkholes in the I-481 South Study Area

Page 6-378 of the DEIS notes that there is karst topography in the I-481 South Study Area and that NYSDOT is monitoring two sinkholes north of E. Seneca Turnpike, however there is no recognition of what this means to the CLB watershed or conditions.

Large sinkole associated with CLB under SB I-81 in the project area: While I have previously submitted this information to NYSDOT in decades past, I do not see a clear recognition of this feature in the DEIS so I am resubmitting it. I include several documents discussed below in Attachment #8. Historic aerials show a karst, pitted landscape with a large sinkhole uphill and slightly southeast of the Glen springs. NYSDOT construction drawings noted this feature was a "gravel pit" however the feature had mature trees at the base and no signs of mining (resident's description) and was identified as a sinkhole by SU Earth Sciences Emeritus Professor Ernie Muller in 1990. At that time, I alerted the NYSDOT regional office of the sinkhole's existence and a group (including Prof. Muller and myself) traveled into the ROW to identify the feature in the field. NYSDOT staff marked the sinkhole perimeter which was still subsiding at the time and causing subsidence of the SB lanes and the guard rail in that location. Later NYSDOT built a culvert over the sinkhole area in an attempt to bridge the sinkhole and reduce surface water infiltration and solutioning of the underlying bedrock.

Bill Kappel -USGS emeritus hydrogeologist – also verified the existence of the sinkhole in 1995 and believes that the sinkhole is a likely source of the gypsum dissolution (October 2019 emails) from Bertie

Dolostone and Camillus Shales shown in the water samples from CLB and cites other occurrences of deep solutioning of gypsum causing subsidence including under SU Slocum dorms in the 1980's and along I-81 further north. He further states that he studied other springs further south along the east side of the valley and that the CLB springs are unique in their sustained flow, chemical composition and tufa production.

In 1990 I plotted the relationship of the sinkhole feature to CLB springs on an historic USGS map. There is a clear relationship between the sinkhole feature and the CLB springs, and some seepage can be observed even today at the base of the 481 southbound ramp fill just east of the Cunningham Building. Existing topographic maps related to the construction of the Cunningham Building also show portions of the sinkhole feature.

Associated Glacial Ravine Feature and springs

South of the sinkhole, a feature can be identified that was/is a glacial outwash drainage feature on historic aerial photos. Prior to the construction of I-81, this ravine extended southwestward almost to E. Seneca Turnpike (Attachment #9), but it was filled for the highway and only the lower part of the ravine remains just west of the Loretto south parking lot and east of residential properties on Monticello Dr. North. This ravine contains a mature forest and an additional perpetual spring which appears to have similar water chemistry characteristics to the main springs at the end of E. Glen Ave. because it has created its own tufa mound. Springs also emerge uphill through the ravine depending on precipitation and snowmelt conditions. These flow between residential properties, partially overland and partially underground. It was historically mapped as part of the southern tributary to City Line Brook. The ground watershed of this brook and its water volumes are also unknown and also result in periodic flooding, although not at the level of severity as main CLB. Yards in this area are perpetually saturated with seeps.

Ecological Classifications of the Glen and Ravine

Glen ecological classification: Professor Don Leopold from ESF visited the Glen in the early 1990's and classified it as a "hanging or hillside fen". Other ecologists who have visited the site concur that it is probably a hillside fen of some type and may be a "rich sloping fen" (Edinger, p. 57) or a similar type of calcareous fen. Don Leopold stated that it is the type of environment that may have once supported the growth of the rare Hart's Tongue Fern. The I-81 DEIS does not recognize the potential existence of this community in the Study Area. Lower western parts of the Glen contain some small wetlands with an unknown classification but which may be salty in character given the water chemistry. Upper portions of the Glen and the surrounding area are "maple-basswood rich mesic forest" (Edinger p. 120). Further investigation is needed to accurately classify the Glen communities. The aforementioned type of fen is classified as S1 in state rank for community rarity and vulnerability, and therefore if the Glen demonstrates any level of degradation it still has high importance. The easternmost portion of the Glen

is bordered by exposed carbonate rock cliffs (west edge of Loretto property) which could provide bat habitat.

Ravine ecological classification: The ravine has evidence of being a mature "calcareous talus slope woodland" (Edinger p. 107) or a "limestone woodland" (Edinger p.103) with large glacial-era and/or tufa boulders tumbled down and lining the ravine. Soils are rich and overlay mixed boulders, rock and bedrock which eroded over time or were carried down from the upper part of the ravine (now below I-81). The lower part of the ravine where the spring is located may also be classified as a "rich sloping fen" as it has similar characteristics as the Glen. In its totality, the ravine is unusual local feature and sustains a unique environment in the region.

The I-81 DEIS mentions some potential communities that may be in the area including the salt pond, maple-basswood rich mesic forest, calcareous talus slope woodland and limestone woodland, but it then discounts that any of those environments exist in the Study Area. The consultants and NYSDOT need to investigate these environments associated with CLB and its tributaries which may be impacted by the I-81 project construction and final configurations and adequately evaluate the impacts.

Potential impacts on the CLB springs, City Line Brook and Valley Neighborhoods from construction and infrastructure in the I-481 South Study Area.

The sinkhole and karst features under the I-481 South Study Area are strongly related to potential impacts to CLB, the springs and the Valley neighborhoods. Excavation and borings for the foundation of the Fahey Building (north of the Cunningham Building) in 1990 showed wide fractures in dolomite rock (Attachment #10) trending southeast as shown in the photos. Depth to bedrock in the building borings was as shallow as a few feet. Any stormwater in the uphill area under the 81/481spans or interchange would pass quickly through overlying shallow soils and down into the fractures that feed the springs and seeps throughout the neighborhood. These fractures would not only carry the volume of highway runoff into the neighborhood, but would also carry road and salt pollution into the springs and CLB. Both Bill Kappel and Don Siegel have speculated that the salt levels in CLB may be partially attributable to road salt from uphill sources. Therefore, construction practices and designed stormwater conveyances need to be adjusted to this reality throughout. NYSDOT officials in the past have told me that they "lose" stormwater above the Valley. They are losing the stormwater into Valley yards and streams.

History of Neighborhood Flooding from City Line Brook: I have enclosed an annotated set of graphics that shows the extent of the CLB channel from the springs to Onondaga Creek (see Attachment #1). To the west of Springbrook Ave., the brook was contained in a limestone-lined Work Progress Administration channel in 1938. In that graphic I note three recent known incidents of flooding from CLB from 2016-2019. Since brook volumes have not been evaluated, it is not possible to know if the flooding is due to increased runoff and/or climate-change conditions in the watershed or to the tufa

build-up in, deterioration and lack of maintenance of the channel. The city used to maintain the CLB channel, however it ended that practice several years ago and now contends that it is the responsibility of each individual homeowner to obtain permits and complete maintenance on their section of the channel. Since there is no overall approach to maintenance or flood control, residents are left vulnerable to the runoff contributions from the unknown watershed. NYSDOT stormwater management in the CLB watershed needs to more carefully consider these impacts to the Valley neighborhood.

Recommendations

Borings: In order to determine the CLB watershed and bedrock characteristics underlying the watershed, NYSDOT should include deeper borings in the I-481 South Study Area. Bill Kappel recommends going deeper to determine how fractured the rock is and then recommends providing open casings with a steel surface casing and locking caps in order to monitor water levels. These wells would assist in determining the CLB watershed and contributions/flows. At least one well in the sinkhole(s) and a series of wells along I-81 would be useful. CLB researchers request access to all boring logs for all holes drilled in the interchange area and access to any monitoring well constructed within the NYSDOT ROW for water level and water-quality monitoring.

Disturbance: Construction in the 81/481 interchange area that might impact the bedrock including sedimentation into the bedrock fractures should be limited or mitigated. Concentration of stormwater flows over specific fractures and construction disturbance may change the way water flows through the bedrock and thus impact downhill neighborhoods, CLB or its associated tributaries and springs. Disturbance through sedimentation into bedrock fractures could also result in increased turbidity and tufa formation depending on the underground connections. Since there is no city maintenance of CLB, additional tufa formation/accumulation would burden dozens of residents adjacent to CLB and related tributaries who are expected to maintain the brook.

Stormwater conveyances along I-81 in the area of karst topography should be lined and their flows piped to appropriate stormwater sewers. The NYSDOT practice of "losing water" to bedrock and ultimately to the Valley neighborhoods should be mitigated in the reconstruction process of the 81/481 interchange.

Thank you for your attention to, and consideration of, this information and these concerns.

Sincerely,

Kathleen A. Stribley

Kathleen Stribley

Valley Resident and ESF Landscape Architecture Professor Emeritus

Phone #'s – (315) 469-1571, cell (315) 391-0598, email kstribl1@twcny.rr.com

Attachments #0 – K. Stribley's 2019 online comments on Chapt 6 and City Line Brook

#1 - Mapping of CLB – North Valley

#2 - Photos of Glen springs, upper stream and CLB tufa mound

#3 - Spring Brook Field Report, 2019, Syracuse Department of Engineering

#4 - Spreadsheet of USGS 2001-2002 water data

#5 – 2019 Letter from Don Siegel to CNY Conservancy

#6 – 2019 CLB study proposal from Bill Kappel (USGS) and Tao Wen (SU)

#7 – Estimated ground-level watershed of CLB based on pre-81 topography

#8 – Sinkhole information and mapping:

A - 1951 aerial photo of sinkhole with contemporary features added

B - NYSDOT I-81 construction drawing including sinkhole feature

C - Resident description of sinkhole transcribed in 1990

D - 1995 letter from Ernie Muller, SU Earth Sciences Professor Emeritus

E - 1995 letter from Bill Kappel, USGS

F - Plot of the relationship between CLB springs and sinkhole

G - Grading plan of Cunningham Building showing sinkhole western edge

#9 – 1951 annotated aerial photo of associated glacial ravine and sinkhole

#10 – Photos of fractured bedrock under the Fahey Building, 1990

Footnote

1 Gehl, Kacie. 2010. P36. Multi-Scale Analysis of Synoptic Streamwater Chemistry and Seasonal Nutrient Limitation in a Mixed Use Catchment (Onondaga Creek, NY) Masters Thesis - State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry

Reference

Edinger, G. J., D. J. Evans, S. Gebauer, T. G. Howard, D. M. Hunt, and A. M. Olivero (editors). 2014. Ecological Communities of New York State. Second Edition. A revised and expanded edition of Carol Reschke's *Ecological Communities of New York State*. New York Natural Heritage Program, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Albany, NY.

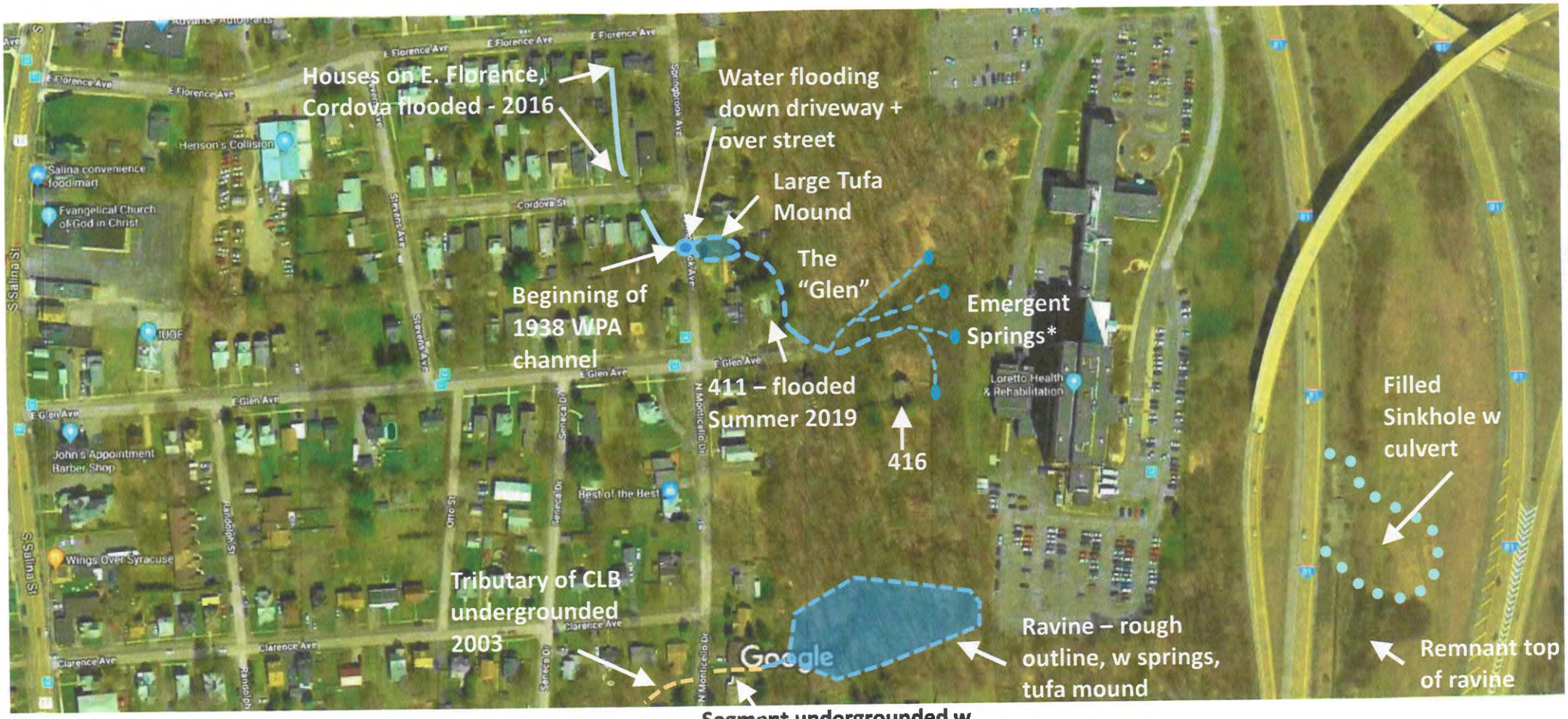
Attachment O - Submitted online to NYSDOT on 10/4/19

Your Chapter 6 notes that City Line Brook is "undergrounded" for its entire length. This is not true - it is a spring-fed stream that is entirely above ground until Slayton Ave., where it is undergrounded to an outlet just north of the Ballantyne Rd. bridge. The springs emerge just to the west of the Loretto plateau and Cunningham Building and traverse toward E. Glen Ave. (lower segment). City Line Brook has had data collected by the USGS and we have recently had experts assess this data. The springs are deeply routed through limestone and the watershed is unknown. It is likely that I-81 runoff in any swales in the vicinity of 81/481 traverses down to the springs/stream/valley through fractured bedrock. A study is highly suggested. Some of CLB was put into a limestone block WPA open channel in 1938 from Springbrook Ave. to Slayton Ave. A portion was relocated to back of Valley Plaza in 1950 into a non-lined channel. If you want to see it, please contact me. More to come...

Attachment 1

City Line Brook #1 – East: Springs, Glen, Ravine, sinkhole under SB I-81

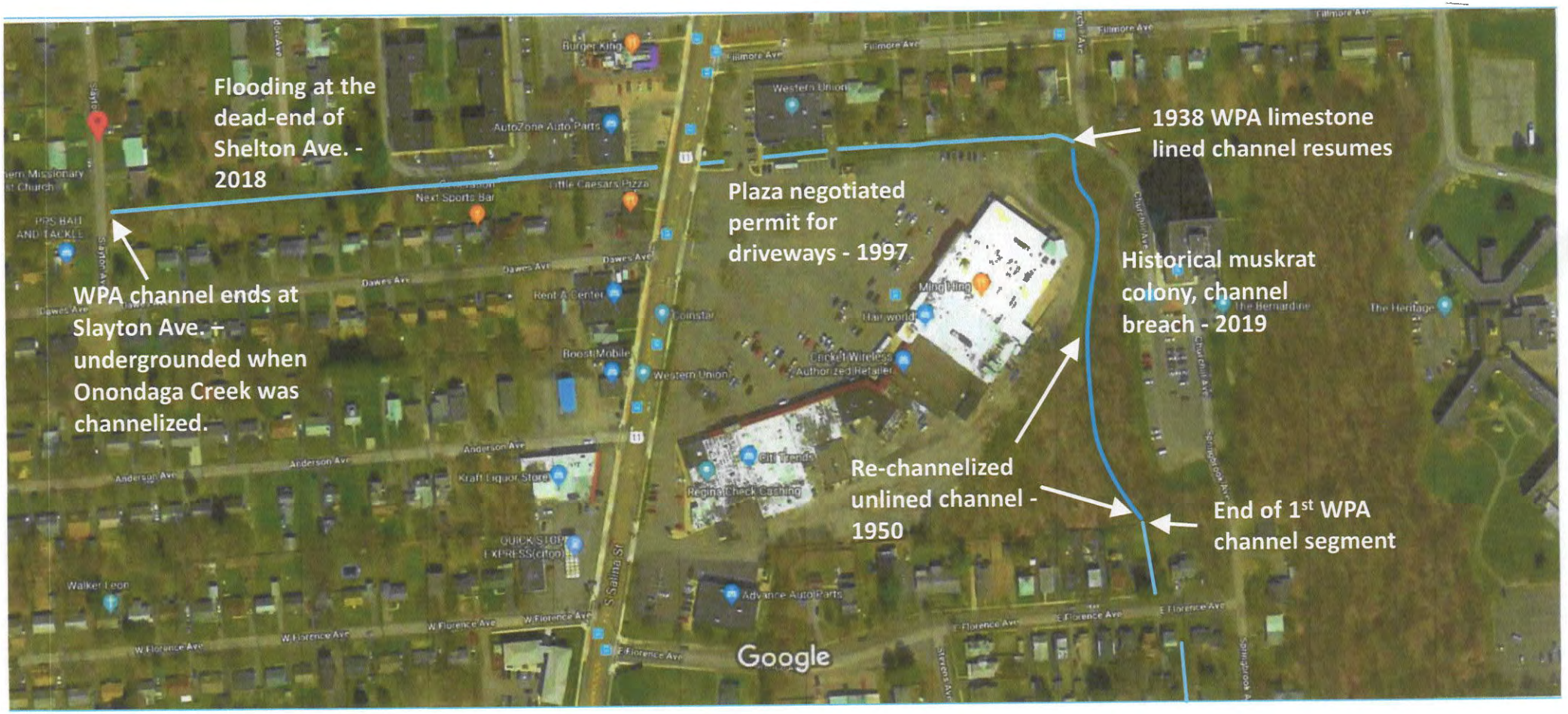
Note: No overland flow from the east/southeast is apparent on historic aerial photos (pre-I-81). Spring flows come from uphill areas through underground limestone fissures. No definitive watershed has been established.



Sinkhole and ravine are evident on 1938, 1951 and 1966 aerial photos. Construction of I-81 filled the sinkhole which was identified by NYSDOT as a gravel pit.

CLB flows at land surface from the springs in the glen, except for road culverts. Segments downstream of Springbrook were lined by limestone blocks in 1938 by the federal WPA.

City Line Brook #2 – Center: E. Florence Ave. through Valley Plaza to Salina St.



1938 WPA channel has the same cross-section throughout, with one curved section. It is lined with large limestone blocks similar to Erie Canal or which may have been recovered from the Erie Canal deconstruction.

Relocated channel at the back of Valley Plaza is an unlined channel.

City Line Brook #3 – West: Salina St. to Onondaga Creek outfall

WPA channel originally emptied straight west to the creek which was east of Midland Ave.) prior to 1950's channelization .

According to city engineering records, City Line Brook was undergrounded to a 30" diameter pipe which goes north up Slayton Ave. to Ballantyne Rd. and then west to re-channelized Onondaga Creek.. The continuous brook flow is obvious just northeast of the Ballantyne bridge. <u>This outlet may be blocked during high creek flows, contributing to flooding events.</u>

Attachment #2 - Photos of Glen Springs, Tuta mound

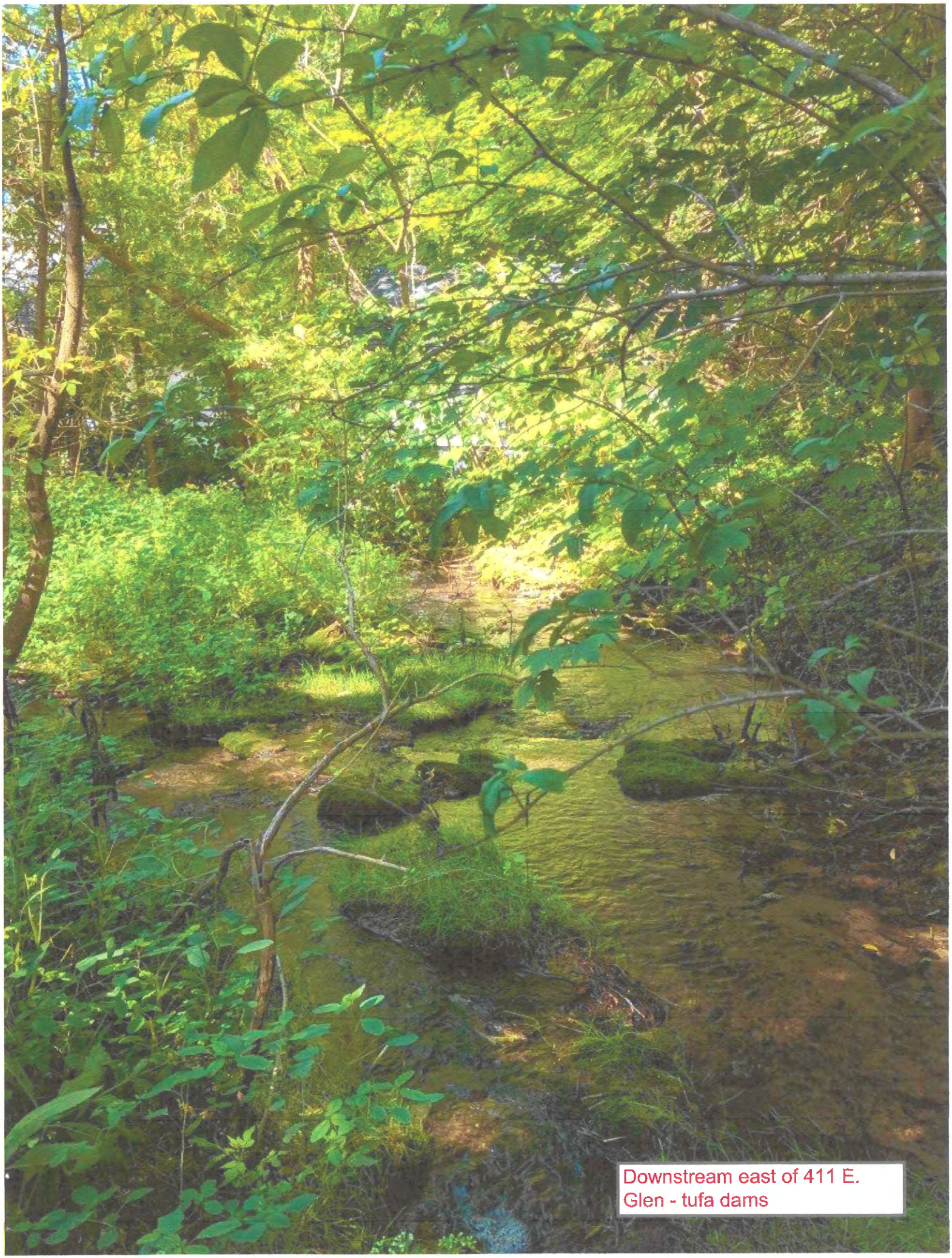
Winter view - springs from above

Bedrock near upper springs

Upper spring from above

Stream from upper spring

Tufa dams in stream below sluice


Downstream east of 411 E.
Glen - tufa dams

Large tufa mound downstream on Springbrook Ave.

Front edge of large tufa mound showing rock formation

Attachment #3

CITY OF SYRACUSE

DEPARTMENT OF ENGINEERING

Mary E. Robison, P.E., City Engineer

Spring Brook Field Report (2019)

Location:

Spring Brook is located in the in the Valley area of the south side City of Syracuse, the brook flows westerly from below Loretto entering into a culvert under Springbrook Avenue near the intersection of East Glen Avenue and Springbrook Avenue.

Background:

Residents in the immediate area of the dead end section of East Glen Avenue complained to their local Common Councilor regarding proposed development at the Loretto Health Care Facility, which is located above East Glen Avenue. The residents share a concern that any development above them will adversely affect their properties as a result of stormwater runoff, erosion and similar (grade difference). In addition, Ms. Anita Sterns at 411 East Glen Avenue is reporting over-topping flow from the stream of "Spring Brook".

History:

The Engineering Department first started investigating the history of this brook when residents of Florence and Cordova Streets complained of flooding in their yards due to the brook overtopping the channel wall. The location of the brook shows up in the 1924 & 1938 Atlases (see attachment 1); the

sewer system in the immediate area was constructed in 1927 however these plans show no improvements to the brook.

The Engineering Depts. earliest record plans for any work on the brook date from 1938; when channel improvements were made under a WPA project (see attachment 2). The limits of these improvements were from Onondaga Creek to the west side of Springbrook Avenue with no work shown from the east of Springbrook Avenue extending up into the hillside. At this time the brook was referred to as "City Line Brook", the brook is shown on private lands (except when it crosses under City street R.O.W's) and there are no records of easements being acquired/obtained for access or maintenance rights. The rear of the plan sheet contains a release from the property owners to the City and WPA (see attachment 2).

In 1939, the sewer on East Glen was extended and the plan (attachment 3) shows a culvert 3' wide, 25' long for a section of the brook, however there is no record as to who built this structure (this structure remains in place to date- refer to photographs in field report).

The last engineering record showing the brook is dated 1973, this involved the construction of a storm sewer in the area, however no work on the brook too place under this project (see attachment 3). The Engineering Dept. is also including a photograph from a culvert inspection report dated 1991 which provides a photographic comparison between the upstream inlet of the culvert and present condition.

Field Investigation:

Engineering personnel (J.Kivlehan, Division Engineer; N. Goe, Intern) visited the area of interest on August 5, 2019, entering from the dead end of East Glen Avenue, making the following observations:

1. Flow is coming down from the hillside in a westerly direction before taking a sharp turn north heading then northerly along the rear line of 411 E. Glen Ave (approx. 120'), taking another sharp turn heading again westerly before discharging into the culvert inlet along Springbrook Avenue. The water was observed was clean, clear & odorless. (see Figure 1)

2. Just to the east of the dead end section of pavement of E. Glen Ave, the channel is contained within the culvert walls as shown in the 1939 plans. The channel between this location and the rear of 411 E. Glen Ave is composed of small placed stones (appearing in some location to be mortared) on either side. This channel wall has been breached in at least 3 locations resulting in flow into the rear of 411. (see Field Report photographs)

3. Heading easterly from the culvert walls, the brook flows in a natural channel being surrounded on either side by higher elevation. The brook breaks in several areas to separate channels.

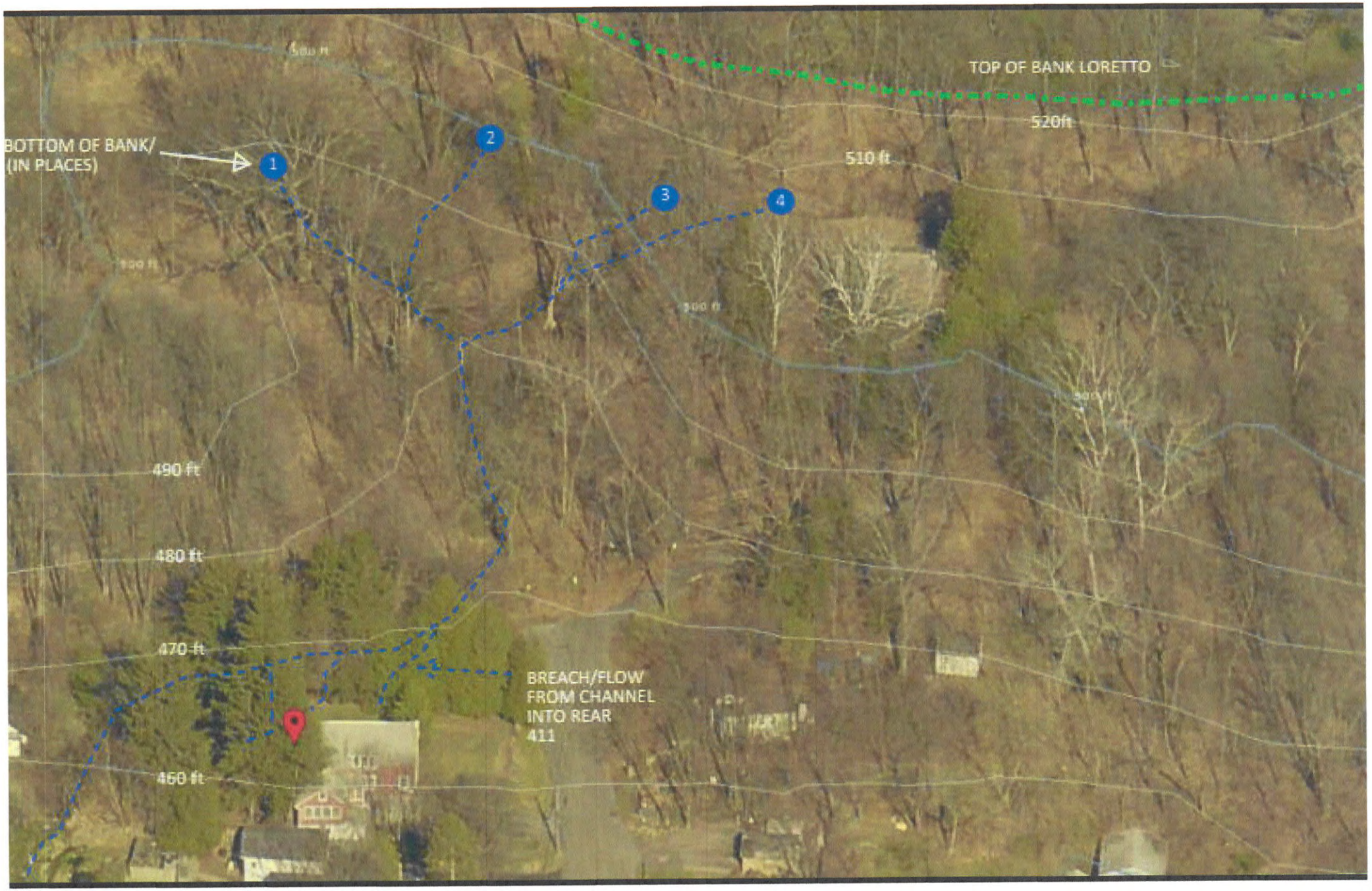
4. Advancing further easterly, one encounters an abrupt elevation change at the approach to Loretto, with outcrops of rock in several locations. This elevated area (elevation 520' approx.) rings the location of the springs which feed the brook. This elevated face was checked and no piping or similar discharge from Loretto above was observed.

5. In the area below the elevated face, personnel observed/traced at least 4 springs that feed the brook that exits at Springbrook Avenue (located at varying elevations). No other sources of water were observed. Refer to Location Map in field report (note: locations are approximate, topographic survey is required to locate true position).

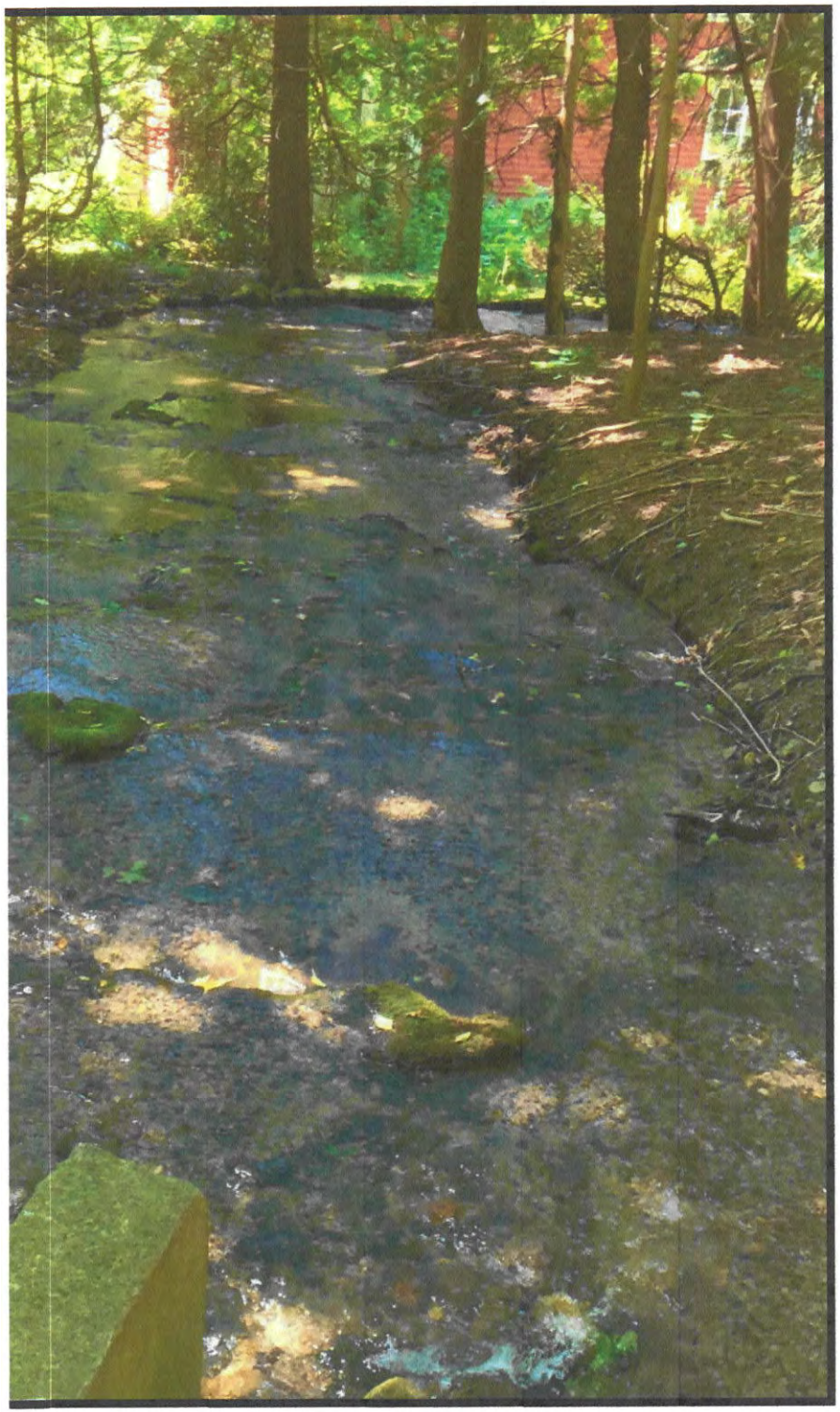
Conclusion:

Similar to research completed in 2016, the Engineering Department can find no record of the City ever being involved in channelizing of the brook above East Glen Avenue. Based on field observations the brook is being fed from at least 4 springs located just below Loretto. The channel wall at the rear of 411 E. Glen Avenue is in poor repair and is in need of maintenance, the lack of maintenance has resulted in the flow breaching the wall resulting in flow entering the rear of 411 (at least 3 breaches). Based on records & field observations the brook is contained on private property and the City has no title interest or similar where the brook is located (see fig 2: note a boundary/topographic survey is required to identify the location of the springs and the lands they are located on, based on observations the springs are possibly located on lands owned by 416 & 418 East Glen and Loretto, but requires a survey to confirm).

SPRING
Aprox.
location
BROOK
Approx.
location
N


TOP OF BANK LORETTO
520ft
510 ft
BOTTOM OF BANK/
(IN PLACES)
1
2
3
4
490 ft
480 ft
470 ft
460 ft
BREACH/FLOW
FROM CHANNEL
INTO REAR
411

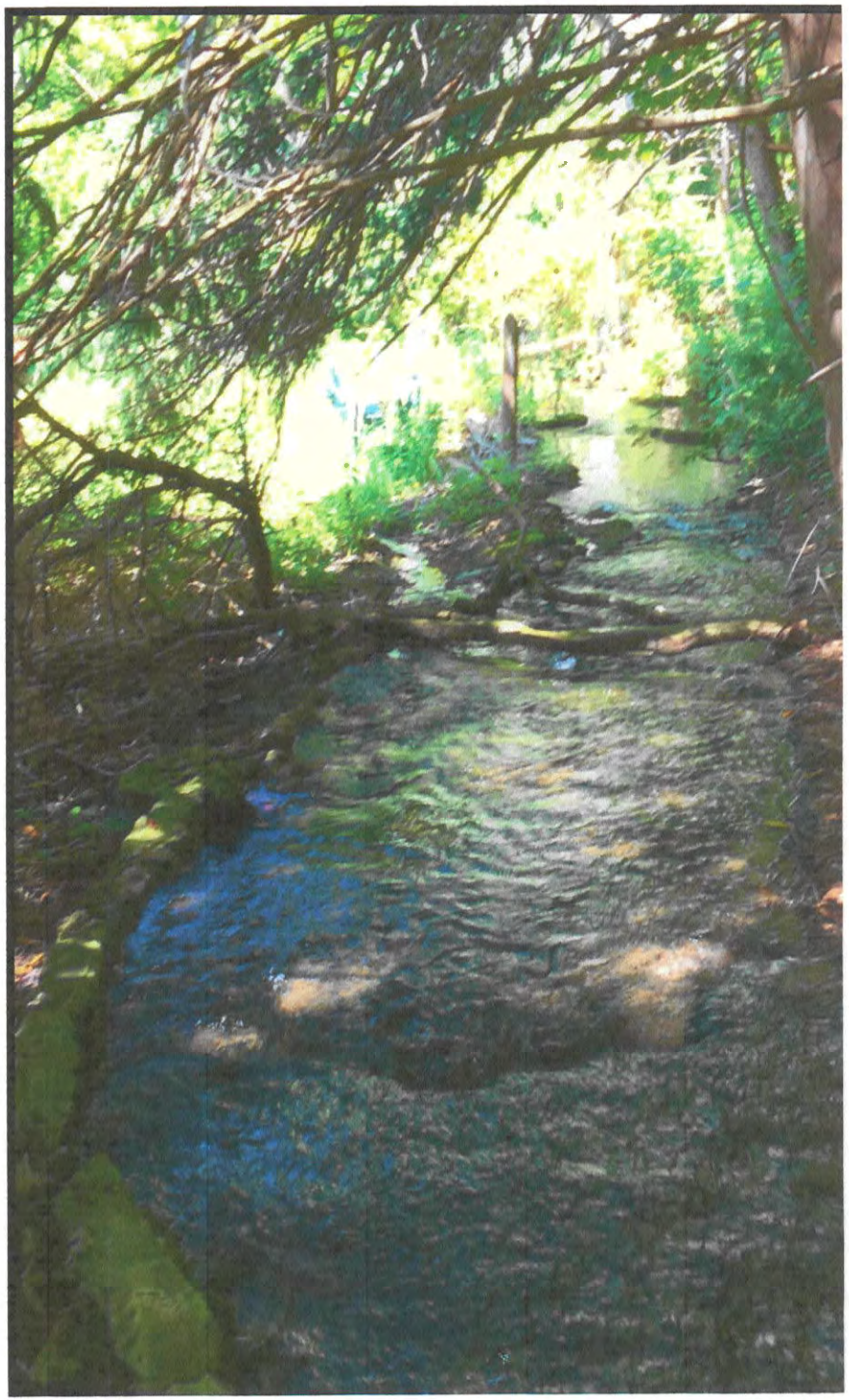
. Glen Ave



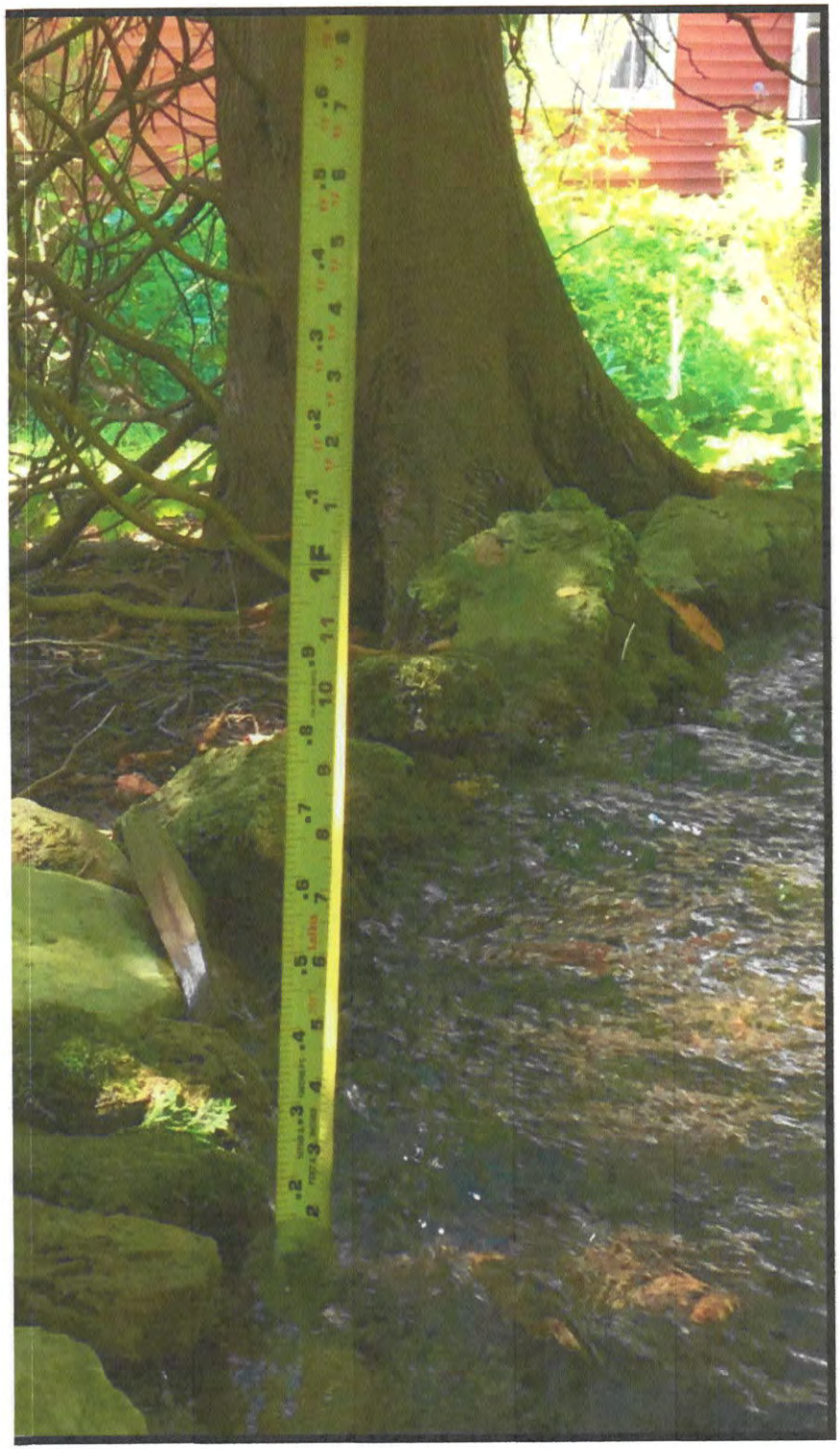
East towards culvert remains

) rear 411 E. Glen Ave

Brook Flowing North @ rear 411 E. Glen Ave



el Height



Flow exiting Channel heading towards 411

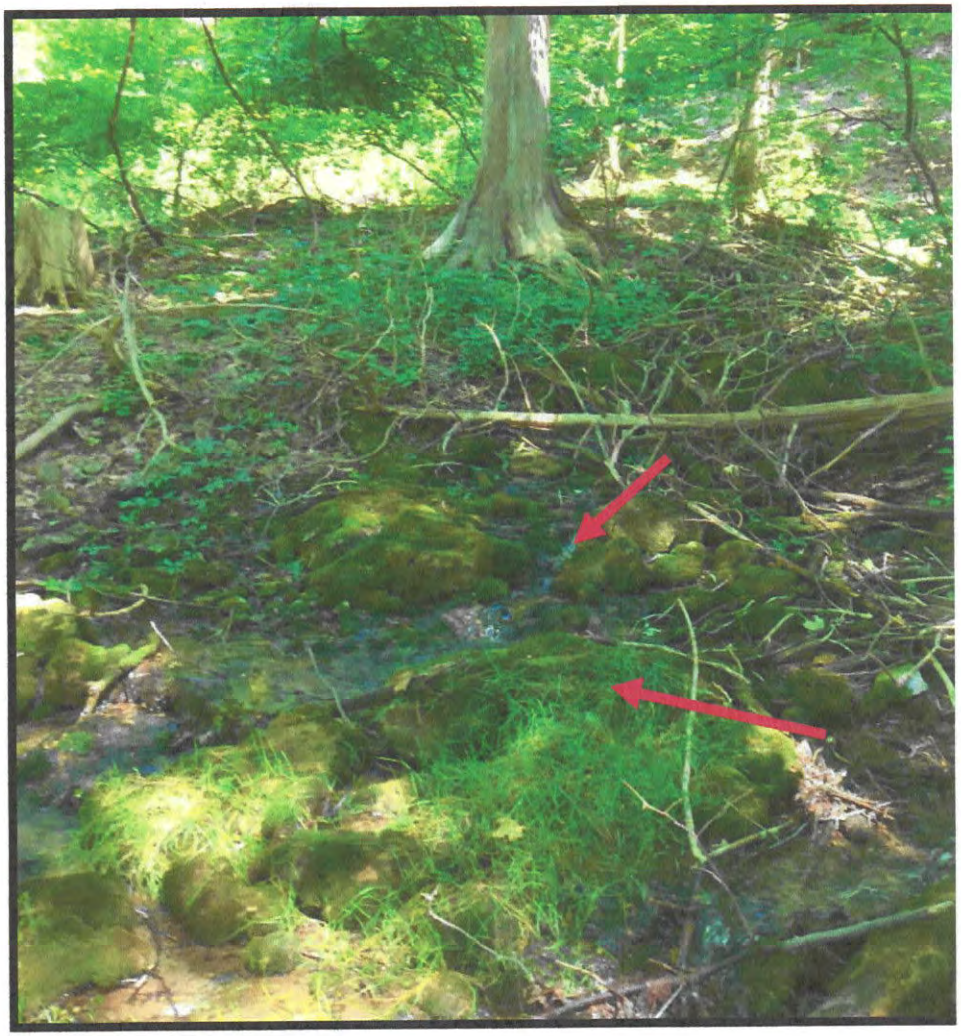
Spring # 1 (refer to location map – Field Report)

Field Report)

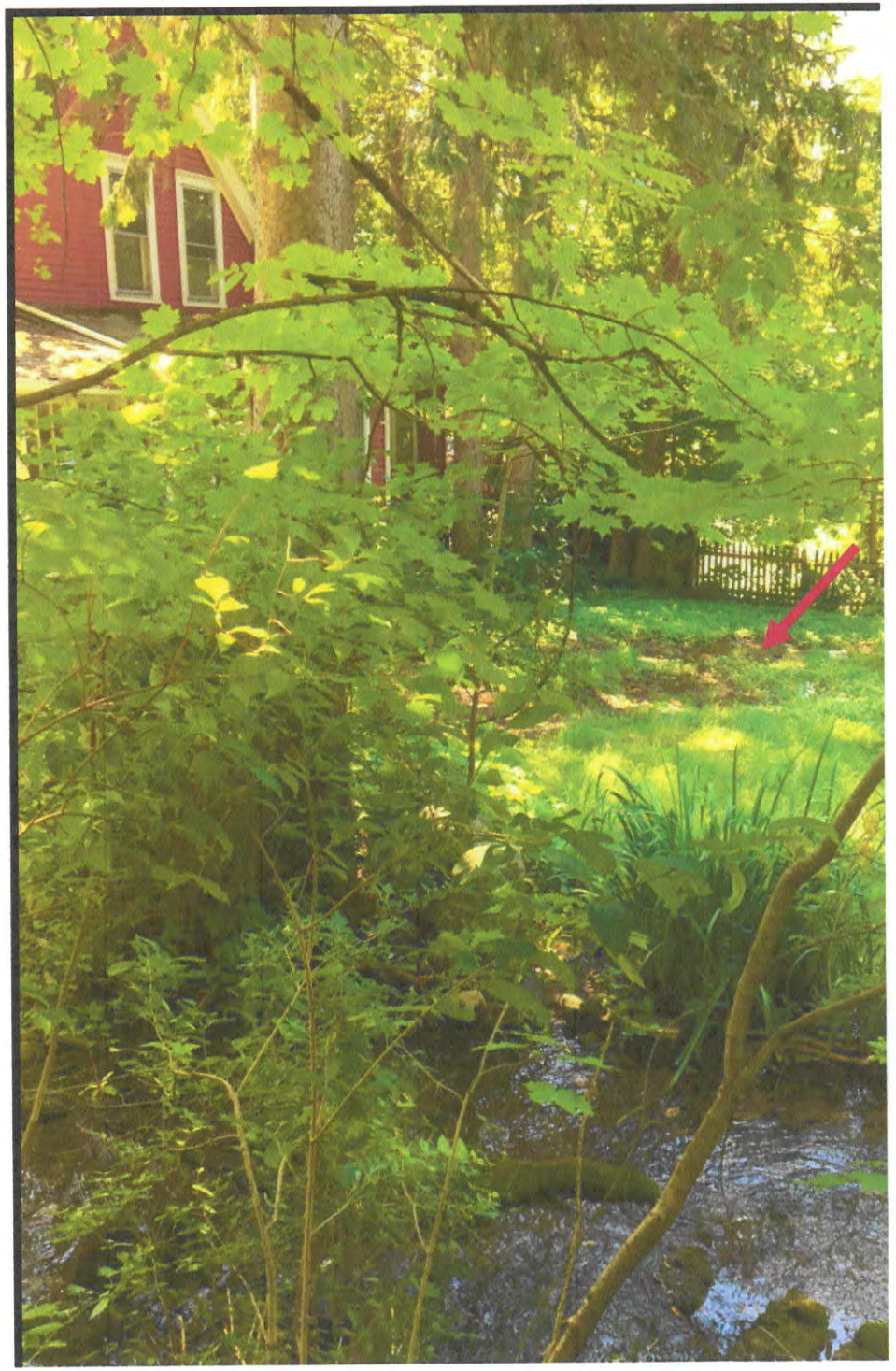
Spring # 3 (refer to location map – Field Report)

Field Report)

Spring 3 & 4 joining together



Flow from brook into 411



Condition 1991

PHOTOGRAPHS FOR FIELD INSPECTION AND CONDITION REPORT

#14

Photo No. S-7

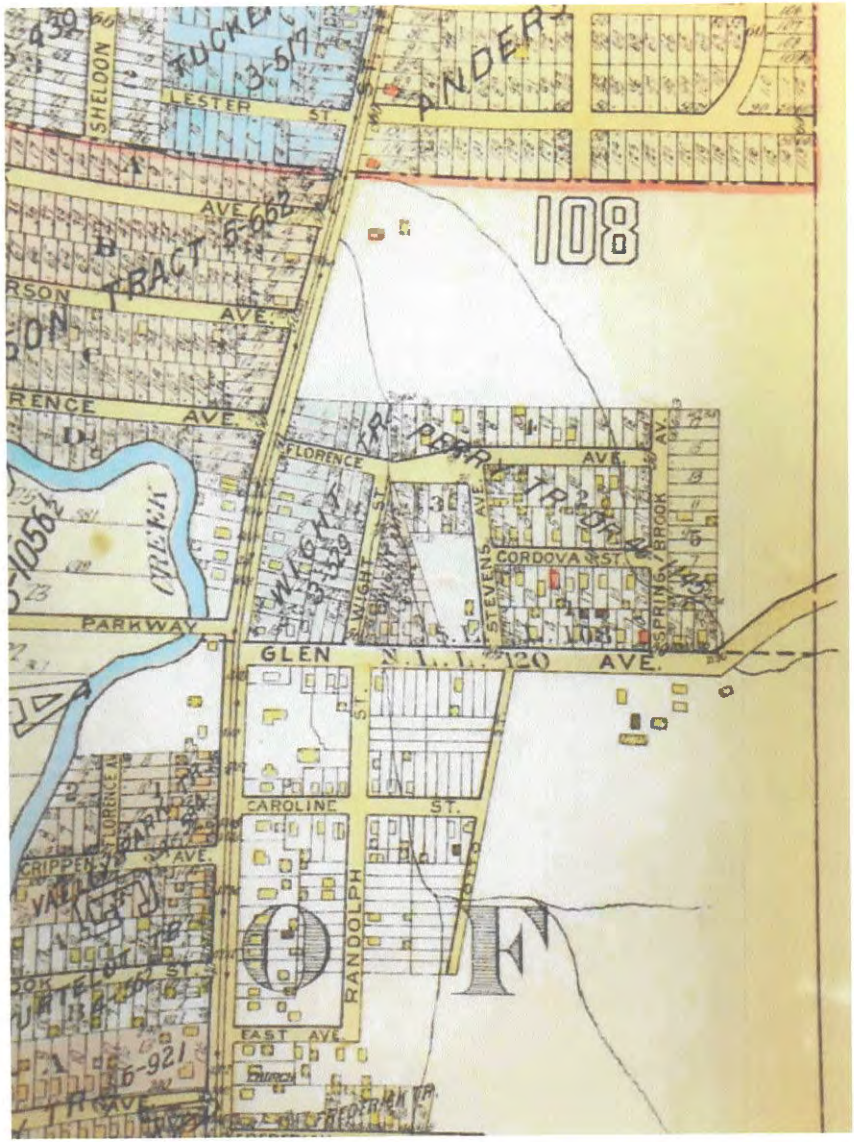
Location Springbrook Avenue at Spring Brook culvert

Description Upstream Inlet - stone and mortar headwall, showing ~~References~~ 21" PVC, 10" clay tile, and 8" clay tile pipes.

LORETTO HEALTH CARE
405 E.GLEN OLIVA TRST
411 E. GLEN Stettis
418 E. GLEN JOHN GREENEY MEXICO,NY
416 E.GLEN JOHN CAMETOTA SYRACUSE,NY
412 E.GLEN JEREMY BROWN SYR, NY

ATTACHMENT 1

1924



1938

ATTACHMENT 2

1938 WPA Records

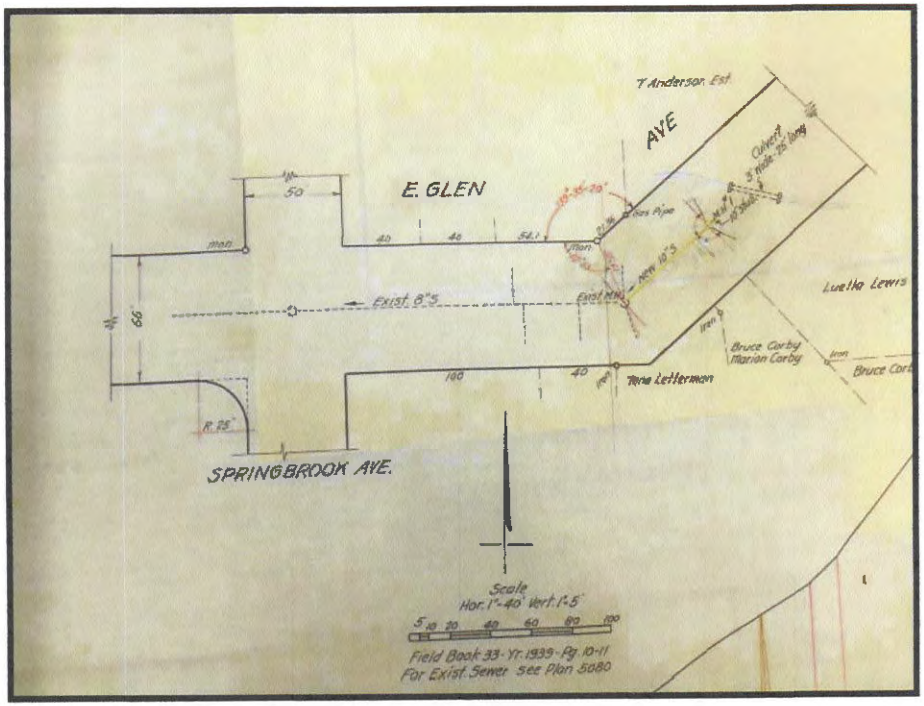
We, the undersigned, property owners of the respective lots or properties shown on the map on the reverse side hereof believing that the condition of our said lots and properties will be greatly benefited and improved by the lining of the south branch of City Line Brook from Springfield Avenue to Onondaga Creek, as shown on said map, do hereby respectively consent that the City of Syracuse and/or Works Progress Administration may reline said Brook and may go upon and across said properties for that purpose and we hereby respectively waive and release said City and/or WPA from any claim or claims for damages to our said properties caused by reason thereof.

It is understood, however, that on completion of said work, our said properties shall be restored to and left in at least as good condition as now is.

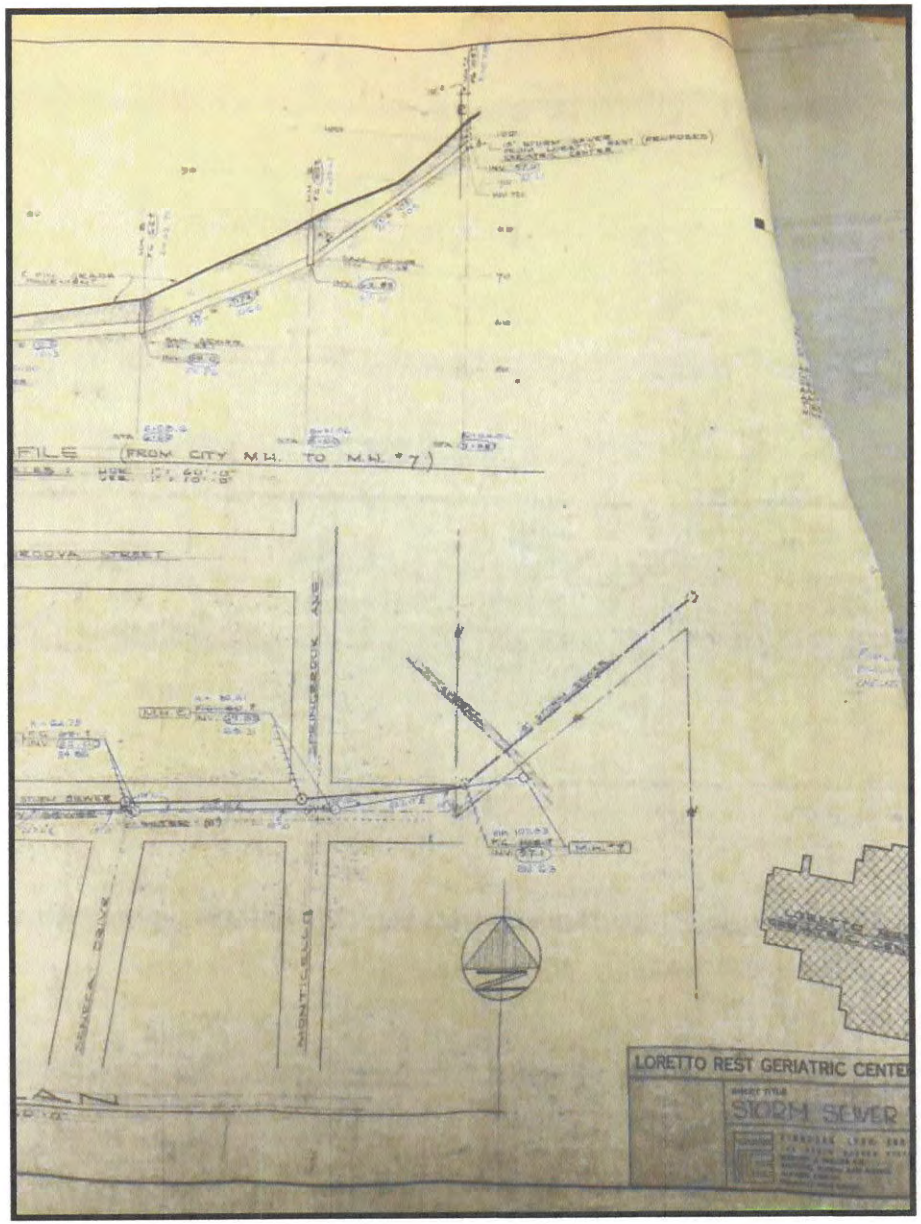
Chas J Leonard.
Catherine B Conrad
Frank V Land
Trustee Foundation
By Charles F McKenney Treas
Julia F Parsons
Farmers & Traders Life Ins Co.
by Ralph Lenz Pres.
Marion L Gifft
Frederick G Wilson
Clara E. Hayes
W. L. Moore
William A Finis

ATTACHMENT 3

1939 Plan



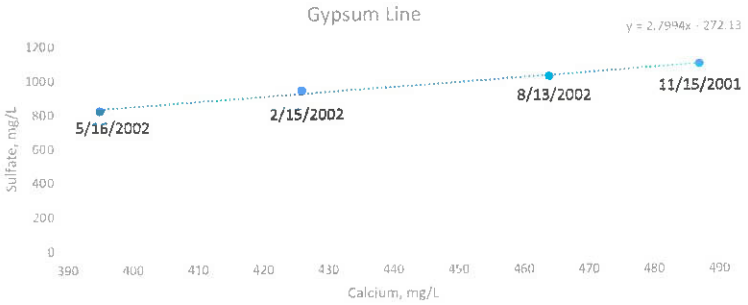
1973 Plan



USGS Data - CLB Attachment #4

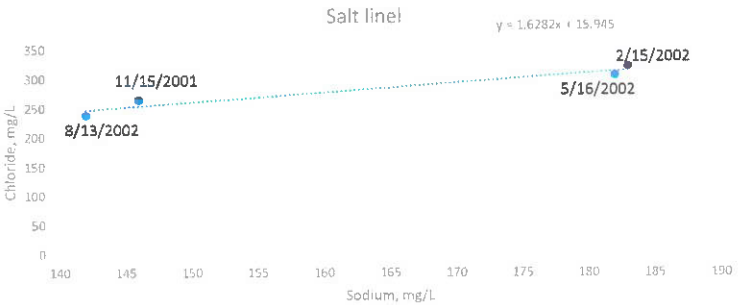
USGS 430020076081701 OD1816	sample_dt	Temp	SC	H+	DO	O2 Saturatio	pH	pH-l	HCO3	Ca	Mg	Na	K	Cl	SO4	Si	TDS	Br	SC
USGS	11/15/2001	11.9	2860	0.00002	12.6	100	7.8	7.8	261	487	49.6	146	3.88	264	1090	6	2340	0.16	2840
USGS	2/15/2002	10.1	2850	0.00002	12.2	106	7.6	7.9	264	426	43.5	183	3.5	320	939	5.5	2180	0.13	2840
USGS	5/16/2002	11.6	2710	0.00002	10.6	98	7.6	7.8	271	395	41.9	182	3.18	305	823	5.5	2050	0.14	2690
USGS	8/30/2002	13	2500	0.00002	10.2	96	7.8	7.8	320	464	47.4	142	4	238	1020	6.3	2230	0.17	2780

meq/L	meq/L	meq/L	meq/L		meq/L	meq/L		Cl/Br
4.2804	24.35	3.968	6.278		7.392	22.89		1650
4.3296	21.3	3.48	7.869		8.96	19.719		2461.5
4.4444	19.75	3.352	7.826		8.54	17.283		2178.6
5.248	23.2	3.792	6.106		6.664	21.42		1400
								SALT



					SI gyp
	1.46	5.428	Kp GYP	0.0001	0.7241
	1.581	5.061	2.63027E-05	0.0001	0.6012
	2.467	5.819		9E-05	0.5111
	1.78	5.572		0.0001	0.6742
			SI=log(IAP/KSP)		

2.63027E-05



Attachment #5

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

January 4, 2020

CNY Land Trust
7 Fennell St
Skaneateles
NY 13152

To Whom It Concerns:

I would like to offer support for citizens and others trying to protect a ravine containing several unique springs located west of I81 in Syracuse, NY. These springs discharge from crack orifices in rock outcrops in the ravine which related to a combination of prior glacial erosion, current stream erosion, and dissolving soluble minerals in the rock underneath.

Ms. Kathleen Stribley brought the springs to my attention and in fall 2019, she took me to the ravine to show them to me. I found the springs scientifically unusual because they deposit large amounts of marl (calcium carbonate) as fast as I have seen from hot springs in the American west and from the Saratoga Springs in eastern NY. But unlike those in the west, the springs I saw in the ravine in Syracuse have cold water and unlike those in Saratoga, the water has about ten times less dissolved minerals and is not naturally carbonated. I looked at what few chemical analyses of the water exist and see it is "full up" with the dissolved components of the minerals calcite and gypsum; calcium, carbonate, and sulfate. I think a portion of the water in the springs may be very old and sourced from deep fractures.

The marl drops out of the spring water so fast residents nearby have to chop it away from the bed of a small stream, formed by the spring flow, to prevent flooding on their properties. Indeed, the marl has even formed a large mound at one residence where the little stream leaves the ravine to flow into other drainages. I gather that the historical record includes this mound as an oddity.

Illustration Showing Where the Ravine is Located and the Marl Mound

204 Heroy Geology Laboratory/Syracuse, New York 13244-1070, USA
disiegel@syr.edu |ph. 315.443.2672 | fax 315.443.3363

Possibly when the spring water warms up in the stream it forms, the dissolved calcite reforms as the marl. I've seen this happen before in Wyoming and other places in the west but never in the east.

Nearby, there is a sinkhole that the U.S. Geological Survey and others have noted and looked at with respect to its origin and whether dissolving gypsum and calcite caused it.

In short, this ravine and the springs it contains are quite unusual and worthy of scientific study and preservation. I hope that they can be saved from development pressure and could see this ravine become much like the *Malloryville Wetland* near Ithaca. There, the Nature Conservancy purchased the wetland to preserve for study and educational purposes. I think this unusual ravine merits similar protection. If I were still an active professor at SU, I would already have written a proposal to gain funding for a grad student to study the hydrology and chemistry. I have alerted a new Assistant professor, Dr. Tao Wen, who was hired to replace me, about the opportunity.

Please feel free to contact me if you wish.

Donald Siegel
President of the Geological Society of America, Boulder Colorado
Emeritus Professor of Earth Sciences, Syracuse University
Partner, Independent Environmental Scientists, Inc., Manlius, NY.
disiegel@syr.edu
3125-380-1857

Attachment #6

DRAFT
Proposal for City Line Brook (Springbrook/Glen Avenue Springs)
Watershed Determination

Bill Kappel, Tao Wen, and Kathleen Stribley

Watershed study proposal:

1. Extent of the "groundwatershed" for these springs.
    a. To determine the extent of the watershed that drains to the Glen Avenue springs, would take time with some costs for supplies. The use of dyes, injected at known sinkholes, loosing streams and drainage structures (one at a time) could be used to delineate the groundwatershed for these springs.

    b. Survey of the surrounding surface-watershed including all storm sewers and road and other man-made drainage infrastructure -- *to determine where water comes from and goes to - losing stream reaches (water that 'disappears into a streambed); flow into swallets and closed-depressions (physical features that accept surface water and route to groundwater), and other surface water flow that may be routed out of the Glen Avenue springs surface-water and groundwatersheds.*

    c. There are DOT borings that were made along I-81 and I-481 before their construction which could be reviewed as a means to determine rudimentary watershed boundaries. Building-structure borings can also be reviewed. *Any new wells that might be drilled for the reconstruction of the I-81/481 interchange would also be of use - possibly work with DOT to have some boreholes turned into monitoring wells is a possibility to determine driving heads to the springs in the upper watershed. These wells could be another means to do dye tracing to the springs.*

    d. Monitoring flow and additional water quality study of the Glen Avenue springs and upgradient streams/sinkholes could also be initiated (see #2b-c below).

    e. Work with Syracuse University and SUNY-ESF to see if one or more graduate student(s) are looking for an interdisciplinary groundwater/urban ecology study.

Stream monitoring proposal:

1. Devise and implement a surface-water monitoring program to:
    a. Monitor flow coming from the springs - *the concrete channel might be the best place to do such by inserting a weir or flume. Either have someone take daily and*

storm-water-level readings, or install a pressure transducer to do such. Measurements of flow related to the height of water in the concrete channel would have to be compiled and the resulting stream rating can then be used to determine seasonal flow variation.

b. Water quality analysis of the Glen Avenue flow throughout the year - *to determine seasonal changes in water quality and the chemistry of tufa development.*

c. Water quality analysis of upgradient streams, sinkhole/swallets, and surface drainage systems- *to determine source-waters to the springs.*

d. Measurement of tufa growth - *Pick several locations where tufa accretion can be monitored and possibly related back to spring water chemical concentrations.*

Estimated costs

a. Graduate student salary (0.5FT) and fringe benefits: ~**$30K/year** (12 months). This salary is for fiscal year 2019, and expects to increase 3% every year. The fringe benefits ~**$5K/year**

b. Tuition might be waived at SU College of Arts and Sciences given the proper funding source. Quoted from the SU office of sponsored program:

"In order to better support graduate student education, training, and mentoring and to also allow for earlier engagement of PhD students in research, the College will waive all remitted tuition charges for students paid on research assistantships supported by research grants, starting July 1, 2018 (please make no changes to arrangements with RAs this semester). This is a change from the College's current support for such students, which has been set at 50%. The tuition arrangements for students on externally funded training grants or fellowships will remain unchanged. Technically, tuition charges on grants will be reduced to zero for account 562802, according to the fraction of support that is paid by Fund 13 (external grant) sources."

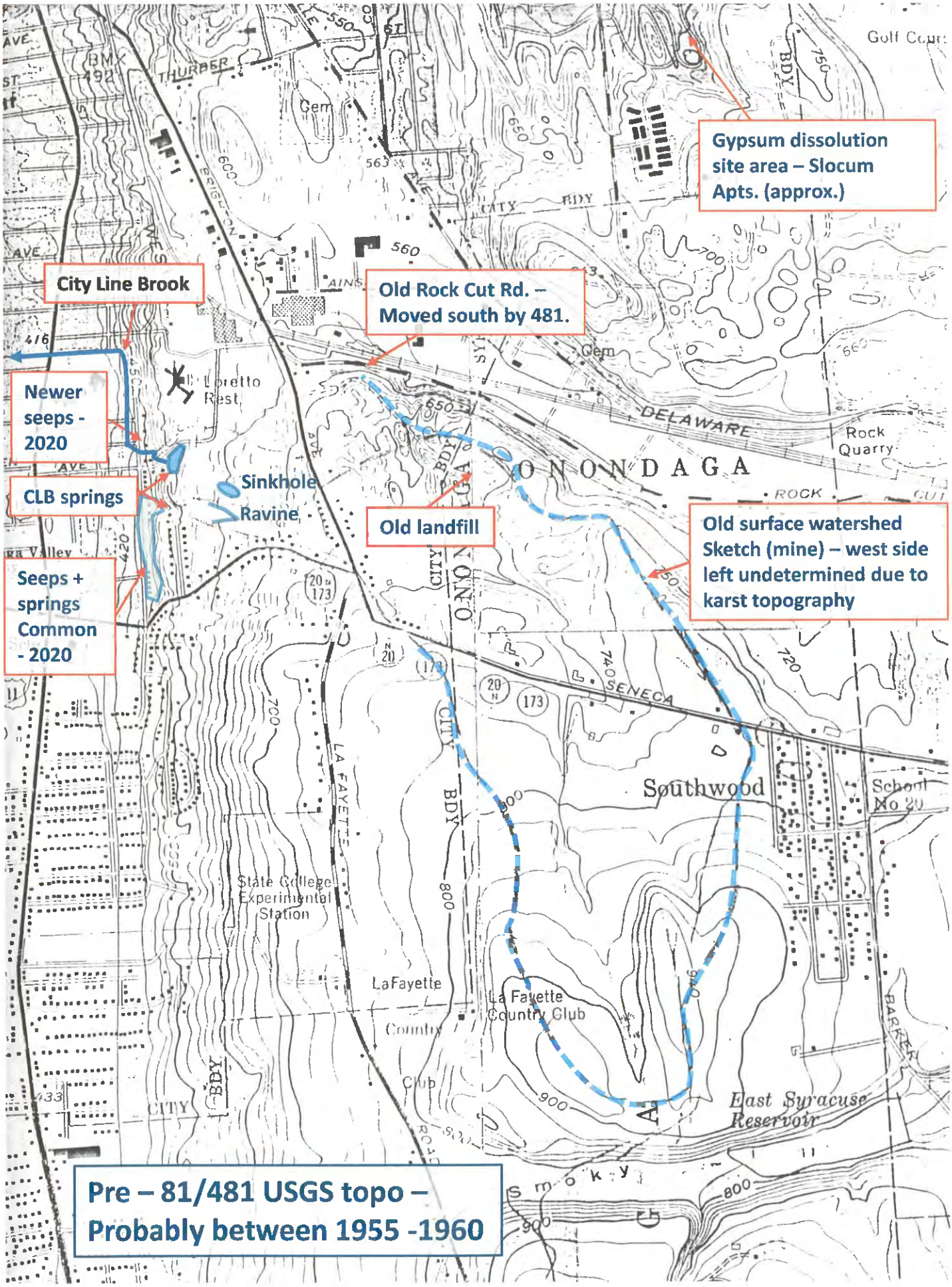
c. Water quality analyses: ~**$2K/year** for consumables and sample analyses (this is just a ballpark number assuming water samples will be collected at least monthly from multiple sampling sites at springs and along the Glen Ave. for mostly ICP-OES and IC analyses, and occasional ICP-MS analyses if needed)

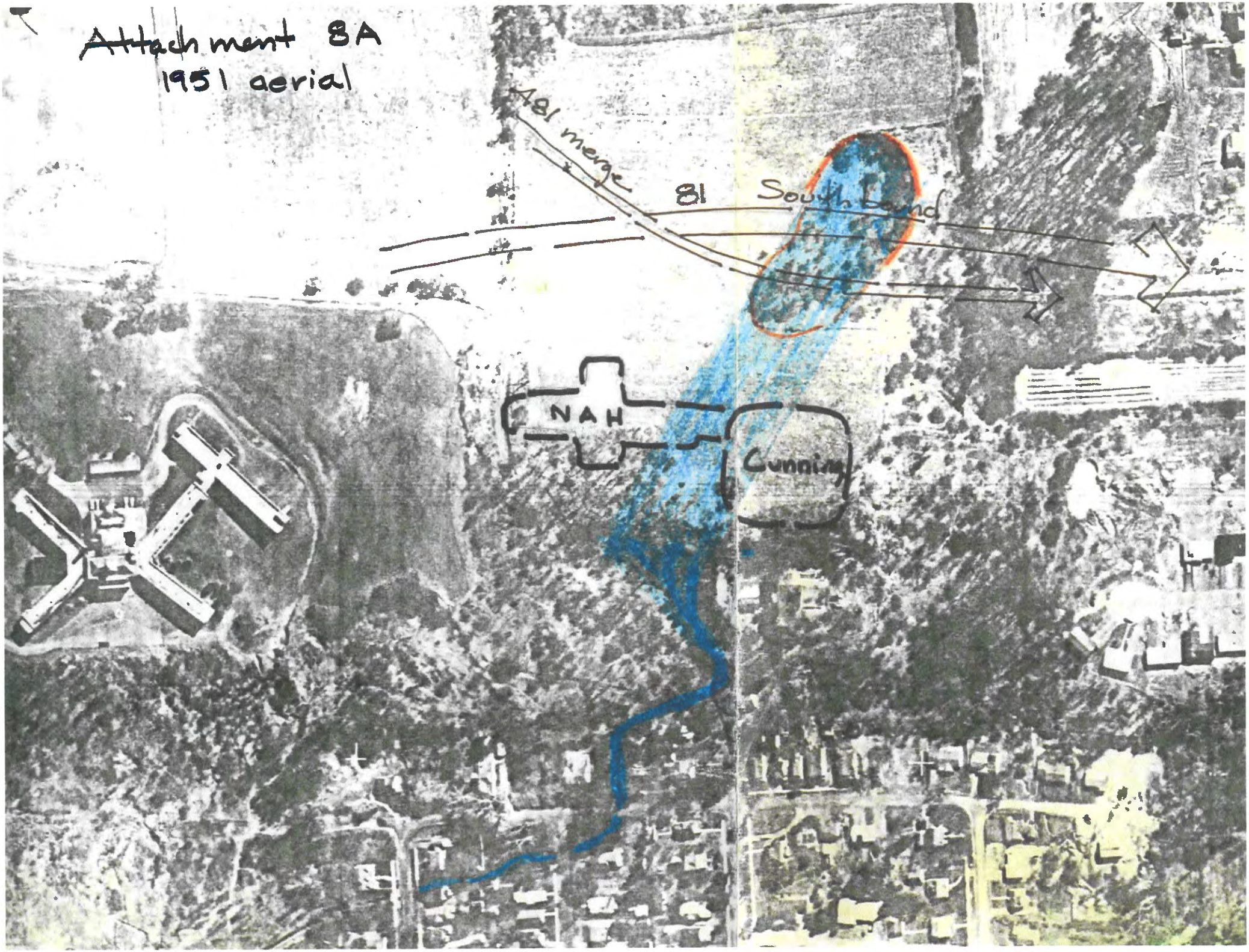
d. Flow and basic water quality (e.g., pH, temp) monitoring equipment: ~**$2K (estimated).** Please see example sites here: https://v2.wqdatalive.com/public/793

e. Tufa drilling and dating: the cost of drilling is UNKNOWN; **might range from completely free to $$$**; Carbonate dating about ~**$180-$290 per sample** depending on the contract type (i.e., internal vs. external) (Penn State has state of art facility for 14C dating; https://eesl.iee.psu.edu/content/ams)

f. Then the all-encumbering overhead costs, $?

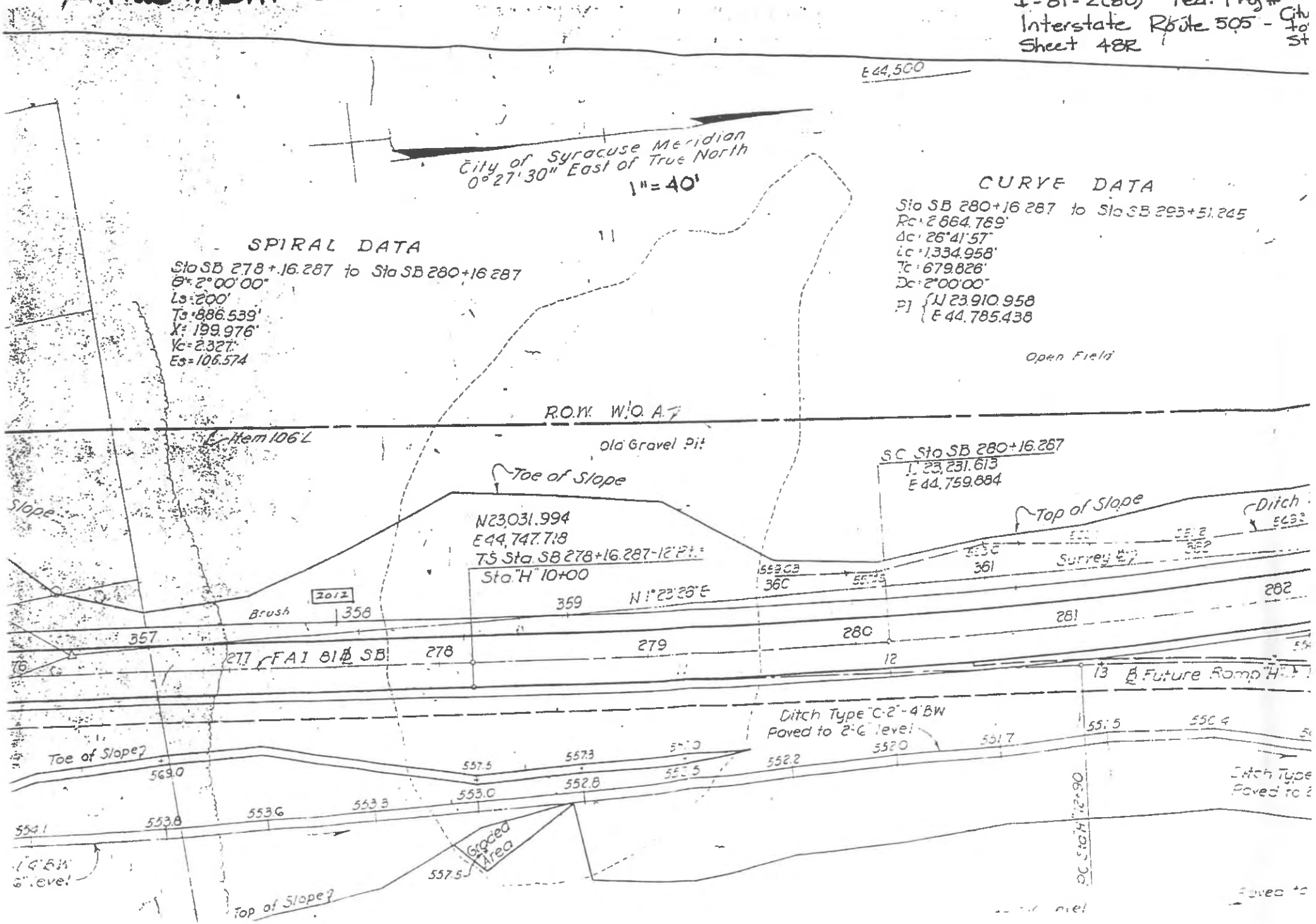
Attachment #7




Attachment 8A
1951 aerial
481 merge
81
South Bound
NAH
Cunning

Attachment 8B

I-81-2(80) Fed. Proj #
Interstate Route 505 - City to St
Sheet 48R



Attachment 8C

DESCRIPTION OF BRIGHTON HILL SINKHOLE BY MICHEAL PRICE

The following is a description, edited and approved by Micheal Price, of a geologic feature which resembled a limestone sinkhole. This feature previously existed to the east of the Loretto Geriatric Center site in what was then open fields. The feature which is described here has now been filled and lies under the southbound lanes of Interstate 81 and the southbound merge lane/overpass from the 481 bypass.

Mike lived at 328 Monticello Drive, North in the early 1950's to 1960's 1952-1961). When he was a teenager, he and his friends explored the valley wall and plateau to the east of their neighborhood, and played within and around the feature described below. Mike describes the feature as follows:

The feature was a large horseshoe-shaped hole or depression which appeared to be "gouged out" of the surrounding gradually upward-sloping hillside. The deepest edge (estimated to be 40-50' deep) was the southeast face, where there was a steep (45 degree angle) slope to the bottom of the depression. Mike and his friends would often slide down this face, and he recalls that it did not have exposed rock. The depression could be entered from its northwest edge. Mike recalls that there was no slope (up or down) at this entry, which was 40 to 50 feet wide, and overgrown with large and small trees, shrubs and grass, except for a narrow path in the center of the entry.

The sides of the depression were covered with shrubs - notably sumac - and trees. Exposed rock was not visible on the sides of the depression, but Mike does not recall examining the walls in detail because of the dense vegetative cover.

The base of the depression had continuous soil cover and several full-size trees and shrubs growing within it. The base of the depression was always dry, with no standing water. The surface of the depression's floor was bumpy or rough, but overall the floor was level and did not have any hillocks or large soil mounds within it. There were a few small rocks and stones visible on the floor of the depression, but no exposed bedrock.

Mike describes the entire feature as having an oblong or "horseshoe" shape, oriented generally northwest (shallow edge) to southeast (deep edge). From the top of the southeast face (steepest edge) Mike describes being able to sit or stand and look toward the skyline of Syracuse. He recalls that people standing at the base of the depression looked small when viewed from above. He estimates that the feature was approximately 40-50' deep at its deepest point.

Mike recounts a neighborhood "legend" that there were originally caves in the depression that were filled in after two boys were lost in them, however he and his friends never located these features.

Mike also recalls that there were several springs in the top part of the steep ravine which is to the west of the feature. These "upper" springs would usually dry up in later summer, but the lower spring ran continuously. The upper springs no longer exist in this ravine.

Dated: April 18, 1990

_____
Micheal Price

Sworn to me this ___ day
of April, 1990,

_____

Attachment 8D

874 Livingston Avenue
Syracuse, NY, 13210-2936
March 18, 1995

Kathleen Stribley
316 Monticello Drive, N.
Syracuse, NY, 13205

Dear Kathy:

This letter is written for your records to restate opinions that I expressed in conversation during our visit in late winter, 1990, together with Mark Craig (D.O.T.) to an area of mild highway subsidence beneath Interstate Highway 81 SE of Loretto Rest.

The locus of highway subsidence is underlain by carbonate rocks (limestone) of the Onondaga Bench. Before highway construction, it probably had less than a meter of glacial drift as natural cover. Rock of this composition thus exposed without the buffering effect of carbonate-rich cover is vulnerable to dissolution that enlarges fractures and leads to subsidence.

At that time we also examined air photographs taken before highway construction. The photographs show a closed depression 10-15 m deep with all of the appearance of a typical limestone sink produced over millennia of natural dissolution of underlying soluble rock. Renewed subsidence since highway construction suggests continuing solution.

It is beyond the scope of these observations to determine whether development of this particular sink bears any direct relationship to solution processes at Loretto Rest. However, the vulnerability of rocks of the Onondaga Bench to long-term dissolution constitutes a reason for attention when structural evidence of solution or subsidence is noted.

Sincerely,

Ernest H. Muller

Ernest H. Muller,
Professor Emeritus

Attachment 8E

United States Department of the Interior

U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
Water Resources Division
903 Hanshaw Road
Ithaca, New York 14850-1573
607-266-0217

March 21, 1995

Ms. Kathy Stribley
316 North Monticello Drive
Syracuse, New York 13205

Dear Ms. Stribley,

Thank you very much for the information and pictures on the sinkhole-like feature and supporting information from the Loretto Building and Interstate 81 drainage problems. This letter is in response to our recent phone conversations and the possibility for hydrogeologic studies of the area. As I stated on the phone, your concerns for the structural integrity of the building is outside our area of expertise, but should be followed-up by a firm with that type of expertise.

A review of topographic maps of the area indicate that there were depressions at land surface south and east of the site of concern (Loretto structure) and that the bedrock of this area is probably the lower part of the Onondaga Limestone and(or) the upper Manlius formation (dolomitic shales) beneath the Onondaga Limestone. Your description of calcitic-type deposits downstream of the springs and the cedar grove at the springs are indicative of dissolution of limestone and discharge of calcium-rich waters, but it needs to be determined if the dissolution and downstream precipitation of calcite is due to very rapid dissolution of the limestone bedrock and(or) water moving through calcium-rich glacial sediments and rock 'flour' along the side of the valley wall. The loss of water in the Interstate 81 roadside ditches does point toward dissolution-widened fractures in at least the upper bedrock in this area.

In as far as a hydrogeologic study of the area a proposed outline for study would include the following --

1. Collection of boring logs for any construction in the area to determine the glacial and bedrock stratigraphy (layering of soils and bedrock types).
2. Collection of water-level data from existing wells (if any) or drilling of wells to determine number 1 (above) as well as determining the water-level conditions within the unconsolidated deposits and bedrock. Since karst-like features appear to be present (sinkholes, solution channels, and springs) siting wells will be a difficult task and may require the use of surface geophysics to 'find' such structures before drilling.
3. Determination of water quality (surface and ground-water) up-gradient of the site (south, east, and north) and water quality at the discharging springs (along the west valley wall and possibly elsewhere.) This would not be a one-time sampling as dissolution of carbonates is dependent on changes in chemistry and changes in water temperature among other chemical reactions.
4. Use non-toxic dyes to determine 'relative' flow paths and time of travel through the area, and use water-quality analyses to determine if the water quality has the potential to dissolve carbonate rock, if bedrock dissolution is the only source of the calcite deposits. This in turn is dependent on

the types and quantity of unconsolidated materials found in the area.

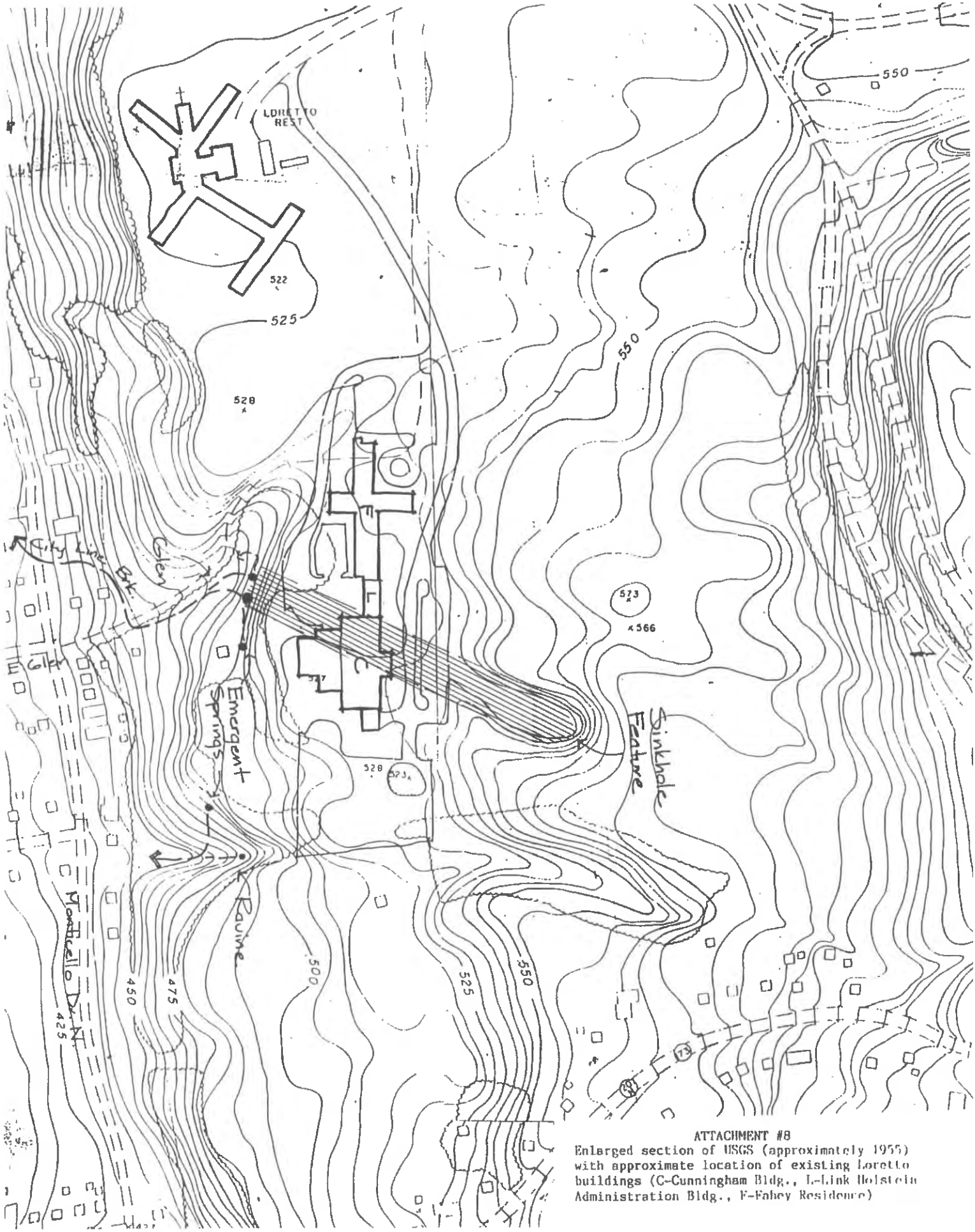
As you can see, this will not be a simple task, and it will be costly to accomplish. A rough estimate of time to accomplish this study would be 2 to 3 years and the cost would be approximately $75,000 to $100,000 per year with the highest costs incurred in the first two years for drilling, water-quality testing, and other basic data collection and analysis needs. The third year would be less costly for final data analysis and report development. This data might be very useful to any foundation studies that might be conducted and if possible, these activities should be co-ordinated to allow for dual usage of the drillholes (structural analysis of the bedrock as well as the collection of water-level and quality data).

I would be happy to discuss this potential project with you. I have enclosed a copy of a report completed by our office in which we studied the Onondaga Limestone in the western part of New York. While this was a study of loss of groundwater in the Onondaga Limestone due to diversion of a ground and surface water, I thought it might be of interest to you. Please return the report as soon as possible. We have very few copies but you can copy whatever sections are of interest to you. Please let me know if you have any questions or if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

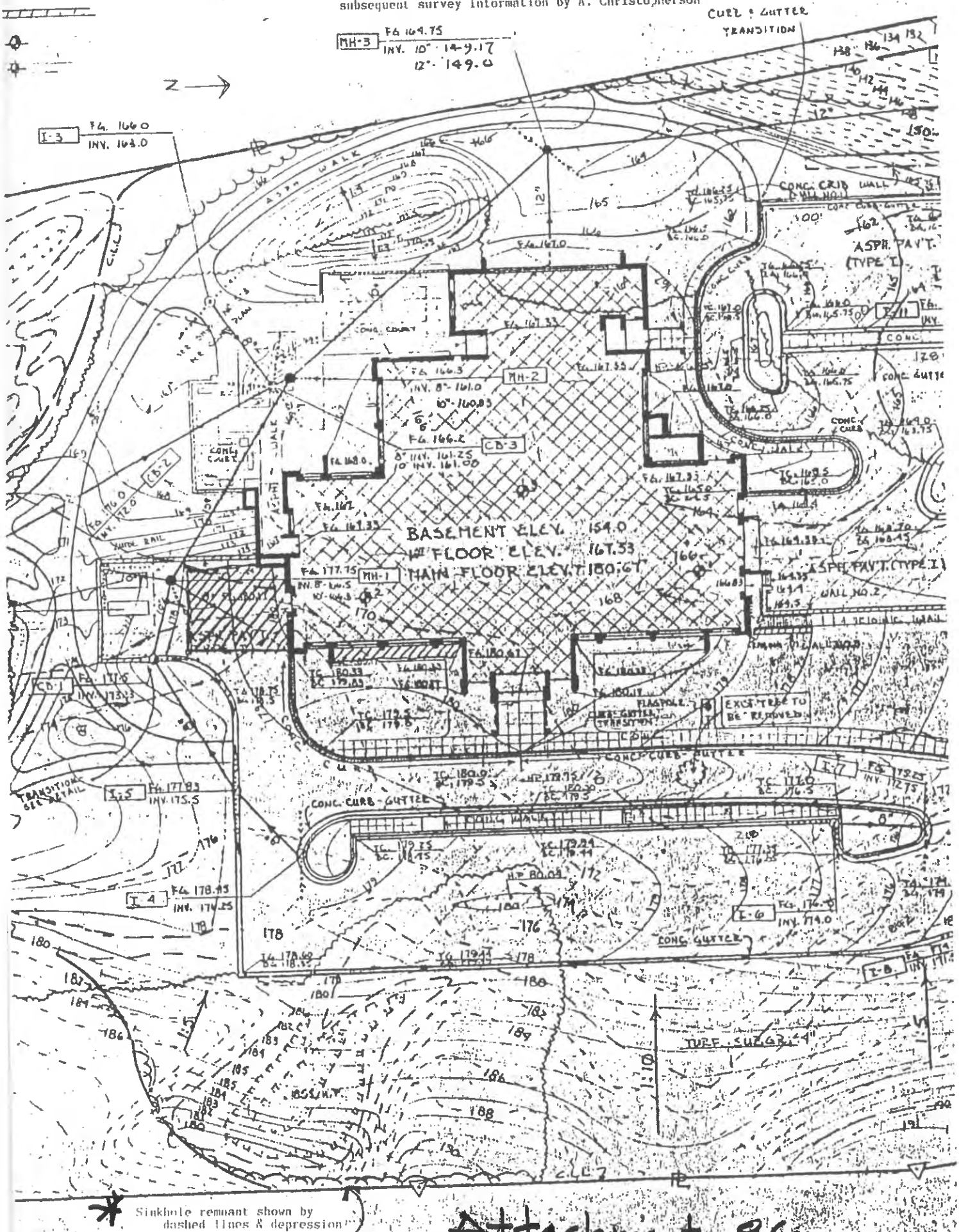
Bill Kappel
Hydrologist

Attachment 8F

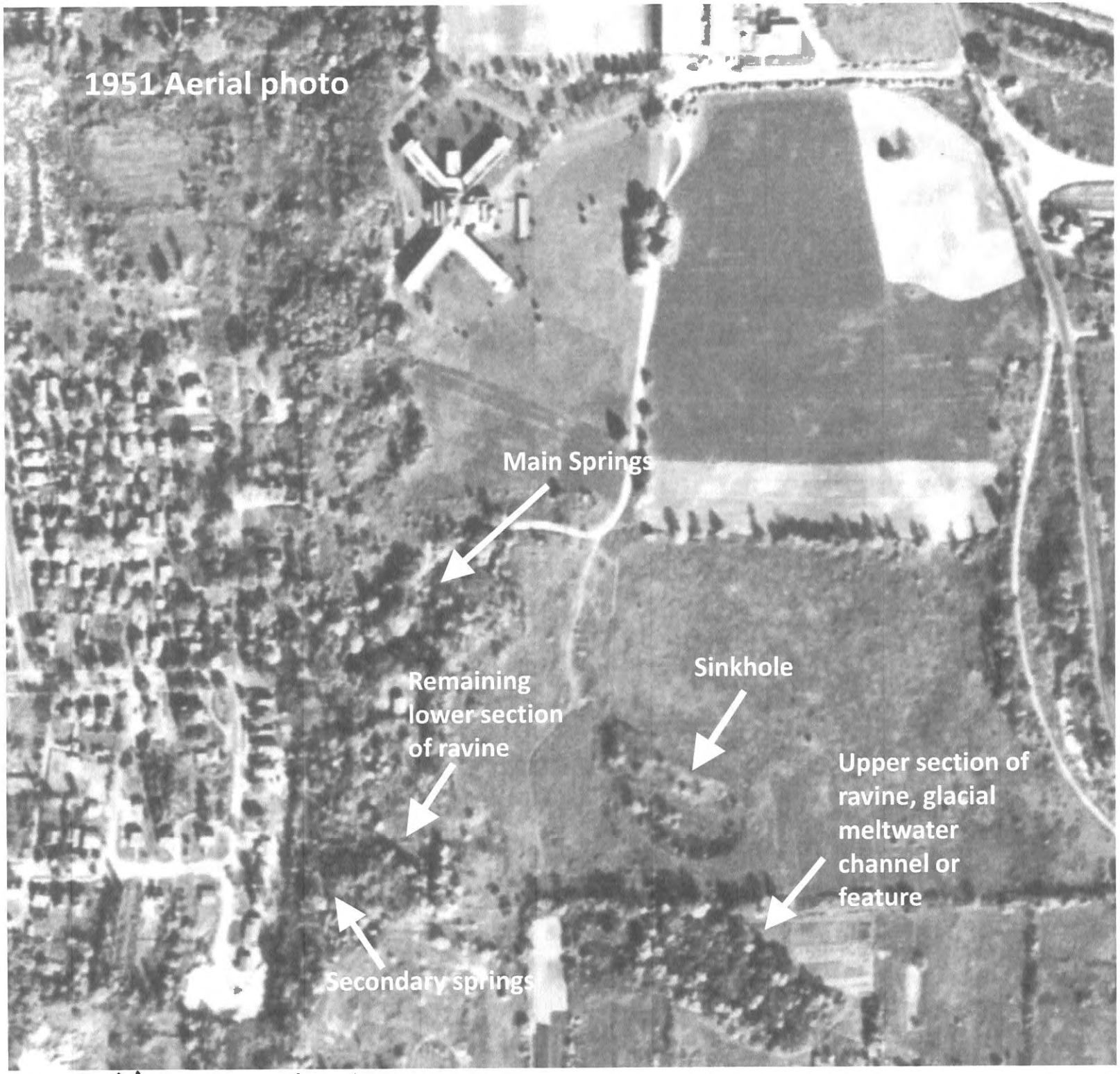


ATTACHMENT #8
Enlarged section of USGS (approximately 1955) with approximate location of existing Loretto buildings (C-Cunningham Bldg., L-Link Holstein Administration Bldg., F-Fahey Residence)

ATTACHMENT #4 - Original grading & layout map for the Cunningham Bldg., 1973 including original survey by B. Quackenbush 10/28/68, with subsequent survey information by A. Christopherson



Attachment 8G



Attachment #9

Photo #16 - Exposed fractured limestone under east wing of Fahey Residence foundation, showing pronounced east-west fracture.

Attachment #10

Photo # 17 - Exposed fractured limestone under foundation for north wing of Fahey Residence, looking south toward Cunningham Bldg. north facade.

Photo #18 - View of highway ROW fencing east of Loretto visitor parking lot, showing lean near sinkhole location.

Photo # 19 - Closeup view of lean of fence along highway, east of Loretto visitor parking lot.

Kathleen Stribley
Monticello Dr. N.
Syracuse, NY 13205

September 7, 2021

Mark Frechette and NYSDOT Staff/Consultants
Project Director, I-81 Viaduct Project
NYS Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington St.
Syracuse, NY 13202

Re: Duplicate street name, existing and prospective traffic problems with Grid Plan - E. Glen southern interchange access road from E. Brighton Ave.

Dear Mark Frechette and NYSDOT Staff/Consultants:

Planners and designers may not be aware that East Glen Avenue exists in the Valley as the original road of which "E. Glen Ave." off Brighton Ave. is a remnant (see attached annotated Google Map). East Glen Avenue was named for the spring-laden "Glen" that exists just to the west of the Loretto Cunningham Building. The Glen springs have high mineral content and were visited by tourists similar to Saratoga Springs, thus there are large guest houses located at the E. Glen Ave. and S. Salina St. intersection (source – historic newspaper articles). East Glen Ave. was a through street from the Valley (see attached maps) up to East Brighton Ave. until it was cut off by Loretto in mid-20th century. East and West Glen Ave. are located on either side of S. Salina St. between E. Florence and Clarence Avenues.

The existence of the E. Brighton Ave. "stub" of E. Glen Ave. has been a persistent source of confusion for drivers of all sorts – delivery vehicles, buses, cars and motorcycles attempt to get to E. Brighton Ave. from S. Salina St. several times a year. This last winter, a Centro bus got stuck in the steep driveway of the resident furthest east on E. Glen Ave. and had to be towed back down. Motorists and motorcyclists have attempted to drive over a sluice carrying City Line Brook to go up the hill toward Loretto on the nonexistent road. Delivery vehicles frequently get lost trying to get to Loretto or beyond. Google Maps search engine currently locates E. Glen Ave. in the Valley and not at E. Brighton Ave. (see attachment)

With the construction of major new infrastructure and a new bridge over I-81, this problem needs to be corrected and not exacerbated. The new interchange will draw much more traffic to the E. Glen Ave. address and be a key "grid" access point. The new access road to the Bus 81 interchange needs to be renamed. The only two entities associated with this road are Loretto and Jaquith Industries – Loretto uses an E. Brighton address and Jaquith will have a separate road which it can rename in a more

appropriate manner (and which would be renamed regardless). Therefore there is no impediment to the renaming of the "stub" of E. Glen Ave. which will be the main access for the new interchange.

This is an important issue for residents of the North Valley who live downhill from the proposed new 81/481 interchange and who cope daily with the issues from this remnant East Glen Ave. road name designation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kathleen A. Stribley, Valley resident and ESF Landscape Architecture Emeritus Professor

Cc: Mayor Ben Walsh

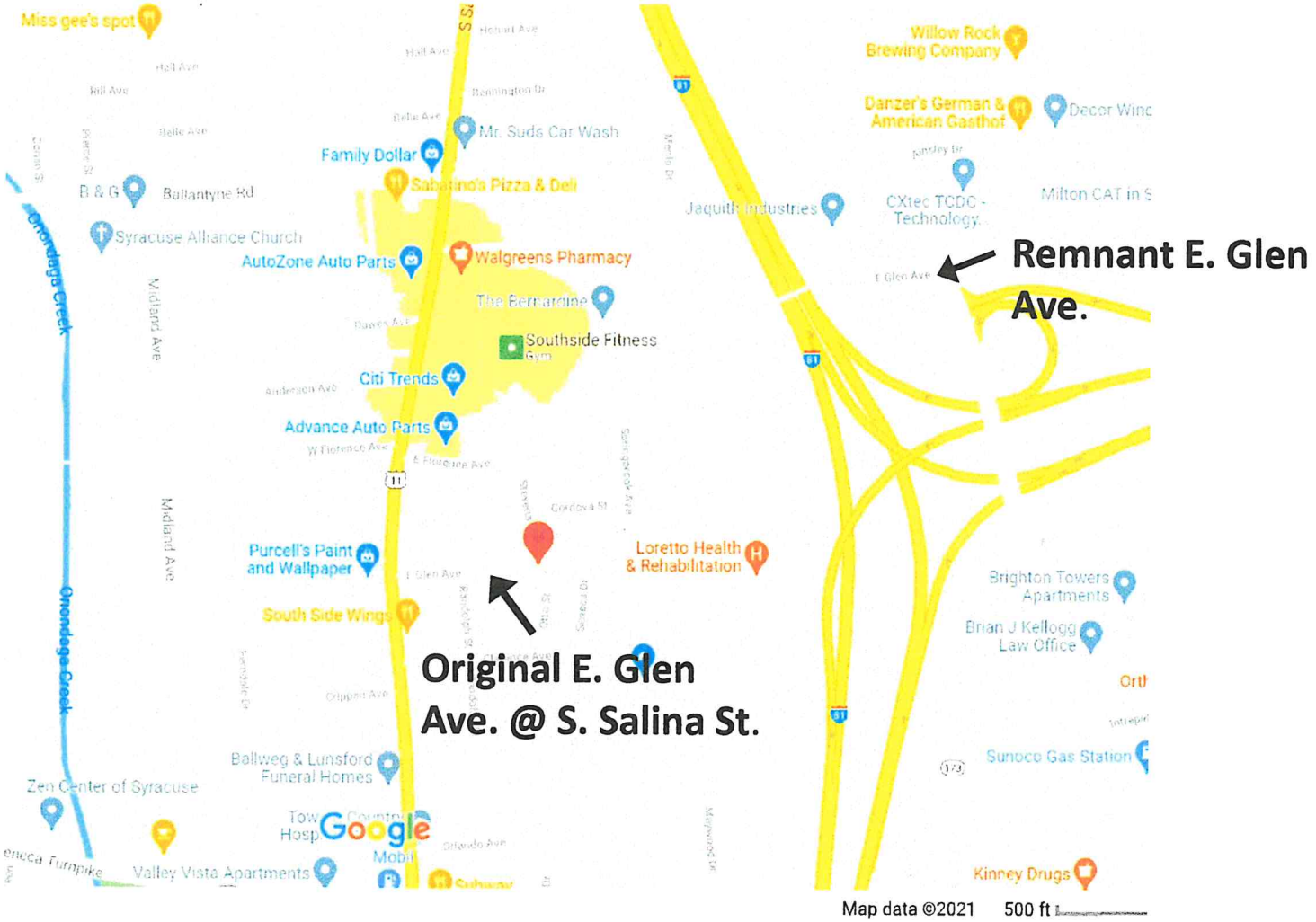
Common Councilman Chol Majok

County Legislator Bill Kinne

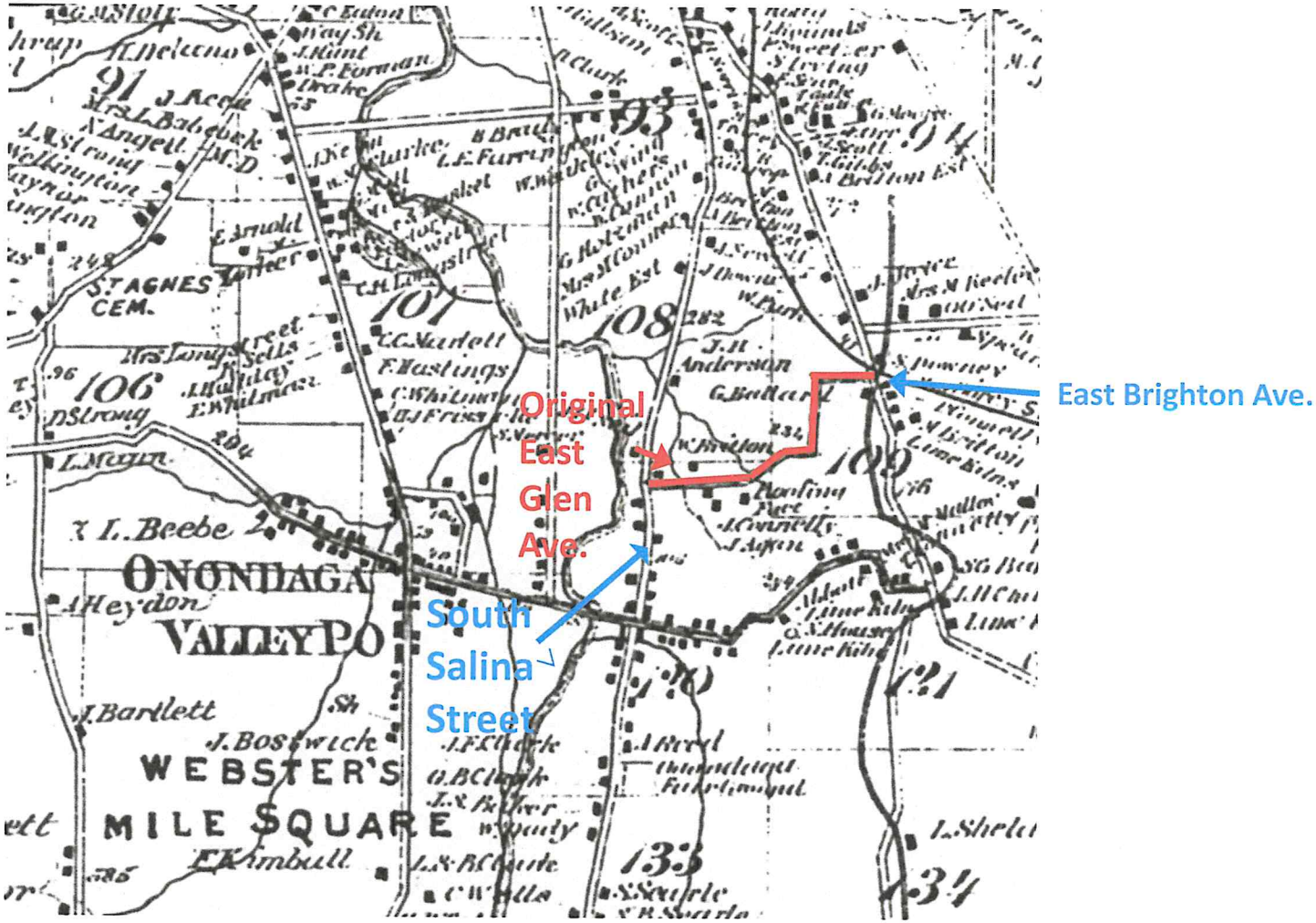
Attachments: Current Google Map locations of E. Glen Ave. and remnant stub @ E. Brighton Ave.

Annotated 1874 Sweet's Atlas showing original E. Glen Ave.

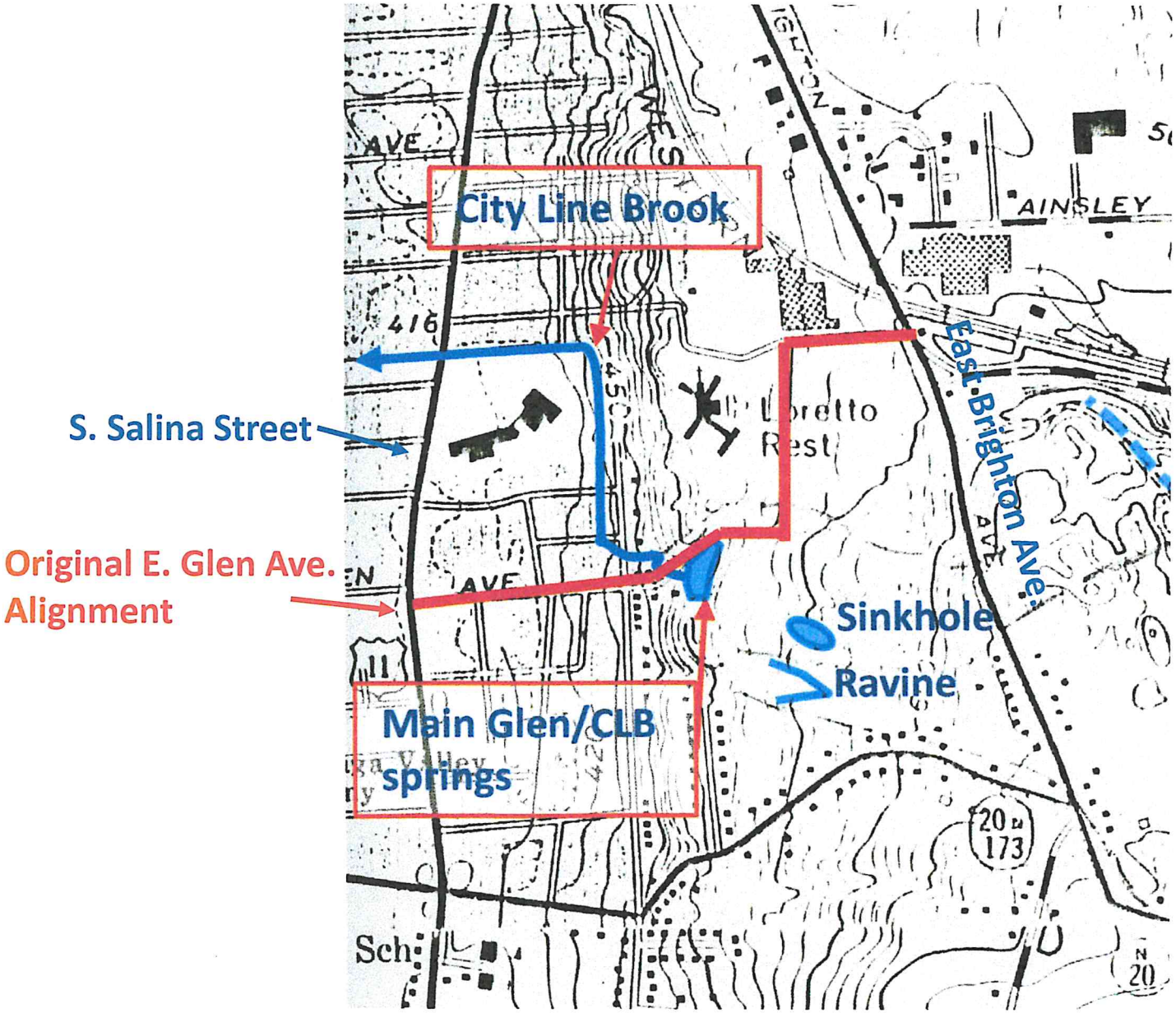
Annotated pre-I-81 USGS map (1955-65) showing original alignment of E. Glen Ave.



Current Google Map search locates E. Glen Ave. in the Valley



1874 Sweets Atlas – Valley Section – shows original E. Glen Ave. connecting S. Salina St. to East Brighton Ave.



Pre-I-81 USGS map shows original E. Glen Ave. alignment

Kathleen A. Stribley
Monticello Dr. N.
Syracuse, NY 13205

September 9, 2021

Mark Frechette
Project Director, I-81 Viaduct Project
NYS Department of Transportation
333 E. Washington St.
Syracuse, NY 13202

Re: Addendum to my submission on City Line Brook (8/17/2021) showing flooding from City Line Brook in the North Valley neighborhoods on 8/19/21 from storm "Fred"

Dear Mark Frechette,

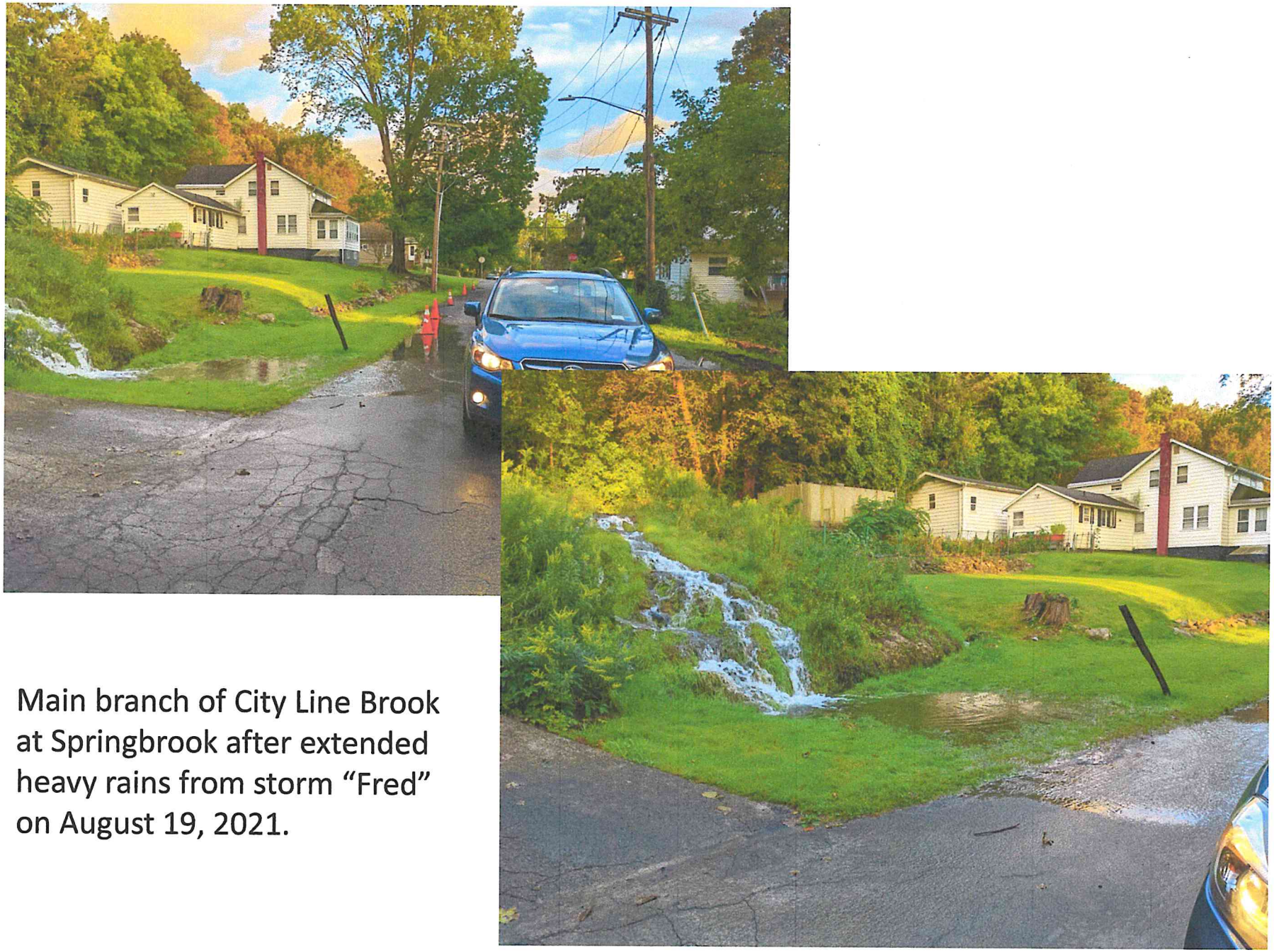
I am submitting photos showing the flooding in the North Valley neighborhood bounded by Loretto Geriatric Center and I-81 on the east and S. Salina St. on the west between Valley Plaza and E. Seneca Turnpike caused by the storm "Fred" between 8/18-8/21. This flooding is characteristic of the events seen in this neighborhood involving flashy levels of flow/runoff after storm events from City Line Brook and its tributaries. After this storm, the Syracuse DPW was a constant presence up and down neighborhood streets attempting to unplug storm drains and segments of City Line Brook well into the next week. I personally spent a great deal of time contacting DPW and digging out a plugged grate related to a southern tributary of City Line Brook in order to stop flooding impacting three neighbors.

As I mentioned in my 8/17/21 letter, the watersheds of these streams (DEIS erroneously calls them "undergrounded") are unknown but overlap with the I-81/481 interchange and southern incoming/outgoing I-81 lanes. I am submitting these photos as further evidence that NYSDOT needs to investigate these watershed linkages and bedrock conditions below the proposed reconstructed interchange (Grid Plan) and entry/exit lanes bordering the North Valley. Currently highway drainage through this karst bedrock zone drains directly into the residential area to the west through fractures.

Sincerely,

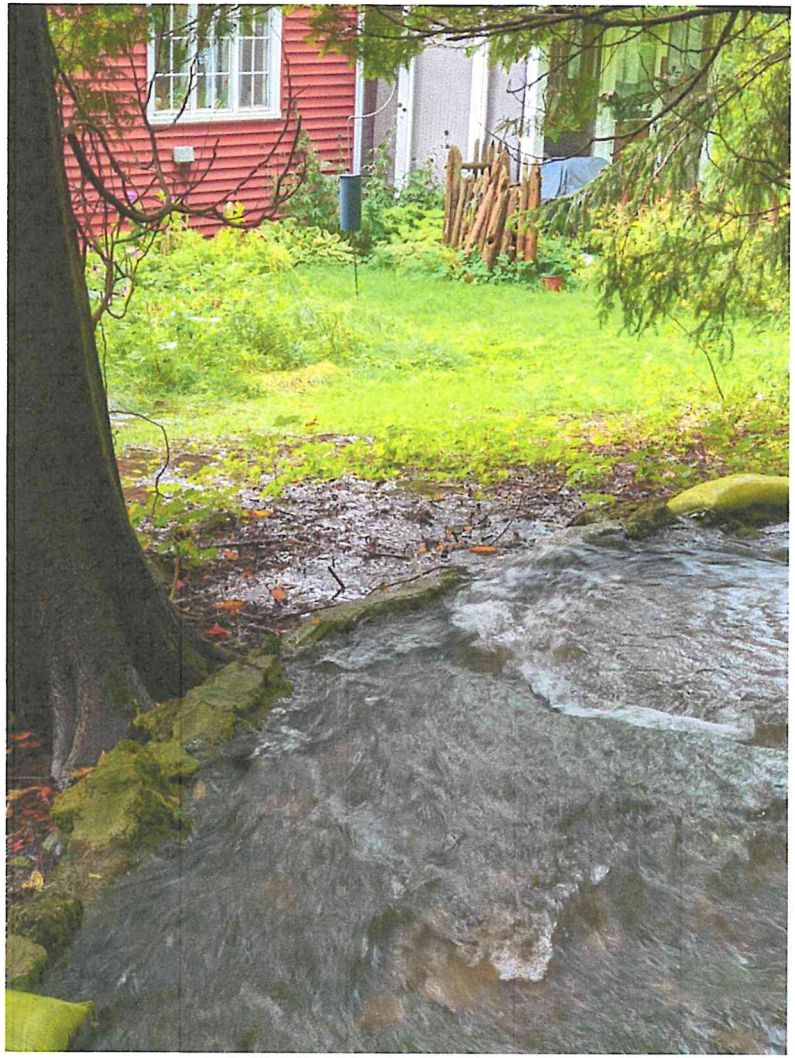
Kathleen A. Stribley, North Valley resident and ESF landscape architect professor emeritus

Attachment: Photos of City Line Brook flooding from "Fred" taken on 8/19/21

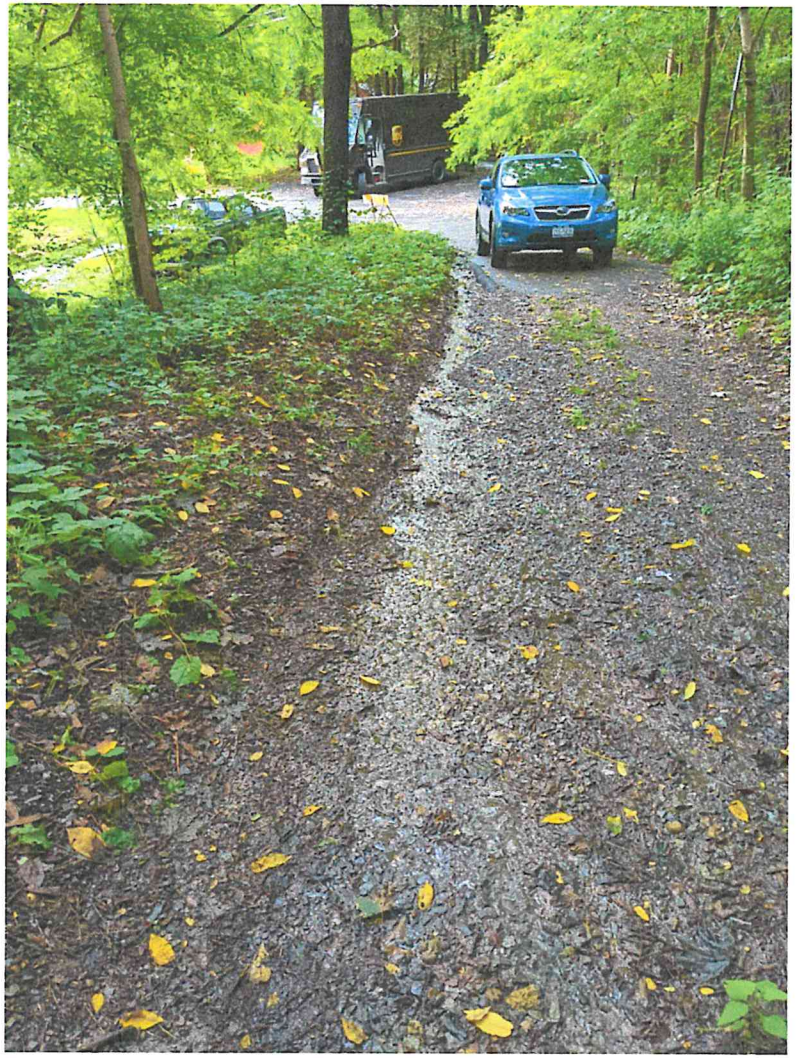


Main branch of City Line Brook at Springbrook after extended heavy rains from storm “Fred” on August 19, 2021.

Flooding on E. Florence St. from City Line Brook overflow west of Springbrook Ave.



Overflow of main City Line Brook branch at 411 E. Glen Ave. into front yard.



Seep/spring overflow unto driveway of 416 E. Glen Ave. and down E. Glen Ave. to Monticello/Springbrook intersection.

Flooding from a southern tributary of City Line Brook on Monticello Dr. N. south of Clarence Ave.

OPINION

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR I-81 PROJECT

I-81 views: roundabout concerns, 'it's not about you'

More than 100 people showed up at Dr. King Elementary School on Sept. 9 to question parts of the plan that would tear down a portion of Interstate 81 in Syracuse. *Teri Weaver, tweaver@syracuse.com*

Mark,

Thank you to you and your staff for your preparedness and availability to answer questions.

(Even for pests like me with clipboards)

Ed Stronski

RECEIVED
OCT 12 2021
BY:

I81 Viaduct Project Comments October 8, 2021 Edward Stronski

The I81 July 2021 Draft Design Report and DEIS fleshes out 2 phases. The first being preparatory to modify the capabilities of the area highway system prior to the disruption of traffic from the removal of the viaduct. The Grid option is seen to be the likely final choice. Even though there has been years of studies and public meetings (I've been to a dozen of them) the July 2021 DEIS has content that is much more specific and contains modifications derived from the previous April 2019 DEIS. A large amount of the material presented over the years has been socio-economic speculations, environmental projections and many roadway modification options. The maps now are nothing like the original projections and the eminent domain acquisitions have changed many times. From what's been presented I have concluded that it's much closer to a starting point than closing in on a final product. Here's some of the pieces that can start ASAP and lead me to an unpopular conclusion that subsequently requires a collection of new data before actually finalizing a decision.

The I81/I481 North and South interchanges and the Dewitt Lyndon corners modifications in Grid Phase 1 that evolved after the 2019 DEIS are excellent, needed and should be standalone regardless of Grid or Viaduct.

The Crouse and Irving interchange with new 690 ramps is another Draft Design Report proposal that evolved after the 2019 DEIS is also a worthy standalone that starts on Day 1 in the Grid Phase 1.

Review of **Figure 4-2 (Viaduct)** and **Figure 4-8 (Grid)** show specific project timelines in each phase for both options. Many of these overlap in **Phase 1**. Specifically, Replacing Butternut and Court St. Bridges and mainline widening. Reconstructing N. Clinton St. and Northern segment ramp consolidation. The West St. interchange widening/bypass is in year 1 of viaduct and year 2 of grid.

Other components are in both alternatives but different phases. Projects such as Replacing Spencer and Bear St. bridges and mainline widening.

The July 2021 Draft Design Report Chapter 5.0 details the NYSDOT Regional Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) inventory - *the application of advanced, sensor, computer electronics and communications technologies and management strategies - in an integrated manner - to improve the safety and efficiency of the surface transportation system.*

In that chapter Speeds and Delays discussion and Table 5-1 it is noted, "Field travel times and vehicular speeds were collected in **December 2013** along 11 routes in the Project Area."

In that chapter Traffic Volume discussion on p.5-18 states **"The 2013 base year has been retained since the study area has not experienced significant traffic changes in recent years.**

Edward Stronski 7300 Cedarpost Rd. L-31 Liverpool, NY 13088 (315)457-6885 ESTRONSKI@aol.com

Traffic Volumes

Existing Traffic Volumes

Traffic volume data was developed for numerous highway segments and more than 290 intersections in the Project Area. Existing traffic volumes were developed from traffic data collected during the November 2013 data collection program and included 24-hour automatic traffic recorder (ATR) and turning movement counts (TMC), Available data previously assembled by SMTC and NYSDOT for the *I-81 Corridor Study* also were used for the Project's traffic analyses. All counts collected prior to 2013 were factored using an annual growth rate of 0.3 percent (estimated from the SMTC Regional Travel Demand Model) to represent a common base year of 2013. Counts were adjusted from the month the count was taken to a "seasonal peak period" representing average volume levels for the fall season, which historically is the busiest time of the year during the peak hours within the project area.

A 2013 base year was used as it coincides with the time period when the traffic data was collected, and initial development of the traffic models and analyses began. The 2013 base year has been retained since the study area has not experienced significant travel pattern changes in recent years. For example, annual data such as "Syracuse Urban Area - VMT since 1985" developed by NYSDOT shows a very stable vehicle-miles traveled (VMT) trend since 2013 for the functional classes of freeways, arterials, and collectors in Syracuse urban area.

In the early years of the I81 meetings it was hard to get any quantifiable substance about the basis for the model results. When work was done on NY 370 in Baldwinsville and I690 in Syracuse I asked if any of the construction detours and traffic constrictions were modeled and then real data used as a benchmark for selecting the I81 model inputs. It wasn't. I think those construction projects would probably have been done by the time the budget request was made and considered!

Before the I81 Viaduct is removed there should be revised empirical traffic flow, volume and speed data for meaningful public observation and comment. In addition to the Phase 1 and other modifications common to both alternatives there are other notable factors that intertwined with the mods can easily amount to more than minor changes.

The Amazon warehouse in Clay and delivery center in Dewitt come to mind and the presumed increased use of the St. Joseph's Amphitheatre. DOT response has often been to the effect that these changes don't really amount to much. That is incongruent with details such as assumed distance between cars stopped at traffic signals and traffic flow consequences of the indigenous Syracuse panhandlers that must be considered.

The decline in shoppers and repurposing prospects for Shoppingtown and Great Northern are different today. The numbers on Destiny may need updates and today as I write this the proposal of building a new aquarium at the Inner Harbor was announced by the County Executive.

The SMTC indicates that the funding and politics for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) will make it happen. (Finding drivers might be the only limitation?)

The residual work at home changes initiated by employer response to COVID has and will change traffic flow and accident occurrences - a factor often cited as a mandate for highway changes. As a matter of fact, accident rate was a primary factor in PIN 3287.17 Onondaga Lake Parkway NY 370 Safety Improvements that resulted in approval of the plan to reduce 370 to one

Edward Stronski 7300 Cedarpost Rd. L-31 Liverpool, NY 13088 (315)457-6885 ESTRONSKI@aol.com

lane each way with a reduced speed. The July 2021 start of that project was deferred due to COVID and I have to wonder if the reduced traffic and accident rate from work at home and other limitations may make that mod much less defensible now.

Starting with which configuration of the NY 370 Onondaga Lake Parkway is assumed in the future all these loose pieces can be focused back to the I81 Viaduct decision.

I understand that the degradation of the I81 viaduct due to exceeding its lifetime is a realistic important consideration. I also speculate that Phase 1 not starting on time and not proceeding as scheduled is also realistic. The degrees of freedom associated with just the empirical and new factors I've mentioned should make measure twice, cut once the rule.

I also understand that rebuilding the viaduct requires a battery of compliance requirements for a Federal Highway. My recollection is that the new design would require the acquisition of 24 properties. I agree that isn't a defensible option. My understanding is that this is based on dimension requirements, the number of lanes and their width, the space for shoulders, the curve radii based on speed and the accident rate based on speed and other factors for ramps etc.
If the viaduct was reduced to function simply as a connector with one lane in each direction, having adequate shoulder and a speed limit of 35mph then FHA compliance would unlikely require much expansion and need many property acquisitions.

If reducing NY 370 Onondaga Lake Parkway to 2 lanes and a reduced speed is an acceptable degradation of a commuter path then an I81 Business connector seems viable. If the Community Grid lengthens an individual's daily commute time 6 minutes that is one half hour per week. That is 24 hours in 48 weeks. For electric cars the extra distance to bypass the city could be a range/recharge frequency logistic that is a notably greater limitation than gas refueling availability.

If the Colvin exit is built and the Irving and Crouse exit off 690 is built these paths would reduce congestion on a reduced connector viaduct. This would also scrap the notably opposed MLK roundabout and the removal of hundreds of truckloads of earth to facilitate it. A brief reduction to 35mph on a viaduct connector route without stop and go on congested city streets would be an acceptable I81 Business Route with redesignated I481 to I81 an also available alternative.

The modifications that are common to both alternatives and have obvious stand-alone merit should be implemented. The combination of those modifications being completed and other CNY infrastructure changes that have occurred or are in imminent development will provide accurate new traffic data. This will allow for VISSIM analysis that is much less speculative in assessing the viaduct vs. grid options.

Edward Stronski 7300 Cedarpost Rd. L-31 Liverpool, NY 13088 (315)457-6885 ESTRONSKI@aol.com

Super 8 - Syracuse

RECEIVED
JUL 27 2021
BY:

July 22, 2021

Mark Frechette, P.E.
Project Director
New York State Department of Transportation, Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Rick Marquis
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Federal Building
11A Clinton Avenue, Suite 719
Albany, NY 12207

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Statement - Need for Additional Time for Review and Comment

Dear Mark and Rick:

Like many stakeholders in Syracuse and Central New York, we are prepared to review and provide comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement ("DEIS") that was released on Friday July 16, 2021.

The purpose of this letter is to formally request that the public comment period be extended through the end of the year to allow sufficient time for a complete review of the 28,000+ page document. COVID has decimated our industry and summer leisure travel has been difficult to manage due to the labor shortage. Most importantly the amount of data just made available, it is not feasible to have complete responses available by September 14th.

The future of Interstate 81 is an important decision that will directly impact our businesses/industry and our team members. It is critical that everyone be provided sufficient time to have their comments submitted and considered.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Melissa Binet

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RECEIVED
AUG 17 2021
BY:

From the Desk of James D. Swan, Jr.

5910 Tuller Rd.

Cicero, NY 13039

Contact: phone 315-458-1539 Cell 315-569-5910 e-mail: jdabjr@twcny.rr.com

August 16, 2021

Subject: Noise Barrier Survey; I-81 Viaduct Project PIN 3501.60

I am the owner of property:

Property ID #: 2063

Benefited Property 5910 Tuller Rd.

Noise Barrier ID # Barrier 3B

Located near mile marker 93 on the west side of I-81 at the I-481 north entry ramp from south bound I-81.

Impacted by the upcoming and planned renovations to I-481/I-81restructuring project.

I received the attached questionnaire in the mail and have many questions.

The property frontage to I- 81 is approximately 225 feet.

The State or Federal owned fence in that footage has been hit by vehicles; damaged and never repaired. Posts are bent and uprooted, top rail disengaged from the posts; and chain link fencing damaged.

Junk trees allowed to grow at the fence line have damaged the fence.

Grape vines with base trunks large that 4 inches in diameter are tangled in the trees and fencing.

The state no longer mows or does any appearance maintenance to the area behind my home.

What happens to this mess when the barrier is or is not constructed?

What does the Barrier mean?

Will it replace the ugly fence behind my home?

Will a new bridge to connect south bound I-81 traffic to I-481 be constructed?

What is the location of that bridge with reference to my property?

Will we be left with the view of the existing disaster behind our home?

When I-81 was reconstructed behind our home several years ago we were left and continue to cope with flooding caused by the runoff from I-81

Attempts on my part to have the State DOT address the problem have fallen on either deaf years or individuals with no authority to correct a drainage ditch.

More than 300 lineal feet of drain tile has been installed at the back of the property in our attempt to minimize the damage to the property.

I would very much appreciate an on site visit from a member of your team.

I plan to attend at least one of the scheduled hearings but doubt very much being given the opportunity to speak when the Special Interest groups attorneys take over the meeting for political gain and publicity.

An individual homeowner like me doesn't stand a chance at having an opportunity to speak.

I am sending this letter with our response to your survey in hopes that we can have a factual conversation with one of your representatives.

Thank you for your time

Regards,

James D. Swan, Jr.

homeowner

RECEIVED
AUG - 2 2021
BY:

Dear Mark Frechette,

In regards to the proposed 81 corridor project in Syracuse , N.Y. I am against the recommendations for our city , over this section of roadway .

The interstate is a national road that goes through all states .This in turn , provides a more direct and constant drive without stopping . The proposal eliminates that . Which is why I am writing this letter . The project creates an adult " time out " for those of us who have lived here all our lives . The exits , at both end of the highway , accommodate drivers to all locations in and around the area . The plan would not only make driving trips longer , but create more pollution while drivers sit idling away extra time for lights to change .

The 481 loop is exactly that . Going around the city , servicing the businesses that are closely linked to that section of town . Again , the proposal would require more fuel consumption for longer drive times . The current route is 3 miles shorter . What the state is suggesting , won't improve a thing ?

Please take into consideration my views of keeping things the way they are .

Sincerely ,

Edward J. Swiderski Jr.

Edward J. Swiderski Jr.

Syracuse City School District - Commentary from the Board of Education

Steinhardt, Eileen <ESteinhardt@scsd.us>

Thu 10/14/2021 6:12 PM

To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>
Cc: Romeo, Daniel F. <DRomeo@scsd.us>; Alicea, Jaime <JAlicea@scsd.us>

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open a achments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

Good evening,

A ached, please find a copy of correspondence from the Board of Educa on regarding the proposed changes to I-81 in Syracuse.

A hard copy will follow via USPS mail.

Thank you,

Eileen Steinhardt
District Clerk
Office of the Board of Education
Syracuse City School District
Phone: 315-435-4691 / Fax:315-435-6288
Email: esteinhardt@scsd.us

Information regarding Board of Education meetings can be found at:
[http:// go.boarddocs.com /ny/scsdny/Board.nsf/Public]http:// go.boarddocs.com /ny/scsdny/Board.nsf/Public

Syracuse City School District

SYRACUSE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Office of the Board of Education

725 Harrison Street · Syracuse, NY 13210
Phone 315·435·4691 · Fax 315·435·6288

Jaime Alicea
Superintendent of Schools

Daniel Romeo
President

Tamica Barnett
Vice President

Patricia Body

David Cecile

Derrick L. Dorsey

Dr. Mark D. Muhammad, Ed.D.

Katie Sojewicz

Eileen Steinhardt
District Clerk

October 14, 2021

Mark Frechette, P.E.
Project Director
New York State Department of Transportation, Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

RE: I-81 Viaduct Project

Dear Mr. Frechette,

Thank you for your willingness to continue to meet with and listen to the members of the Syracuse City School District community including our students, families and staff as it relates to the ongoing discussion regarding the I-81 Viaduct Project. We appreciate the time you have taken to engage with us and explain the nuances of this project. This is an extremely important project and one that will have ramifications for years to come.

This project's construction area includes several of our schools that will in some way be impacted. It is important that we as the Board of Education and Superintendent of Schools express to you that the safety of the students attending those schools, as well as the continuity of their learning, are of primary concern to the District. While we understand the immense importance of this project, in no way can those two things be compromised.

One particular piece of the project that is of concern to us is the proposed roundabout near STEAM at Dr. King Elementary School. While we understand it is not within our purvey or area of expertise to decide where the roundabout should go, we feel strongly that it cannot go where it is currently planned. The amount of traffic and the potential traffic hazards for the students, staff and families at STEAM at Dr. King would have a negative impact on that school community. The roundabout as proposed will greatly increase the traffic on the streets nearest to the school. We cannot stress enough the need to find a better location for this roundabout.

Again, thank you for your openness and transparency with regard to this project. We appreciate your willingness to consider our concerns and adapt the plans accordingly.

Very truly yours,

Dan Romeo,
President, Board of Education
Syracuse City School District
and on behalf of
Tamica Barnett
Patricia Body
David Cecile
Derrick Dorsey
Dr. Mark D. Muhamamd, Ed.D.
Katie Sojewicz

Syracuse City School District

SYRACUSE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Office of the Board of Education
725 Harrison Street · Syracuse, NY 13210
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Vice President

Patricia Body

David Cecile

Derrick L. Dorsey

Dr. Mark D. Muhammad, Ed.D.

Katie Sojewicz

Eileen Steinhardt
District Clerk

October 15, 2021

Mark Frechette, P.E.
Project Director
New York State Department of Transportation, Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202
Email: mefrechette@dot.state.ny.us

RE: I-81 Viaduct Project

Dear Mr. Frechette,

Thank you for your willingness to continue to meet with and listen to the members of the Syracuse City School District community including our students, families and staff as it relates to the ongoing discussion regarding the I-81 Viaduct Project. We appreciate the time you have taken to engage with us and explain the nuances of this project.

As we expressed to you at our recent Work Session, we consider the health and safety of our students to be extremely important. Despite our support of the Community Grid as an overall plan, it is our position that the roundabout as proposed will greatly increase the amount of traffic on the streets nearest to the school. The potential traffic hazards for the students, staff and families at STEAM at Dr. King would have a negative impact on that school community. The Board of Education and the Superintendent strongly feel that the proposed location of the roundabout should be farther away from the school. We would defer to your expertise in determining an appropriate alternative location.

Thank you for your openness and transparency with regard to this project. We appreciate your willingness to consider our concerns and adapt the plans accordingly.

Very truly yours,

Dan Romeo,
President, Board of Education
Syracuse City School District
and on behalf of
Tamica Barnett
Patricia Body
David Cecile
Derrick Dorsey
Dr. Mark D. Muhammad, Ed.D.
Katie Sojewicz

Executive Director
William J. Simmons

SYRACUSE HOUSING AUTHORITY

Building Neighborhoods. Growing Dreams.

Main Office

July 27, 2021

Mark Frechette
Director of the I-81 Project
NYS Department of Transportation

Dear Director Frechette,

I would like to thank you for attending our meeting at Toomey Abbott Towers on July 23, 2021, to discuss the future of Interstate-81 and how the project can complement our East Adams Street Transformation Plan. We greatly appreciate you providing an opportunity to view our presentation on the history of the decimation of the 15th Ward caused by the construction of the viaduct, our 2016 Preferred Concept Plan, how the plan has evolved into SHA's current Master Planning efforts with our selected Master Developer, McCormack Baron Salazar, and the needs of SHA to ensure our residents are protected.

As stated in our original request and presentation, with over 4,000 residents living in the project area, the vision of the East Adams Street Transformation Plan is to create a highly amenitized area of opportunity and investment that is safe, vibrant, and inclusive. The proposal by the NYSDOT to demolish the current I-81 viaduct is an opportunity to restore and reconnect the city. NYSDOT's community grid option complements the vision of East Adams and together they will advance the housing, economic, health, social, racial, and environmental justice initiatives for impacted minority and low-income residents and remove the effects of the prior discriminatory actions from the original construction of I-81.

We believe this $2 Billion dollar investment represents a "once in lifetime" opportunity to align the State project with the redevelopment of the neighborhood, making this project more than just a transportation project, rather more a project that also considers people and place.

With a record of decision on the future of I-81 expected in the immediate future, it is crucial that all key partners work closely together to ensure a successful project that does not once again negatively impact those living in proximity of I-81. Without deliberate project coordination and resources provided by NY State and other sources, voluntary options to mitigate risks for our residents will not be possible.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for further discussions and meetings on our project and the future of the East Adams Street Neighborhood.

Sincerely,

William Simmons
Executive Director
Syracuse Housing Authority

516 Burt Street / Syracuse, New York 13202 / PH 315.475.6181 / FAX 315.470.4293 / www.syracusehousing.org

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Executive Director
William J. Simmons

SHA
SYRACUSE HOUSING AUTHORITY
Building Neighborhoods. Growing Dreams.

Main Office

October 14, 2021

Mark Frechette, P.E.
Project Director
New York State Department of Transportation, Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

RE: The I-81 Viaduct Project Comments to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Mr. Frechette:

The Syracuse Housing Authority ("SHA") has reviewed the NYSDOT's Draft Environmental Impact Statement ("DEIS") and the environmental justice (EJ) analysis prepared for the I-81 Viaduct Project that has chosen the Community Grid Alternative.

Although SHA is in support of the community grid alternative there are some concerns that SHA has regarding the impact that the construction phase of the project will have on our residents, our operations and our employees. SHA residents are part of an environmental justice population and therefore NYSDOT must demonstrate that SHA residents would not be subjected to a disproportionality high level of adverse effects, in accordance with the provisions of Executive Order 12898 and FHWA Order 6640.23.

There are over 500 residents that live in Pioneer Homes immediately adjacent to the viaduct and about 300 residents that live in Toomey Abbott Towers. In the NYSDOT's Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), the Table 4-7 titled "Measures to Minimize Community Impacts" does an adequate job of assessing the critical technical areas that need to be considered throughout deconstruction and construction of the project. However, it does not address how to help residents with the health impacts they may encounter throughout the project.

Please see the attached document titled "I-81 Construction Health Impacts: Recommendations for Syracuse Housing Authority" that delineates the recommendations of SHA for pre-construction, construction and post construction of the I-81 Viaduct Project. The recommendations were drafted with the Upstate Medical University Working Group. In addition, from input from residents and the community SHA is also seeking voluntary housing vouchers for residents and 130 units of replacement housing to protect the health and well-being of SHA residents during the construction of I-81 Viaduct project.

Sincerely,

William Simmons
Executive Director

Toomey Abbott Towers is a 23 story high rise building located at 1207 Almond Street, that houses 308 units of elderly and disabled residents. Sixty Five (65) of the Three Hundred and Eight (308) units in Toomey Abbot Tower consist of a licensed Assisted Living Facility that is run by the ERIE program and is licensed under the Onondaga County Health Department. **Pioneer Homes** is a neighborhood of 597 families. 144 of those families (325 residents) live on the East side of the I-81 viaduct in close proximity to I-81. Tyler Court and Stewart Court to the West of the I-81 Viaduct are also immediately adjacent to the I-81 viaduct and consist of 108 families (181 residents).

I-81 Construction Health Impacts: Recommendations for Syracuse Housing Authority

[with cost estimates]

Contents

Overview 2

Pre-Construction Recommendations 3

Active Construction Recommendations 4

Post-Construction Recommendations 6

This document was developed by the following SUNY Upstate Medical University work group:

- **Dr. Jerrold Abraham -** Professor of Pathology, Professor of Family Medicine, Director of Environmental/Occupational Pathology
- **Dr. Judith Crawford** - Visiting Researcher of Pathology
- **Dr. Margaret Formica** - Associate Professor of Public Health and Preventive Medicine,
- Associate Professor of Urology
- **Dr. Auyon Ghosh –** Associate Professor of Medicine
- **Dr. Travis Hobart -** Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, Clinical Assistant Professor of Public Health and Preventive Medicine
- **Dr. Michael Lax -** Professor of Family Medicine, Professor of Medicine, Professor of Public Health and Preventive Medicine, Medical Director of Occupational Health Clinical Center (CNY)
- **Dr. Paula Rosenbaum** - Associate Professor Emerita of Public Health and Preventive Medicine
- **Dr. Dana Savici -** Associate Professor of Medicine, Division Chief of Pulmonary/Critical Care
- **Dr. Ahmed Shawkat -** Assistant Professor of Medicine
- **Gregory Siwiniski -** Adjunct Instructor of Family Medicine
- **Sarah Trapani -** Project Manager for Office of the President
- **Linda Veit** - Assistant Vice President of Community Relations, Interim Chief of Staff for Office of the President

Overview

SUNY Upstate Medical University (UMU) has convened a work group to develop recommendations for Syracuse Housing Authority related to preventing, minimizing, monitoring, assessing, and if needed, treating, any health conditions that could arise or worsen for Syracuse Housing Authority residents impacted by the planned I-81 deconstruction and construction project. The SUNY UMU work group consists of physicians (family medicine, internal medicine, occupational health, pathology, pediatrics, and pulmonology), public health practitioners, and researchers.

The Syracuse Housing Authority residents that will be impacted are those that live at:

- Toomey Abbot Towers - approximately 300 elderly disabled
- Pioneer Homes – approximately 500 adults and children (immediately adjacent)

Possible health risks identified include:

- Displacement of local residents from their homes and community
- Exclusion of local community members from planning and implementation
- Respiratory issues
- Audiology – noise effects
- Sensory-vibration effects
- Exposure to toxic substances – e.g. lead
- Accidental injuries
- Mental health issues
- Access to services
- Disruption of medical care due to proximity of construction to Upstate
- Lack of adequate resources to ensure the health of the community

Major components of the construction project that must be considered include:

- Air Pollution and Particulate Matter (Respiratory issues)
    - Construction activities are major contributors to dust pollution due to the usage of raw materials like sand, silt, cement, concrete, sawdust, etc. and activities like excavation, drilling, bulk material transportation, loading and unloading, open-air material storage, concrete and mortar making, cutting and filling, and the movement of equipment. If unattended, particulate pollution is bound to surpassingly increase having greater health implications on laborers and workers at these sites, and in this case, Residents living nearby.
- Noise Pollution (Audiology issues)
    - Noise pollution can cause harmful effects on human health. Various studies have shown that approximately sixteen percent of worldwide disabling hearing loss was due to occupational noise. Noises can occur from machinery or construction such as piling, welding, knocking, hammering and material transportation.
- Vibration (Sensory-Vibration effects)
    - Exposure to excessive vibrations can cause health risks to workers and to the community members in the immediate area. Use of anti-vibration products should be considered (rollers, dampers, rubber compounds, etc...).
- Impact on Mental Health and Wellbeing of Residents
    - The mental health needs of the community residents during construction need to be considered especially in a vulnerable population, who rely on walking and public transportation. The stress of daily living near a construction site and the potential disruption of access to vital services also need to be considered.

In the DOT Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), the Table 4-7 titled “Measures to Minimize Community Impacts” does an adequate job of assessing the critical technical areas that need to be considered throughout deconstruction and construction of the project. However, it does not address how to help residents with the health impacts they may encounter throughout the project. Our experts have provided additional recommendations to address these issues.

Pre-Construction Recommendations

Initiatives for Pre-Construction Phase

Recommendations		Details
1.	**Health Impact Assessment (HIA) [pre-construction]** Purpose: To determine the current (baseline) health status/needs of the community. *Estimated cost: $10k – $200k, possibly more depending on scope*	• Possible collaboration with Onondaga County Health Department for existing data (e.g. Onondaga County Health Assessment and Improvement Plan) • Specific considerations given to children, elderly, and disabled who might be more at-risk of health impacts from construction • Focus on environmental justice and equitability
2.	**Revision of problematic construction plans** *Estimated cost: unclear costs*	• Roundabout, while an improvement over the prior plans, is still too close to STEAM at Dr. King elementary school, in contradiction to EPA guidelines regarding distance from schools (>600 feet) • Assure adequate safe access to community grid from all areas of the neighborhood by including walkable access and roadway crossings for certain areas
3.	**Heavy equipment guidelines for Department of Transportation (DOT)** *Estimated cost: unclear costs*	• Establish independent monitoring guidelines for construction phase • Upgraded list of controls • Incorporate Prevention through Design & Planning principles to address relevant health exposure risk to community and workers. • Include Best Available Technologies to remove source exposures such as quiet equipment, dust-less processes, etc.
4.	**Resident focus groups and/or survey** *Estimated cost: $4k-$12k*	• Facilitated discussions at each impacted housing establishment • Focus groups should occur prior to the distribution of a health survey • Concern for overburdening residents with too many surveys, etc. with assurance that their needs and concerns are addressed • Determine best methods for community/resident input into construction process and outcomes and community health • Develop an environmental health registry with community input (to monitor short and long-term health issues and facilitate access to health services)
5.	**Educational sessions for residents** *Estimated cost: $3k*	• Information on what to do if a health issue occurs • Information on residents' rights related to the construction

Active Construction Recommendations

Initiatives for during Active Construction Phase

	Recommendation	Details
1.	**Access to health services** *Estimated cost: $1 million*	• Development of an on-site health clinic at Toomey Abbot Towers staffed by experts to provide prompt virtual and in person care. This would be a full-service clinic with physicians, APPs, nurses, respiratory therapist to run a spirometer (~$2000) along with the project coordinators and community navigators. Services should include primary care, pulmonary care, audiology services, and occupational health. • Ensure access to Upstate and other health related services remain available and easily accessible during the project. • Continue to monitor and assess residents' health (environmental health registry – see below)
2.	**Access to mental health resources** *Estimated cost: unclear costs*	• Availability of mental health resources in on-site health clinic. • Phone hotline for mental health concerns
3.	**Educational sessions for residents** *Estimated cost: $3k*	• Information on how to avoid specific health issues, e.g. remove shoes in home to avoid tracking lead into the house • Information on what to do if a health issue occurs • Information on residents' rights related to the construction
4.	**Stringent adherence to construction and health controls** *Estimated cost: unclear costs*	• Independent monitoring with ability to stop construction if thresholds exceeded
5.	**Air quality monitoring and safety** *Estimated costs:* • *$300 per handheld spirometer unit, up to $10,000 plus operating costs for stationary, highly accurate unit* • *$1000 per 100 flow meters* • *$250 per AirBeam device, with possible additional cost if phones are needed.* • *$9000 - $15000 per PM 2.5, fine particulate matter monitoring instruments suitable for indoor and outdoor use, with annual calibration costs of $800*	• Air filtration systems • Air conditioning units in SHA homes and buildings • Air quality monitoring system in and near residents' homes; possibly connected to their phone app. • Handheld spirometers for residents • Peak flow meters for residents • Air quality/particulate matter devices suitable for residents and community members that measure PM2.5 (fine particulate matter) in units of micrograms/cubic meter. *Note: Recommended product is the AirBeam (www.habitatmap.org). was developed for participatory community air monitoring and is probably the most applicable device. It fits in a pocket or backpack, can be set up indoors or outdoors for in-home or mobile monitoring. It is used with an Android phone and the AirCasting App. Measurements are recorded and mapped in real time and synched to the cloud where they can be viewed at the AirCasting.org website. Results are compared with a color-coded scale EPA has developed to indicate health risks. The device is $250. If phones are needed, that is an additional cost.* • Specific attention given to STEAM at Dr. King Elementary School and Wilson Park to protect children and other vulnerable populations
6.	**Sound monitoring and abatement**	• Sound proofing windows

Recommendation		Details
	Estimated cost: • *$500-$1k per monitor* • *$5000 for professional sound level meter with yearly cost of $500 for factory calibration. Plus personnel costs for managing that program*	• Sound monitoring system in and near residents' homes; possibly connected to their phone app. *Note: Professional sound level meters with good accuracy and sensitivity come at high cost and require maintenance, calibration and training. Even low-cost, lower accuracy devices need the same. The most realistic approach to personal sound level measurements for residents or community members is through a smartphone and sound level meter apps. There are numerous, free, sound level apps that use the smartphone microphone and provide a reasonable screening tool for noise monitoring. Measurements would be stored only on the individual phone, not on servers as this is not a typical feature of the apps reviewed. There are different apps for IOS and Android phones including a NIOSH (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health) app for IOS that is highly rated. Recommendations for the best apps for could be developed and some type of instruction or training provided for users.* • Provision of meaningful noise abatement options to residents. For additional guidance and recommendations, refer to: https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dep/downloads/pdf/air/noise/construction-noise-protocols-vendor-guidance-sheet.pdf • Specific attention given to STEAM at Dr. King Elementary School and Wilson Park to protect children and other vulnerable populations
7.	**Strict control practices when dealing with toxic substances, as well as both environmental monitoring and active surveillance of nearby residents when appropriate.** *Estimated cost: unclear costs*	• Lead paint and lead in soil, including surveillance of blood lead levels of nearby residents, particularly children • Asbestos hazards • Silica • Particulate matter • Diesel exhaust • Hazardous waste (legacy sites)
8.	**Develop *independent and confidential* reporting process for residents' health issues, such as an environmental health registry** *Estimated cost: unclear costs* (Flint, MI registry = $14+ million; World Trade Center = $23.5 million)	• Standardized mechanism for SHA residents to report construction-related health issues • Guidelines for what residents should do if they experience construction-related health issues • Safeguards to ensure resident health information is kept private
9.	**Ensure economic opportunity is available to residents of the community as this is a major determinant of health** *Estimated cost: unclear costs*	• New jobs with the project must be primarily available to local residents
10.	**Develop method for communicating site compliance with hazard controls, effectiveness, and planned changes to control procedures to all interested parties** *Estimated cost: unclear costs*	• Address transparency concerns
11.	**Develop mechanism for handling complaints / inquires / rumors from the community, workforce, etc.** *Estimated cost: unclear costs*	• Address transparency concerns • Serve as an ombudsman's role to resolve problems as needed

Post-Construction Recommendations

Initiatives for Post-Construction Phase

Recommendation		Details
1.	**Health Impact Assessment (HIA) [post-construction]** *Estimated cost: $10k – $200k, possibly more depending on scope*	• Focus on environmental justice and equitability • Continue to monitor and assess residents' health and identify possible unanticipated effects of construction (environmental health registry)
2.	**Ensure economic opportunity is available to residents of the community as this is a major determinant of health** *Estimated cost: unclear costs*	• New jobs arising from new business must be primarily available to local residents
3.	**Continued access to physical and mental health services** *Estimated cost: $500k*	• Continuation of health clinic in Toomey Abbott building, based on resident needs

Comments by Syracuse United Neighbors (SUN) on D.E.I.S. for the I-81 Viaduct Project

Phil Prehn <phil.prehn@gmail.com>

Thu 10/14/2021 2:27 PM

To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>
Cc: rich@sunaction.com <rich@sunaction.com>

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Comments are copied and pasted into the body of this e-mail--as well attached in a Word format document

Comments by Syracuse United Neighbors (SUN) on Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the I-81 Viaduct Project by the NYS Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration

Syracuse United Neighbors (SUN) is a community action group whose members work on issues of concern in the neighborhoods where they live—the South, Southwest and Near-West sides of the city of Syracuse.

The issues we have worked on since our founding in 1977 include:

- Housing that is affordable and in decent condition
- Equal access to quality public services for senior citizens, the disabled, youth, tenants and homeowners
- Good paying jobs for our community
- Environmental justice for all neighborhoods
- Reversing the history of bank redlining suffered by our neighborhoods

SUN's history is tightly entwined with the repercussions felt by our neighborhood residents since the Rt. 81 viaduct was run directly through the Southside in the early 1960's. SUN was founded as a neighborhood housing group in 1977 by a coalition of churches on the Southside—a direct response to the segregation, discrimination and lack of investment felt in the low income neighborhoods of Syracuse suddenly walled off from their wealthier east side neighbors.

The major campaigns undertaken by SUN-- property tax re-assessment, constant oversight of poorly run city Code Enforcement division, eliminating the need for tax delinquent auctions of vacant homes by establishing a city Land Bank, and holding banks accountable to their lending obligations under the Community Reinvestment Act--can be directly linked to the decision to run Rt. 81 through our neighborhoods.

We must always remember that the Rt-81 viaduct decision exacerbated the city's problems with racial discrimination in housing, education and employment. For this reason, the decisions we make now as the viaduct has exceeded its usable life-span, is to design its replacement to not further damage the residents along the viaduct, but also to use the new construction as a way to improve the conditions of the residents and eliminate to problems that the racism and discrimination that the original Rt. 81 Viaduct decision wrought.

It is for these reasons that SUN asks the NYS Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration to incorporate the following into their final plans for replacement of the Rt.-81 Viaduct.

1) S**upport the Community Grid.** The problems created by the Rt.-81 Viaduct are largely those of the residents of the city of Syracuse and the discrimination and segregation caused by its construction in the early 1960's. Overwhelming public sentiment supports eliminating the raised portions of the highway through the city and replacing it with a ground-level boulevard that does not wall off the lower income neighborhoods adjacent to Rt.-81 from the southern-most to the northern most areas of the city of Syracuse.

We urge the NYS Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration to firmly and finally commit to the Community Grid model of development and eliminate and consideration of rebuilding using tunnels and/or elevated portions of highway. These proposals have been supported by business interests north of the city in the suburbs.

Any model other than the Community Grid should be totally rejected. The engineering costs of these projects are astronomical and they do nothing to deal with the segregation and discrimination felt by the overwhelming percentage of effected residents—those in the city of Syracuse.

2) Create Jobs for Low Income Residents of the City of Syracuse. The results of the discrimination, segregation and disinvestment in the neighborhoods adjacent to Rt. 81 in the city of Syracuse are stark. 43% of the city's black and Latinx communities live in poverty.

The DEIS points out in Section 6-2-3 that of the 166 census tracts affected by its proposed project, 91 are environmental justice communities (50% of population is minority and/or 31% live below the poverty line). All 91 of these Environmental Justice Communities are in the city of Syracuse.

We would like the Department of Transportation to pursue the following job creation goals while rebuilding the Rt. 81 Viaduct through the city of Syracuse:

Set Inclusive Local Hiring Goals—based on percentages of the estimated 7.7 million work hours performed by several thousand individual workers. This is necessary given the fact that in 2019 the median household income for Onondaga County was $61,000, city of Syracuse median household income was $38,000 and the Pioneer Homes' census tract 42 adjacent to Rt. 81 was $18,000.

Target the following populations for Hiring—Local residents ready now or recently trained and disadvantaged workers (e.g. disabled, formerly incarcerated, single custodial parents, Public assistance recipients, workers without HS or GED diplomas, the unhoused)

Create an On-The-Job Training program through NYSDOT and target recruitment in neighborhoods adjacent to Rt. 81 such as Census Tract 42 (Pioneer Homes) and the immediately adjacent southerly tract 53.

3) Changes to proposed plan to further help Southside residents

- **Create a new northbound exit from the boulevard at E. Colvin Street**. This exit will both help improve access to Southside areas and businesses, as well has help diffuse local traffic bound for Syracuse University.
- **Move the proposed roundabout located near MLK, Jr. School further** south in order to provide more safety to students and area residents from traffic exiting Rt. 81 and merging onto the Community Grid boulevard. We need more details on the impact that will be felt on adjacent neighborhoods created by the traffic circle. How much of an area will it take up? Will the plan take out any houses? What will be the impact on traffic along State, Salina St, and area side streets?
- **Traffic calming during Southside deconstruction and construction:** The construction in our neighborhoods will run from Taylor St to W Calthrop Ave. along several main arteries for traffic: S Salina St, S State St, Oakwood- Garfield. What will the traffic conditions be as more vehicles drive up and down our streets? Will the traffic lights on S Salina synchronize? Will cars from side streets be able to merge on to the major arterials? Are there any estimates about increased accidents? The City is currently removing traffic lights at State and Kennedy, as well as State and Martin Luther King East due to road repairs. Neighbors are complaining that cars are running the stop signs at these intersections. Are there any plans for effective traffic calming during construction?
- **Monitor all property sales.** SUN demands that the state monitor housing sales on the south side: Census Tracts: 32, 42, 51, 52, 58, and 59, at least. There are concerns in this community that Rt. 81 reconstruction will bring about gentrification. We need to be proactive on monitoring home sales in order to make plans to prevent neighbors from being forced out of their neighborhoods against their will. In the 1960's, Rt. 81 construction physically forced people out of their homes and small businesses. We need to ensure that rectifying the discrimination and segregation brought by Rt. 81's construction isn't replaced by further discrimination and segregation by uncontrolled market forces.
- **Repair the natural pedestrian path that runs on both sides of the Rt. 81 overpass on E. Colvin Street.** Residents on either side of the rail and traffic bridges over E. Colvin St. frequently walk up and down the street—to access the elementary school and shortcuts to Syracuse U. campus on one side, and the business corridors along both S. State St. and S. Salina St. on the other side of the overpass. The conditions are terrible now—traffic backed up to turn onto the Rt. 81 entrance, chewed up and missing sidewalks, no crosswalks or pedestrian safety equipment. SUN demands the state install sufficient pedestrian safety infrastructure immediately—as well as plan for the extensive pedestrian activity that will result from the creation of a more walkable ground-level boulevard.
- **Public Outreach for this project needs to be improved.** SUN attended the public hearings held at Fowler High school on August 25th, and the hearing held at Dr King School on September 9th. The events were not really public hearings. They were public education sessions with a display of roughly twenty 4 X 6 boards with descriptions of what is planned with a viaduct or community grid. People milled around and spoke with DOT staff standing in front of the boards,

a one on one conversation. These sessions have value—but should not totally replace traditional hearings where both officials and the general public give statements on their position, and then answer questions. One would hear what the other people have to say, cheer them on, clap and officials have a better sense what people are feeling. In addition, the state DOT book on the Rt. 81 project is designed to cut out all dialogue—3,000 pages, 5 inches thick. SUN, an organization with over 40 years of experience holding public meetings with neighborhood residents in Syracuse, would like to sit down with other local groups and the NYS DOT on how to better structure all future public outreach meetings.

Syracuse United Neighbors

Attn.: Rich Puchalski, Executive Director

1540 S. Salina Street

Syracuse, NY 13205

rich@sunaction.org

315-476-7475

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Phil Prehn

about.me/phil.prehn

"The goal ever recedes from us. Salva on lies in the effort, not in the a ainment. Full effort is full victory." --Gandhi

Comments by Syracuse United Neighbors (SUN) on Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the I-81 Viaduct Project by the NYS Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration

Syracuse United Neighbors (SUN) is a community action group whose members work on issues of concern in the neighborhoods where they live—the South, Southwest and Near-West sides of the city of Syracuse.

The issues we have worked on since our founding in 1977 include:

- Housing that is affordable and in decent condition
- Equal access to quality public services for senior citizens, the disabled, youth, tenants and homeowners
- Good paying jobs for our community
- Environmental justice for all neighborhoods
- Reversing the history of bank redlining suffered by our neighborhoods

SUN's history is tightly entwined with the repercussions felt by our neighborhood residents since the Rt. 81 viaduct was run directly through the Southside in the early 1960's. SUN was founded as a neighborhood housing group in 1977 by a coalition of churches on the Southside—a direct response to the segregation, discrimination and lack of investment felt in the low income neighborhoods of Syracuse suddenly walled off from their wealthier east side neighbors.

The major campaigns undertaken by SUN-- property tax re-assessment, constant oversight of poorly run city Code Enforcement division, eliminating the need for tax delinquent auctions of vacant homes by establishing a city Land Bank, and holding banks accountable to their lending obligations under the Community Reinvestment Act--can be directly linked to the decision to run Rt. 81 through our neighborhoods.

We must always remember that the Rt-81 viaduct decision exacerbated the city's problems with racial discrimination in housing, education and employment. For this reason, the decisions we make now as the viaduct has exceeded its usable life-span, is to design its replacement to not further damage the residents along the viaduct, but also to use the new construction as a way to improve the conditions of the residents and eliminate to problems that the racism and discrimination that the original Rt. 81 Viaduct decision wrought.

It is for these reasons that SUN asks the NYS Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration to incorporate the following into their final plans for replacement of the Rt.-81 Viaduct.

1) S**upport the Community Grid.** The problems created by the Rt.-81 Viaduct are largely those of the residents of the city of Syracuse and the discrimination and segregation caused by its construction in the early 1960's. Overwhelming public sentiment supports eliminating the raised portions of the highway through the city and replacing it with a ground-level boulevard that does not wall off the lower income neighborhoods adjacent to Rt.-81 from the southern-most to the northern most areas of the city of Syracuse.

   We urge the NYS Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration to firmly and finally commit to the Community Grid model of development and eliminate and consideration of rebuilding using tunnels and/or elevated portions of highway. These proposals have been supported by business interests north of the city in the suburbs.

   Any model other than the Community Grid should be totally rejected. The engineering costs of these projects are astronomical and they do nothing to deal with the segregation and discrimination felt by the overwhelming percentage of effected residents—those in the city of Syracuse.

2) **Create Jobs for Low Income Residents of the City of Syracuse.** The results of the discrimination, segregation and disinvestment in the neighborhoods adjacent to Rt. 81 in the city of Syracuse are stark. 43% of the city's black and Latinx communities live in poverty.

   The DEIS points out in Section 6-2-3 that of the 166 census tracts affected by its proposed project, 91 are environmental justice communities (50% of population is minority and/or 31% live below the poverty line). All 91 of these Environmental Justice Communities are in the city of Syracuse.

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Syracuse United Neighbors

Attn.: Rich Puchalski, Executive Director

1540 S. Salina Street

Syracuse, NY 13205

rich@sunaction.org

315-476-7475

RECEIVED
AUG 31 2021
BY:

I am Ann Tiffany, a resident of Syracuse and a Mental Health Nurse (retired) who worked in the 15th Ward when Rt 81 first arrived in Syracuse. Families, neighborhoods, small businesses, and a sense of belonging were all lost in a very short time. Many mental and physical health problems arose during the next few years because of the trauma and isolation people experienced.

I fully support the Community Grid and the opportunity it affords the city for the people displaced and a full awareness of past mistakes and not wanting them to happen again...and the opportunity to right a wrong.

I would hope that the round-about now planned near the Martin Luther King School can be located elsewhere...Brighton Ave exit???

Thank you for your attention to this input.

Ann Tiffany

Ann Tiffany
340 Midland Ave, Syracuse, 13202

From:	Frechette, Mark (DOT)
To:	Bjorness, Joan E (DOT)
Subject:	FW: Interstate Route 81 Letter & Attachments
Date:	Thursday, October 14, 2021 12:00:35 PM
Attachments:	2021 I-81 Letter, Resolutions and Documents Opposing NYSDOT Community Grid Plan(2).zip

Comments.

From: Judy Rios <jrios@townofclay.org>
Sent: Thursday, October 14, 2021 9:38 AM
To: Frechette, Mark (DOT) <Mark.Frechette@dot.ny.gov>; rick.marquis@dot.gov; dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>
Subject: Interstate Route 81 Letter & Attachments

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

Good morning;

Please see attached in reference to the open comment period regarding the DEIS for Interstate Route 81. This will also be forthcoming via U.S. Mail.

Thank you,
Damian M. Ulatowski
Supervisor, Town of Clay

Judy Rios
Executive Assistant to the Supervisor

Town of Clay, New York
Supervisor Damian M. Ulatowski
4401 State Route 31
Clay, NY 13041

Tel: (315) 652-3800 x 114
Email: jrios@townofclay.org

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Interstate 81
Opposing Community Grid Stand Along Project

Letters and Resolutions

February 2021	Letters from Town Supervisors to Secretary Buttigieg
3/12/21	Onondaga County Village Mayors' Association Letter to Secretary Buttigieg
4/20/21	Onondaga County Supervisors Press Release
7/2/21	Onondaga County Supervisors Letter to the Editor
November 2018	Onondaga County Mayors and Supervisors Letters to Governor

Resolutions Opposing Community Grid have been passed by 30+ Counties, Towns and Villages

Onondaga County Legislature	Cayuga County Legislature
Aurora	Auburn
Camillus	Cicero
Clay	Dewitt
East Syracuse	Elbridge
Fabius	Fleming
Geddes	Ira
Lafayette	Lysander
Manlius	Marcellus
Minoa	Moravia
Onondaga	Otisco
Owasco	Pompey
Salina	Sennett
Town of Skaneateles	Village of Skaneateles
Spafford	Tully
Van Buren	

Damian M. Ulatowski
Supervisor

Joseph A. Bick
Deputy Supervisor

Office of the Supervisor

Town of Clay

"One of America's 100 Best Places to Live"

Councilors:
Brian E. Hall
David J. Hess
Kevin J. Meaker
Ryan A. Pleskach
Eugene B. Young

February 16, 2021

Honorable Peter Buttigieg, Transportation Secretary
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

As one of the nineteen Supervisors from Onondaga County and President of the Onondaga County Board of Supervisors Association, who together represent 69% of the County population, I write to you today to express our support for a new consolidated rebuilding program for the future of Interstate 81. That said many of our constituents are looking for a complete solution that recognizes the needs of our residents as opposed to a "*grid-only*" option that has been proposed.

While some in this community envision a future Syracuse devoid of critical transportation infrastructure, all polling demonstrates how the broad majority of Central New Yorkers eagerly urge building for a robust, growing and healthier future.

It is said the elevated highway in downtown Syracuse is "*nearing the end of its useful life.*" If so it is only the elevated structure itself that is nearing the end of its useful life. Our community's transportation needs will not end any time soon and in fact will demand a far-reaching solution that can accommodate us all.

Some 90,000 cars and trucks travel this stretch of Interstate 81 through the City of Syracuse every day. A majority of this traffic begins and ends within our community but outside of the boundaries of the elevated structure, that is the current Route 81 through the City. Many of these commuters are suburban and rural residents who depend on an efficient route to maintain their livelihoods.

The "grid" as narrowly proposed offers an appealing image. But to enable Central New York's economy to recover from this devastating COVID era, it is absolutely necessary that our infrastructure plans provide for economic recovery and job growth.

From a climate perspective, a "*grid-only*" option, as proposed, would set this community precipitously backward. Without infrastructure to carry those 90,000 vehicles every day to where they must go, the majority would have to divert to city streets as well as suburban and

rural roads. Consequently, urban streets would become gridlocked and fuel consumption would be wasted on extended travel times. Greenhouse gas emissions on residential streets and rural roads would spiral ever upward from the endless cars and trucks starting, stopping and idling at the thirteen traffic lights that would become the new Route 81 artery through the City. Diverted traffic would crowd streets near Dr. Martin Luther King School. Heavy traffic would multiply the number of vehicle-pedestrian accidents.

We agree the "grid" has drawn some favor as a component of an innovative rebuilding program. However, we urge the "grid" to be built - in concert with forward-looking infrastructure that will meet the needs of all Central New Yorkers. A "grid" option without vision cannot meet the needs of Central New Yorker's from communities - urban, suburban and rural.

We urge you to consider a proposal that addresses all the important issues raised by the presence of the old viaduct. Some of the alternatives to the crumbling overhead- elevated highway already considered, a tunnel, recessed highway, and a rebuilt viaduct, why not an iconic suspended bridge –flowing over an active, bustling urban center. Such an option would create the long-term solution for Central New York as it grows its way into the future. A bridge alternative could show the world beyond New York an image of a growing community capable of accommodating all of Central New York's residents while show casing a modern and vibrant Syracuse.

We should consider instead a complete solution to the 81 rebuilding project that is directed 100% to the area impacted by the proposed improvements. Spending hundreds of millions of dollars to improve suburban highways such as a peripheral road in suburban DeWitt, and hundreds of millions more to improve Route 481 is not a solution. That half billion dollars should be spent in the City – creating jobs in the City – giving City residents an improved chance to work at those jobs, and respecting the principles of smart growth by resisting further expansion of suburban sprawl.

An iconic bridge would link not only the physical gap but the social gap that has divided a community for the past 60 years, and could provide the City with a naming opportunity for a historical figure that helped shape the City's growth.

We know others have invited you to Syracuse to see our mainline Interstate in its local setting and to discuss the best path forward. We respectfully request to be included in any meetings.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

Damian M. Ulatowski
Supervisor, Town of Clay and President of the Onondaga County Supervisor's Association

Town of Geddes
1000 Woods Road
Syracuse, New York 13209
(315) 468-3600

U.S. Department of Transportation
Attn: U.S. Secretary of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

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Greenhouse gas emissions on residential streets and rural roads would spiral ever upward from the endless cars and trucks starting, stopping and idling at the thirteen traffic lights that would become the new Route 81 artery through the City. Diverted traffic would crowd streets near Dr. Martin Luther King School. Heavy traffic would multiply the number of vehicle-pedestrian accidents.

We agree the "grid" has drawn some favor as a component of an innovative rebuilding program. However, we urge the "grid" to be built - in concert with forward-looking infrastructure that will meet the needs of all Central New Yorkers. A "grid" option without vision cannot meet the needs of Central New Yorker's from communities - urban, suburban and rural.

We urge you to consider a proposal that addresses all the important issues raised by the presence of the old viaduct. Some of the alternatives to the crumbling overhead- elevated highway already considered, a tunnel, recessed highway, and a rebuilt viaduct, why not an iconic suspended bridge –flowing over an active, bustling urban center. Such an option would create the long-term solution for Central New York as it grows its way into the future. A bridge alternative could show the world beyond New York an image of a growing community capable of accommodating all of Central New York's residents while show casing a modern and vibrant Syracuse.

We should consider instead a complete solution to the 81 rebuilding project that is directed 100% to the area impacted by the proposed improvements. Spending hundreds of millions of dollars to improve suburban highways such as a peripheral road in suburban DeWitt, and hundreds of millions more to improve Route 481 is not a solution. That half billion dollars should be spent in the City – creating jobs in the City – giving City residents an improved chance to work at those jobs, and respecting the principles of smart growth by resisting further expansion of suburban sprawl.

An iconic bridge would link not only the physical gap but the social gap that has divided a community for the past 60 years, and could provide the City with a naming opportunity for a historical figure that helped shape the City's growth.

We know others have invited you to Syracuse to see our mainline Interstate in its local setting and to discuss the best path forward. We respectfully request to be included in any meetings.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

Gerald Albrigo

Gerald Albrigo
Town Supervisor
Town of Geddes

Town of Salina
OFFICE OF THE TOWN SUPERVISOR

Colleen A. Gunnip

Town Supervisor

Douglas R. Wickman, P.E.
Staff Engineer

Nancy A. O'Neil
Secretary to the Supervisor

February 11, 2021

Hon. Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Secretary of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Hon. Secretary Buttigieg,

The Town of Salina was incorporated in 1847 and consists of five small suburban communities off Interstate 81, known as Mattydale, Liverpool, Lyncourt, Galeville and a portion of North Syracuse. For the last 50 years, I-81 has served as a vital backbone for the economy of the Town of Salina and Central New York, connecting commuters, businesses, tourists, visitors, interstate commerce and through-travelers alike.

The preferred alternative of the Community Grid outlined in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, will significantly impact the Town of Salina with loss of jobs, loss of hundreds of thousands of dollars in tax revenue and a 50% drop in assessed value of properties located along I-81. We have three (3) exits off the interstate with forty-one (41) restaurants, nine (9) gas stations, and fifteen (15) hotels. These businesses bring in approximately $4.7 million in town, County and school taxes plus $2.2 million in state and federal fuel tax, $3.3 million in NYS Sales Tax and $440,000 County room occupancy tax.

The latest Draft Environmental Impact Statement released by the NYSDOT failed to address many of the serious concerns raised by residents, business owners, and elected representatives about the future of the Town of Salina and the communities that have grown around I-81. We have recently seen that other elected officials have invited you to Syracuse to tour the viaduct. We would also like to invite you to our town and show you how I-81 was also constructed through the low-income neighborhoods in Salina. However, the town was proactive and rezoned these corridors for commercial, office and retail business, creating an economic advantage for our community. Now only to have traffic completely bypass Salina.

We truly hope you will take advantage of this invitation and see first hand how the preferred alternative of the community grid would impact the Town. Please feel free to contact us by phone at (315) 457-6661 or by email at supervisor@salina.ny.us to schedule a date and time to meet.

Sincerely,

Colleen A. Gunnip
Supervisor

Nicolas Paro
1st Ward Councilor

V. James Magnarelli
2nd Ward Councilor

Daniel Ciciarelli
3rd Ward Councilor

David Carnie
4th Ward Councilor

Office of the Supervisor
TOWN OF CAMILLUS
4600 WEST GENESEE STREET
SYRACUSE, NEW YORK 13219

MARY ANN COOGAN
SUPERVISOR

PHONE: (315) 488-1335
FAX: (315) 488-8768
macoogan@townofcamillus.com

February 17, 2021

Secretary Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

As one of the nineteen Supervisors from Onondaga County and, a member of the Onondaga County Board of Supervisors, who together represent 69% of the County population, I write to you today to express our support for a new consolidated rebuilding program for the future of Interstate 81. That said many of our constituents are looking for a complete solution that recognizes the needs of our residents as opposed to a "*grid-only*" option that has been proposed.

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Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mary Ann Coogan
Camillus Town Supervisor

CC:
Governor Cuomo
Camillus Town Board

TOWN OF LYSANDER
OFFICE OF THE SUPERVISOR

Robert A. Wicks
Supervisor
Tel.: (315) 638-4264

8220 LOOP ROAD
BALDWINSVILLE, NEW YORK 13027
FAX: (315) 635-1515

David J. Rahrle
Comptroller
Tel: (315) 635-1443

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TOWN OF LYSANDER
OFFICE OF THE SUPERVISOR

Robert A. Wicks
Supervisor
Tel.: (315) 638-4264

8220 LOOP ROAD
BALDWINSVILLE, NEW YORK 13027
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David J. Rahrle
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TOWN OF LYSANDER
OFFICE OF THE SUPERVISOR

Robert A. Wicks
Supervisor
Tel.: (315) 638-4264

8220 LOOP ROAD
BALDWINSVILLE, NEW YORK 13027
FAX: (315) 635-1515

David J. Rahrle
Comptroller
Tel: (315) 635-1443

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Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Robert A. Wicks

TOWN OF VAN BUREN

Claude E. Sykes, Town Supervisor
7575 Van Buren Road
Baldwinsville, NY 13027-6706
(315) 635-3009
Email: supervisor@townofvanburen.com

February 16, 2021

Honorable Peter Buttigieg, Transportation Secretary
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave., SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

As one of the nineteen Supervisors from Onondaga County and, a member of the Onondaga County Board of Supervisors, who together represent 69% of the County population, I write to you today to express our support for a new consolidated rebuilding program for the future of Interstate 81. That said many of our constituents are looking for a complete solution that recognizes the needs of our residents as opposed to a "*grid-only*" option that has been proposed.

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Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

Claude E. Sykes
Town Supervisor
Town of Van Buren

SUZANNE BELLE
Councilor

KATHY FEDRIZZI
Councilor

THOMAS P. ANDINO, JR.
Supervisor
Town of Onondaga

MARY RYAN
Councilor

JOHN MAHAR
Councilor

5020 BALL ROAD • SYRACUSE, NEW YORK 13215-1605 • Tel: (315) 469-3888

February 16, 2021

Pete Buttigieg, Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

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Thank you in advance for your consideration.

TOWN OF ONONDAGA

Thomas P. Andino, Jr.
Supervisor

Town of Fabius
7786 Main Street
Fabius, NY 13063

February 18, 2021

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

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Melanie Vilardi
Town Supervisor

TOWN OF LA FAYETTE
2577 ROUTE 11
P.O. BOX 193
LA FAYETTE, N.Y. 13084

PHONE: 315-677-3674
FAX: 315-677-7806
WWW.TOWNOFLAFAYETTE.COM

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Daniel Fitzpatrick, Supervisor

Town of Manlius

Edmond J. Theobald, Supervisor

February 22, 2021

US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

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Town Board - Karen Green, Sara Bollinger, Elaine Denton, John Deer, Heather Waters, Katelyn M. Kriesel

301 Brooklea Drive • Fayetteville, NY 13066 • Telephone: (315) 637-3521 • Fax: (315) 637-0713
www.townofmanlius.org

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301 Brooklea Drive • Fayetteville, NY 13066 • Telephone: (315) 637-3521 • Fax: (315) 637-0713
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TOWN OF
SKANEATELES

February 19, 2021

Mr. Peter Buttigieg
United States Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

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To avoid the grid, trucks will exit I-81 before Syracuse for non-interstate roads throughout the Finger Lakes. This will create an untenable negative impact on Skaneateles Lake, and other Finger Lakes in Central New York. Skaneateles Lake provides unfiltered drinking water to over 200,000 people in Skaneateles, the City of Syracuse, and surrounding communities. Truck traffic exiting Interstate 81 travel along highways on the east side and west side of Skaneateles Lake and this has potential consequences to Skaneateles Lake, the Town of Skaneateles and the surrounding Towns and Villages in Central New York that has not been adequately addressed in the DEIS.

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Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Janet L. Aaron

Janet L. Aaron
Town Supervisor

5400 Butternut Drive
East Syracuse, NY 13057-8509
Phone: 315.446.3910
Fax: 315.449.0620

Town Board:
Joe Chiarenza
Karen Docter
Jack Dooling
Kerry Mannion
Kerin Rigney
Sam Young

Edward M. Michalenko, PhD.
Supervisor

TOWN OF DeWitt
more than you think

February 24, 2021

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

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Sincerely,

Edward M. Michalenko, Ph.D
Supervisor

Town of Tully
5833 Meetinghouse Road
P.O. Box 206
Tully, N.Y. 13159
315/696-4693

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suburban and rural roads. Consequently, urban streets would become gridlocked and fuel consumption would be wasted on extended travel times. Greenhouse gas emissions on residential streets and rural roads would spiral ever upward from the endless cars and trucks starting, stopping and idling at the thirteen traffic lights that would become the new Route 81 artery through the City. Diverted traffic would crowd streets near Dr. Martin Luther King School. Heavy traffic would multiply the number of vehicle-pedestrian accidents.

We agree the "grid" has drawn some favor as a component of an innovative rebuilding program. However, we urge the "grid" to be built - in concert with forward-looking infrastructure that will meet the needs of all Central New Yorkers. A "grid" option without vision cannot meet the needs of Central New Yorker's from communities - urban, suburban and rural.

We urge you to consider a proposal that addresses all the important issues raised by the presence of the old viaduct. Some of the alternatives to the crumbling overhead-elevated highway already considered, a tunnel, recessed highway, and a rebuilt viaduct, why not an iconic suspended bridge –flowing over an active, bustling urban center. Such an option would create the long-term solution for Central New York as it grows its way into the future. A bridge alternative could show the world beyond New York an image of a growing community capable of accommodating all of Central New York's residents while show casing a modern and vibrant Syracuse.

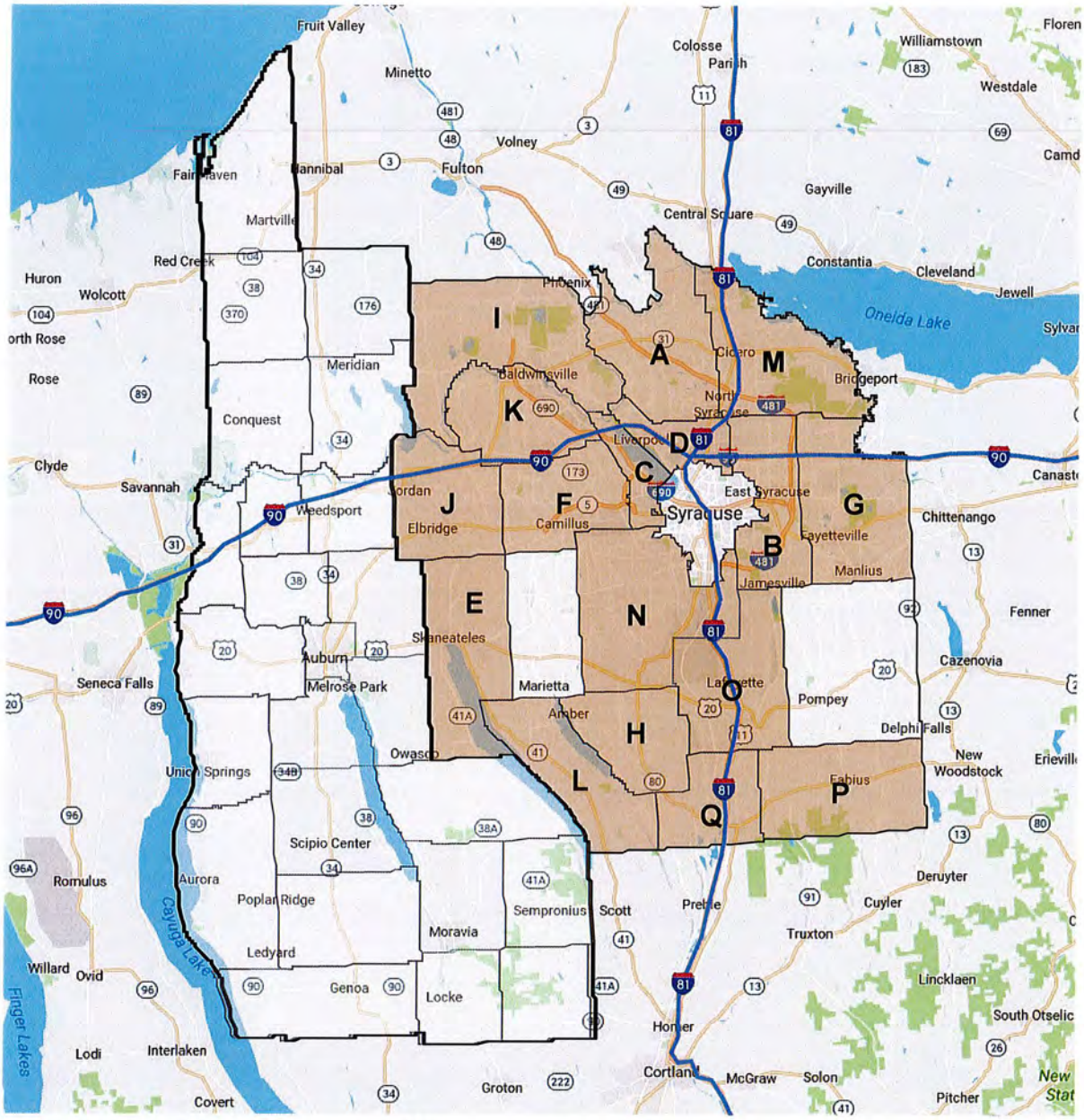
We should consider instead a complete solution to the 81 rebuilding project that is directed 100% to the area impacted by the proposed improvements. Spending hundreds of millions of dollars to improve suburban highways such as a peripheral road in suburban DeWitt, and hundreds of millions more to improve Route 481 is not a solution. That half billion dollars should be spent in the City – creating jobs in the City – giving City residents an improved chance to work at those jobs, and respecting the principles of smart growth by resisting further expansion of suburban sprawl.

An iconic bridge would link not only the physical gap but the social gap that has divided a community for the past 60 years, and could provide the City with a naming opportunity for a historical figure that helped shape the City's growth.

We know others have invited you to Syracuse to see our mainline Interstate in its local setting and to discuss the best path forward. We respectfully request to be included in any meetings.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Town Supervisor
John Mastic



Municipalities on record in opposition to replacing Interstate 81 through the City of Syracuse with a street level boulevard.

A. Town of Clay
B. Town of Dewitt
C. Town of Geddes
D. Town of Salina
E. Town of Skaneateles
F. Town of Camillus
G. Town of Manlius
H. Town of Otisco
I. Town of Lysander
J. Town of Elbridge
K. Town of Van Buren
L. Town of Spafford
M. Town of Cicero
N. Town of Onondaga
O. Town of LaFayette
P. Town of Fabius
Q. Town of Tully

ONONDAGA COUNTY MAYORS' ASSOCIATION

Mayor Mark Olson	**Mayor Richard Clark**	**Mayor Richard Waterman**
Mayor Elizabeth Bough Martin	**Mayor Robert Tackman**	**Mayor Christopher DeCola**
Mayor Richard Platten	**Mayor Gary White**	**Mayor Paul Whorrall**
Mayor John Curtain	**Mayor William Brazill**	**Mayor Gary Butterfield**
Mayor Martin Hubbard	**Mayor Derek Baichi**	**Mayor Melissa Flint-Morgan**

March 12, 2021

Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: Interstate 81 project

Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

As one of the 15 Mayors from Onondaga County, and a member of the Mayors' Association of Onondaga County who together represent a large segment of the population, I write to you today to express our support for a new consolidated rebuilding program for the future of Interstate 81. Many of our constituents are looking for a complete solution that recognizes the needs of our residents as opposed to a "*grid-only*" option that has been proposed.

While some in this community envision a future Syracuse devoid of critical transportation infrastructure, a majority of Central New Yorkers eagerly urge building for a robust, growing and healthier future.

It is said the elevated highway in downtown Syracuse is "*nearing the end of its useful life."* If so it is only the elevated structure itself that is nearing the end of its useful life. Our community's transportation needs will not end any time soon and in fact will demand a far-reaching solution that can accommodate us all.

Some 90,000 cars and trucks travel this stretch of Interstate 81 through the City of Syracuse every day. A majority of this traffic begins and ends within our community but outside of the boundaries of the elevated structure, that is the current Route 81 through the City. Many of these commuters are suburban and rural residents who depend on an efficient route to maintain their livelihoods.

The "grid" as narrowly proposed offers an appealing image. But to enable Central New York's economy to recover from this devastating COVID era, it is absolutely necessary that our infrastructure plans provide for economic recovery and job growth.

From a climate perspective, a "*grid-only*" option, as proposed, would set this community precipitously backward. Without infrastructure to carry those 90,000 vehicles every day to where they must go, the majority would have to divert to city streets as well as suburban and rural roads. Consequently, urban streets would become gridlocked and fuel consumption would be wasted on extended travel times. Greenhouse gas emissions on residential streets and rural roads would spiral ever upward from the endless cars and trucks starting, stopping and idling at the thirteen traffic lights that would become the new We agree the "grid" has drawn some favor as a component of an innovative rebuilding program. However, we urge the "grid" to be built - in concert with forward-looking infrastructure that will meet the needs of all Central New Yorkers. A "grid" option without vision cannot meet the needs of Central New Yorker's from communities - urban, suburban and rural.

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Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

ONONDAGA COUNTY MAYORS' ASSOCIATION

Mayor Mark Olson	**Mayor Richard Clark**	**Mayor Richard Waterman**
Mayor Elizabeth Bough Martin	**Mayor Robert Tackman**	**Mayor Christopher DeCola**
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Mayor Martin Hubbard	**Mayor Derek Baichi**	**Mayor Melissa Flint-Morgan**

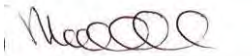
Village of Baldwinsville

Village of Camillus

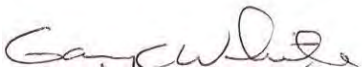
Village of Chittenango

Village of Elbridge

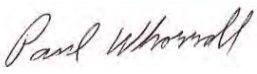
Village of East Syracuse



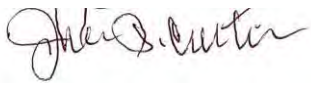
Village of Fayetteville



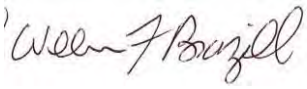
Village of Liverpool



Village of Manlius



Village of Marcellus

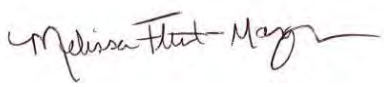


Village of Minoa

Village of North Syracuse

Village of Skaneateles

Village of Solvay



Village of Tully

CC
Andrew Cuomo, Governor
Kathy Hochul, Lieutenant Governor
Charles Schumer, U.S. Senate
Kirsten Gillibrand, U.S. Senate
John Katko, U.S. Congress
Maria Therese Dominguez, NYS DOT
Matthew Driscoll, NYS Thruway Authority
John Mannion, NYS Senate
Patty Ritchie, NYS Senate
Fred Akshar, NYS Senate

James Seward, NYS Senate
Pamela Helming, NYS Senate
Thomas O'Mara, NYS Senate
Tim Kennedy, NYS Senate Transportation Committee
Pamela Hunter, NYS Assembly
William Magnarelli, NYS Assembly Transportation Committee
William Barclay, NYS Assembly
John Lemondes, NYS Assembly
Brian Manktelow, NYS Assembly
Ryan McMahon, Onondaga County Executive
David Knapp, Onondaga County Legislature Chairman
Ben Walsh, Mayor of Syracuse

April 20, 2021

Onondaga County Supervisors Voice Concern Over Governor Cuomo Announcement on Interstate 81 Project Funding

State DOT has ignored comments by all who would be impacted by project

SYRACUSE, NY – We, the Town Supervisors of Onondaga County today announce our concern with Governor Andrew Cuomo's recent proposal to put $800 million of next year's state budget towards funding a community grid in place of Interstate 81. As representatives of 69% of the County's population, the Onondaga County supervisors expressed frustration with the Albany Department of Transportation's unwillingness to listen to their constituent's concerns over a "grid-only" proposal being pushed by Governor Cuomo. Both the Onondaga County Supervisors and Mayors also reached out to Transportation Secretary Buttigieg with their concerns for an all-inclusive infrastructure project that meets the important needs of residents who live in the neighborhood next to Interstate 81 and; the Supervisor's were surprised when the Secretary mentioned the 81 proposal indicating he had received numerous letters on the project, but failed to mention their source or the issues related therein.

Our constituents are looking for a complete solution that recognizes the needs of all residents, as opposed to the proposed grid-only plan which would fail miserably in many ways. Despite representing the vast majority of Onondaga County, the Albany DOT has not listened to or considered our serious concerns prior to the announcement of this new round of state spending. Most of the impacted community is still being left out of the conversation.

The $800 million announced by Governor Cuomo is only planned for a proposed community grid. However, this proposal remains largely at odds with the greater Central New York Community. One major oversight of the grid-only proposal is its impact to climate change: by taking down the free-flowing and efficient route currently utilized by 90,000 cars and trucks every day and diverting them onto city streets, gridlock and congestion would increase, leading to more idling vehicles and greatly increased levels of fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

This runs counter to both the needs of Central New Yorkers, who would witness increased levels of localized pollution, as well as the needs of the rest of the state as it looks to pursue a cleaner energy future.

Not only would a grid-only proposal further impact climate change, but rerouting thousands of cars and trucks onto busy and congested city streets would also reduce pedestrian safety and induce more traffic accidents. After the year that we've had, public safety, along with fast and reliable access to hospitals, is of utmost concern to all of us who rely on Interstate 81 on a regular basis. Notable, is the fact the emergency service providers are beginning to weigh-in on their concerns too. On its own, a community grid-only proposal just doesn't make sense for those who live in the area.

On top of that, a community grid-only would crush businesses that directly rely on Interstate 81 while interfering with day-to-day operations throughout the region's business ecosystem. Manufacturers, suppliers, warehouses, haulers, tradespeople, accountants, lawyers, benefits managers and marketers dart between city and suburban zip codes to solve problems, cultivate leads and get product out the door. Any solution must consider the significant business and personal opportunity costs of workday traffic jams. Let's not forget the most recent DEIS was issued in April of 2019 and any final document has not yet been put on the calendar.

The Onondaga County Supervisors reiterated that other proposals for an Interstate 81 project had been offered but ignored by the Albany Department of Transportation in favor of a grid-only proposal. They also urged Governor Cuomo that a grid built in conjunction with forward-looking infrastructure will meet the needs of Central New Yorkers and help the region build back from the pandemic.

At this point, we need a solution that is best for everyone and works for all of us who live here in Central New York. As it stands, the vast majority of Onondaga County does not believe that a grid-only proposal is what's best for the region. That said, we want to continue to work with the Governor to find common ground to ensure that any project is the best option for our entire community.

###

ONONDAGA COUNTY SUPERVISOR'S ASSOCIATION

Town of Camillus
Town of Cicero
Town of Clay
Town of Dewitt
Town of Elbridge
Town of Geddes
Town of Lafayette
Town of Lysander
Town of Onondaga
Town of Otisco
Town of Salina
Town of Skaneateles
Town of Spafford
Town of VanBuren

Karen Pollard, Marcellus, Town of
Ed Theobald, Manlius, Town of
Melanie Vilardi, Fabius, Town of

July 2, 2021

Letter to the Editor;

Not surprisingly, we were not offered a seat at the table to meet with Honorable Secretary Buttigieg, Senator Schumer and Senator Gillibrand when they were in Syracuse Tuesday (6/29) to witness, in person and embrace a Route 81 proposal that still lacks the consensus that Senator Schumer has been seeking. As elected officials, representing residents from the Towns in Onondaga County, we are extremely disappointed that once again we were left out of the dialogue that we each individually implored the secretary and US senators to schedule. It appears once again, that the door was closed to us as our federal representatives met with only the county executive and city Mayor along with invited stakeholders of a grid-only alternative.

Central New York is beginning to witness a resurgence in its local economy and, now national and global players are taking positive steps to recognize that Onondaga County is a competitor in the world marketplace. In September of this year, a new Amazon facility will open for business in our County and in so doing, bring with it over 1,000 new jobs to our community. Spin-off businesses looking to capitalize off this once in a lifetime opportunity will position themselves to support this growth. Add to that the possibility of even larger global employers looking to make Central New York their home and you will have a boom in our economic community that has not been seen in almost a hundred years.

We as Town leaders could not agree more with the local business community who have gone on record embracing this positive economic growth. Now, we all need to follow suite and get behind an infrastructure improvement that will carry our economy and community forward into this young new century. We can't

afford to repeat the mistakes of the past. We need to be prepared for such growth and be ready with a highway that delivers a fast and efficient alternative to the present route that together with our economy has deteriorated for decades. We can rebuild our city and shore up its communities with a grid but at the same time we should keep the federal dollars that will build it, in our city, by constructing an iconic bridge to carry through traffic in conjunction with that grid creating an interstate artery above our city. Future economic growth in our region will only add to the traffic demand on our infrastructure. Let's prepare now for that alternative and no longer close the door to what could be opportunity knocking.

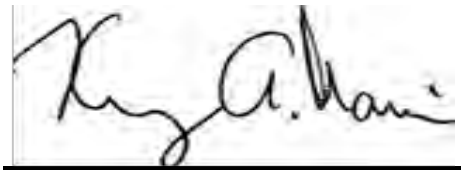
Tuesday provided a unique opportunity to bring federal, city and local elected officials to the table for a comprehensive dialogue about an infrastructure project that will affect us all. However, once again there were no chairs at the table for local elected Town officials; the reception was but a cold slap in the face, the sting of which we have felt several times before. We cannot let this happen again lest we all meet at the ribbon cutting of an already outdated 81 project to discuss why we didn't consider alternatives from voices outside the city of Syracuse.

Sincerely,

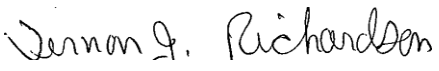
Damian M. Ulatowski
Supervisor, Town of Clay
(315) 652-3800 ext. 114

Supervisor, Town of Camillus

Supervisor, Town of Cicero

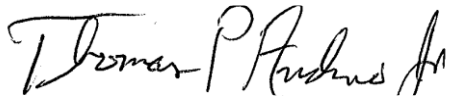


Deputy Supervisor, Town of Dewitt

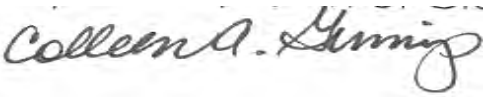


Supervisor, Town of Elbrdige

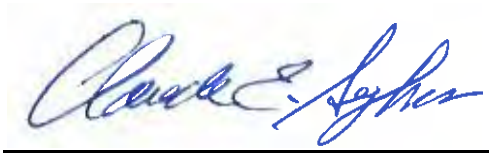
Supervisor, Town of Lysander



Supervisor, Town of Onondaga



Supervisor, Town of Salina



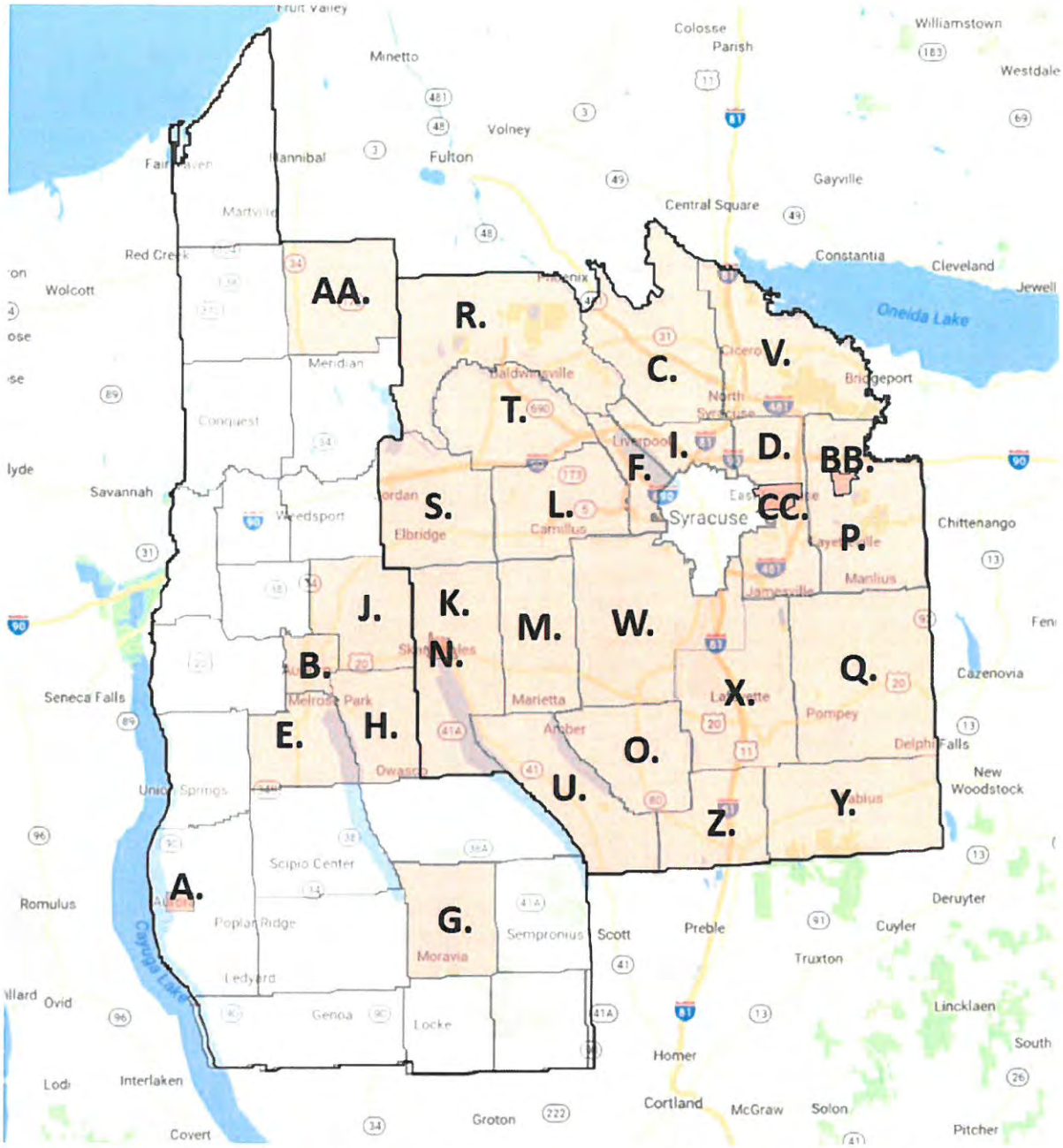
Supervisor, Town of Van Buren

Ed Theobald, Manlius Supervisor

Melanie Vilardi, Fabius Supervisor

I-81 Resolutions

Onondaga County	Town of Onondaga
Cayuga County	Town of Otisco
Village of Aurora	Town of Owasco
City of Auburn	Town of Pompey
Town of Camillus	Town of Salina
Town of Cicero	Town of Sennett
Town of Clay	Town of Skaneateles
Town of Dewitt	Village of Skaneateles
Village of East Syracuse	Town of Spafford
Town of Elbridge	Town of Tully
Town of Fabius	Town of Van Buren
Town of Fleming	
Town of Geddes	
Town of Ira	
Town of LaFayette	
Town of Lysander	
Town of Manlius	
Town of Marcellus	
Village of Minoa	
Town of Moravia	



Municipalities on record in opposition to replacing Interstate 81 through the City of Syracuse with a street level route (boulevard or community grid):

A.	Village of Aurora	P.	Town of Manlius
B.	City of Auburn	Q.	Town on Pompey
C.	Town of Clay	R.	Town of Lysander
D.	Town of Dewitt	S.	Town of Elbridge
E.	Town of Fleming	T.	Town of Van Buren
F.	Town of Geddes	U.	Town of Spafford
G.	Town of Moravia	V.	Town of Cicero
H.	Town of Owasco	W.	Town of Onondaga
I.	Town of Salina	X.	Town of LaFayette
J.	Town of Sennett	Y.	Town of Fabius
K.	Town of Skaneateles	Z.	Town of Tully
L.	Town of Camillus	AA.	Town of Ira
M.	Town of Marcellus	BB.	Village of Minoa
N.	Village of Skaneateles	CC.	Village of East Syracuse
O.	Town of Otisco		

Regional Elected Officials have rejected with near unanimity any street-level-only substitute for Interstate 81:

1. New York State Senators:
   - Ritchie (R-48)
   - DeFrancisco (R-50)
   - Seward (R-51)
   - Akshar (R-52)
   - Valesky (D-53)
   - Helming (R-54)
   - O'Mara (R-58)

2. New York State Assembly Members:
   - Barclay (R-120)
   - Finch (R-126)
   - Hunter (D-128)
   - Magnarelli (D-129)
   - Oaks (R-130)

County, Town & Village Resolutions

Onondaga County Legislature

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 Route 81.doc
kam

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

Cayuga County Legislature

Resolution No 243-13 6.25.13

6-13-LEG-2
LEG maint align 81 thru Syr. rev

MEMORALIZING 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

Sheila P. Smith
CLERK, CAYUGA COUNTY LEGISLATURE

Village of Aurora

RESOLUTION 613-3 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 outlaying 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 Bellard

Village Clerk

City of Auburn

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 outlaying 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

Town of Camillus

January 10, 2017
Town of Camillus Town Board Resolution

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF CAMILLUS, 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 Camillus; 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, 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 Camillus 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, Camillus 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 Supervisor of the Town of Camillus 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.

Adopted 4 Ayes
0 Nayes
3 Abstaining

Town of Cicero

Town Council
Vern Conway, Deputy Supervisor
Mike Becallo
Dick Cushman
Jonathan Karp

Supervisor
Mark Venesky
(315) 699-1414

Highway Superintendent
Christopher J. Woznica
(315) 699-2745
Fax (315) 699-2746

Town Clerk
Tracy M. Cosilmon
(315) 699-8109

Receiver of Taxes
Sharon M. Edick
(315) 699-2756
Fax (315) 699-9562

TOWN OF CICERO

COUNTY OF ONONDAGA
8236 Brewerton Road, Cicero, New York 13039 • FAX 315-699-0039 • e-mail: mvenesky@ciceronewyork.net

STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF ONONDAGA
TOWN OF CICERO

The Town Board of the Town of Cicero adopted the following Resolution at a Special Town Board Meeting held on December 30, 2016 as follows:

Supervisor Venesky moved for an adoption of a resolution that the Cicero Town Board memorializes its determination that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must be removed or impaired; and, that the Supervisor of the Town of Cicero 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. The resolution was approved as follows:

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF CICERO, 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 Cicero; 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 local neighborhoods and quality of life; 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 Cicero 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, Cicero 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; and,

WHEREAS, if Interstate 81 is not retained as an interstate highway through Syracuse, truck traffic will become a greatly increased burden for communities to the west of Syracuse;

WHEREAS, the Almond Street "boulevard" and parallel streets in Syracuse would bear the burden of scores of thousands of additional vehicles each day, displaced by the removal of the elevated highway;

WHEREAS, additionally, if Interstate 81 is not retained as an interstate highway, trucks headed north through Syracuse to Interstate 690 or the New York Thruway would encounter a boulevard laced with 14 signalized intersections, then have to make a right turn onto Erie Boulevard, travel east two blocks, make a left turn to pass under I-690, and then another left turn onto a westbound I-690 ramp. It is very unlikely that trucks traveling north on I-81 with a destination to the west would travel this route, nor would they divert miles out of the way to the east of Syracuse and pay increased tolls on the Thruway to reach their goal. The result would be communities west of Syracuse experiencing a greatly increased burden of truck traffic, with many of the trucks carrying hazardous wastes.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cicero 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 Cicero 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.

Motion was seconded by Councilor Karp.

Ayes – 5, Noes – 0, and Abstentions- 0. *Motion carried unanimously.*

I, Tracy M. Cosilmon, Clerk of the Town of Cicero, in the County of Onondaga, New York, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that I have compared the preceding resolution, excerpted from the Town Board minutes of the special meeting held on December 30, 2016 with the original thereof filed in my office, and that the same is a true and correct copy of said original and of the whole thereof so far as the same relate to the subject matters referred to therein.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the Town of Cicero, the day and year above written.

Dated: December 30, 2016
Cicero, New York

Tracy M. Cosilmon
Town Clerk

(SEAL)

Town of Clay

Damian M. Ulatowski
Supervisor

Robert L. Edick
Deputy Supervisor

Office of the Supervisor
Town of Clay

"One of America's 100 Best Places to Live"

Councilors:
Joseph A. Bick
Naomi R. Bray
Bruce N. Johnson
Eugene B. Young
William C. Weaver

January 26, 2015

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

Dear Commissioner McDonald:

I represent the Town of Clay and urge the state Department of Transportation to choose an option for Interstate 81 that will maintain the highway's current function and general alignment through our region.

As state transportation officials now consider the final I-81 options for further study, I want to formally restate the Town of Clay's support for maintaining I-81 and again urge the state to consider options that will preserve it for the future.

I also urge the state to reject any boulevard-only plans that would replace I-81 and reroute highway traffic around the City of Syracuse.

I am confident that residents of the Town of Clay are deeply concerned that replacing I-81 with an at-grade boulevard will lead to increased commute times and air pollution from gridlock. Re-routing the highway will cause increased truck traffic in our community that will strain infrastructure and reduce property values. I am also worried that re-routing traffic around Syracuse will slow emergency response times throughout the region.

This is why I support a resolution urging the state to maintain I-81's general alignment as part of any plan for the highway's future. I, together with many other municipalities throughout the region, agree that keeping I-81 on its current path is crucial for our region.

It is vital for the DOT to determine a path forward for I-81 that our entire region can unite behind. Recent polls and surveys have shown Central New York residents want to maintain Interstate 81 in its current path, either by rebuilding the boulevard or through a tunnel. These polls, combined with the resolutions that have been passed throughout our region, show strong support for maintaining Interstate 81's current form, function and alignment throughout Central New York.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback and for your outreach to residents and I-81 stakeholders. We hope you will fully consider the concerns of our communities as this critical process continues to unfold, and we look forward to working closely with you throughout 2015 to ensure the right decision is made for all Central New Yorkers.

Sincerely,

Damian M. Ulatowski
Supervisor, Town of Clay

DMU/jr

4401 State Route 31, Clay, New York 13041-8707
Phone: (315) 652-3800 ✧ Website: www.townofclay.org ✧ E-Mail: supervisor@townofclay.org ✧ Fax: (315) 622-7259

Town of Dewitt

August 22, 2016

DeWitt Town Board Resolution

Motion by Councilor Young, seconded by Councilor Frank.

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 August 22, 2016

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.

Adopted 5 Ayes

1 Nay - Rigney

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.

Village of East Syracuse

MAYOR: Robert Tackman, Mayor
DEPUTY MAYOR: Kimberly Liedka
TRUSTEES: Mary Albanese
James Carr
Janet Mattox

VILLAGE CLERK: Michael A. Moracco

VILLAGE OF EAST SYRACUSE
204 NORTH CENTER ST.
EAST SYRACUSE, NEW YORK 1305
Incorporated 1881
(315) 437-3541
(315) 463-2150 (fax)

IN THE MATTER

OF

VILLAGE OF EAST SYRACUSE **RESOLUTION No: 2018-050**

The **VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF EAST SYRACUSE**, in the County of Onondaga, State of New York, met in a special session on May 23, 2018 at the Municipal Building, located at 204 North Center Street, East Syracuse New York 13057.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Robert T. Tackman, and the following were present:

Deputy Mayor Kimberly Liedka
Trustee James Carr
Trustee Janet Mattox
Trustee Mary Albanese

Also present:

Village Clerk Michael Moracco

The following resolutions were moved, seconded and adopted:

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, many of the region's workers and businesses rely on l-81's current Interstate. Highway designation, it is vital that solution for 1-81 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, l-81's current Interstate Highway designation through the City of Syracuse must be preserved, because altering designation could harm businesses along l-81's path and potentially result in loss of
jobs for area workers; and

WHEREAS, Village of East Syracuse, Trustees of the ("Village Board") believes that any solution to deal with I-81's aging infrastructure must not compromise one the most significant advantages of living, working, and doing business in the region and;

WHEREAS; the Village Board urges I-81 decision-makers to 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, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that Village Board does hereby oppose replacing I-81 in Downtown Syracuse with a boulevard and rerouting existing highway traffic around the City of Syracuse, and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Village Board memorializes its determination that Interstate 81's current Interstate Highway designation through Syracuse and Central New York should not be altered; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Village of East Syracuse Clerk 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.

The adoption of the foregoing Resolution was moved by Trustee Albanese, seconded by Deputy Mayor Liedka, and duly put to vote, which resulted as follows:

Mayor Tackman	yes
Deputy Mayor Liedka	yes
Trustee Mattox	yes
Trustee Carr	yes
Trustee Albanese	yes

THIS RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

I, **Michael Moracco, Village Clerk** of the Village of East Syracuse, **DO HEREBY CERTIFY** that the preceding Resolution was duly adopted by the Village Board of Trustees of the Village of East Syracuse at a Board of Trustees meeting of the Board duly called and held on the 4th day of June, 2018; that said Resolution was entered in the minutes of said meeting; that I have compared the foregoing copy with the original thereof now on file in my office; and that the same is a true and correct transcript of said Resolution and of the whole thereof.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that all members of said Village Board had due Notice of said meeting.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the Village of East Syracuse, this 5th day of June, 2018.

_____

Mike Moracco, Village Clerk
Village of East Syracuse
Onondaga County, New York

Town of Elbridge

TOWN OF
ELBRIDGE

5 Route 31 • P.O. Box 568 • Jordan, NY 130
Tel: 315-689-9031 • Fax: 315-689-31
www.townofelbridge.co

Ken ush, Jr.
Supervisor

Rita I Dygert
Councilor
Deputy Supervisor

Vern Richardson
Councilor

Doug Blumer
Councilor

Floyd Duger
Councilor

Debra Sapleton
Town Clerk

James White
Highway
Superintendent

December 29th, 2016

STATE OF NEW YORK
COUNTY OF ONONDAGA SS:
TOWN OF ELBRIDGE

I, the undersigned, Clerk of the Town of Elbridge, DO HEREBY CERTIFY that the following resolution was duly adopted by the Town Board of the Town of Elbridge at a Town Meeting of the said Board duly called and held on December 28th, 2016; that the said resolution was entered in the minutes of the said meeting; and that I have compared the foregoing copy with the original thereof now on file in my office and that the same is a true and correct transcript of said resolution and of the whole thereof.

On a motion of Councilor Blumer seconded by Councilor Duger the following resolution was

ADOPTED: 4 AYES Dygert Richardson Blumer Duger
0 NAYS

Resolutions 140-16

Resolved: the Elbridge Town Board Memorializing the intent of the Town board of the Town of Elbridge, 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 Elbridge; 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, 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 travel 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 Elbridge 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, Elbridge supports a balanced, comprehensive approach, a regional transportation plan is necessary to ensure smart climate 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; and,

WHEREAS, if Interstate 81 is not retained as an interstate highway through Syracuse, truck traffic will become a greatly increased burden for communities to the west of Syracuse;

WHEREAS, the Almond Street "boulevard" and parallel streets in Syracuse would bear the burden of scores of thousands of additional vehicles each day, displaced by the removal of the elevated highway;

WHEREAS, additionally, if Interstate 81 is not retained as an interstate highway, trucks headed north through Syracuse to Interstate 690 or the New York Thruway would encounter a boulevard laced with 14 signalized intersections, then have to make a right turn onto Erie Boulevard, travel east two blocks, make a left turn to pass under I-690, and then another left turn onto a westbound I-690 ramp. It is very unlikely that trucks traveling north on I-81 with a destination to the west would travel this route, nor would they divert miles out of the way to the east of Syracuse and pay increased tolls on the Thruway to reach their goal. The result would be communities west of Syracuse experiencing a greatly increased burden of truck traffic, with many of the trucks carrying hazardous wastes.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Elbridge 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 Elbridge 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.

Debra H. Stapleton

Debra H. Stapleton
Town Clerk of the Town of Elbridge
In Onondaga County New York

Town of Fabius

TOWN OF FABIUS
STATE OF NEW YORK COUNTY OF ONONDAGA

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

RESOLUTION #2017-1

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 Fabius; 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 local neighborhoods and quality of life; 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 Fabius 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.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Fabius 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 Fabius 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.

Adopted: Ayes {4} Vilardi, Schlicht, Foster, Hanson
Nays {0}

I, Margaret M. Riker, Clerk of the Town of Fabius, County of Onondaga, State of New York, do hereby certify that the foregoing was duly adopted by the Town Board of the Town of Fabius, County of Onondaga, State of New York, at their regular monthly meeting held on the 16th day of January 2017, a quorum being present.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of my office.

Dated: 1-17-17

Margaret M. Riker

Margaret M. Riker, Town Clerk of the Town of Fabius

(SEAL)

Town of Fleming

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 outlaying 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

Gary B. Searing, Supervisor

Ronald LeVarnway, Councilman

Arthur Fritz, Councilman

Ellen M. DelloStritto

Ellen DelloStritto, Councilwoman

Gerald Dudek, Councilman

Town of Geddes

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.

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Joseph L Ranieri

JOSEPH L RANIERI

Town of Ira

TOWN CLERK'S CERTIFICATION

STATE OF NEW YORK
:SS:
COUNTY OF CAYUGA

I, the undersigned Clerk of the Town of Ira, Cayuga County, New York, **DO HEREBY CERTIFY:**

THAT I have compared the attached proceedings of the Town Board of said Town, including the Resolution contained therein with the originals thereof on file in My office and that the same are true and correct copies of said originals and of the whole of said originals so far as the same relates to the subject matters therein referred to.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of said Town this 1st day of March , 2017.

Jill C. Campbell
Town Clerk, Town of Ira
Cayuga County, New York

SEAL

RESOLUTION #2017-17
THE INTENT OF THE TOWN OF IRA BOARD REGARDING THE NEED TO MAINTAIN THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE RT. #81

On motion by Mr. Wilson and seconded by Mr. Simmons with unanimous approval the following resolution was,
ADOPTED, AYES 4, NAYS 0

WHEREAS, the last 50 years Interstate Rt. 81 has served as a vital backbone for the economy and welfare of Central New York and,

WHEREAS, Interstate Rt. #81 provides necessary links to downtown Syracuse, area hospitals, Syracuse University, Destiny U.S.A., Hancock Airport and our many neighboring cities and towns and,

WHEREAS, removing the Interstate Rt. #81 as it exists today would create an adverse condition to the quality of life in the immediate area and access as it is today to the above mentioned, it is therefore

RESOLVED, that the Town of Ira Board would like the existing configuration of Interstate Rt. #81, remain an interstate and keep the same alignment through the City of Syracuse.

Town of LaFayette

Town of LaFayette Town Board Resolution

ESTABLISHING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF LAFAYETTE, 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, Hancock Airport, present and future businesses and residents along 81 corridor, to business and residents within the Town of LaFayette; 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 local neighborhoods and quality of life; 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 LaFayette 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, LaFayette 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; and,

WHEREAS, if Interstate 81 is not retained as an interstate highway through Syracuse, truck traffic will become a greatly increased burden for communities to the south and west of Syracuse;

WHEREAS, the Almond Street "boulevard" and parallel streets in Syracuse would bear the burden of scores of thousands of additional vehicles each day, displaced by the removal of the elevated highway;

WHEREAS, additionally, if Interstate 81 is not retained as an interstate highway, trucks headed north through Syracuse to Interstate 690 or the New York Thruway would encounter a boulevard laced with 14 signalized intersections, then have to make a right turn onto Erie Boulevard, travel east two blocks, make a left turn to pass under I-690, and then another left turn onto a westbound I-690 ramp. It is very unlikely that trucks traveling north on I-81 with a destination to the west would travel this route, nor would they divert miles out of the way to the east of Syracuse and pay increased tolls on the Thruway to reach their goal. The result would be communities west of Syracuse experiencing a greatly increased burden of truck traffic, with many of the trucks carrying hazardous wastes.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the LaFayette Town Board establishes 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 LaFayette 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.

Adopted [5] Ayes
[0] Nayes

SUPERVISOR OHSTROM MOVED
COUNCILOR KERRY EVANS SECONDED

ALL IN FAVOR

Town of Lysander

Town of Lysander
Town Board Resolution Number 194
December 29, 2016

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF LYSANDER, 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 Lysander, 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 local neighborhoods and quality of life; 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 Lysander 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, the Town of Lysander 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 Lysander 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 Lysander 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.

Adopted 5 Ayes
0 Nays

Town of Manlius

IN THE MATTER
Of
THE
ALIGNMENT OF INTERSTATE 81
THROUGH THE CITY OF SYRACUSE

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING
THE EXISTING ALIGNMENT

The **TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF MANLIUS**, in the County of Onondaga. State of New York, met in regular session at the Town Hall in the Town of Manlius. located at 301 Brooklea Drive in the Village of Fayetteville, County of Onondaga, State of New York, on the 22nd day of December 2016, at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Edmond J. Theobald, Supervisor, and the following were present, namely:

Edmond J. Theobald	Supervisor
Vincent Giordano	Councilor
Karen Green	Councilor
John R. Loeffler	Councilor
David M. Marnell, Sr.	Councilor
Nicholas J. Marzola	Councilor
Richard Rossetti	Councilor

The following resolution was moved, seconded and adopted:

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 Manlius; 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 local neighborhoods and quality of life; 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 unanimous agreement of the Manlius 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, the Town of Manlius 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; and,

WHEREAS, if Interstate 81 is not retained as an interstate highway through Syracuse, truck traffic will become a greatly increased burden for communities to the west of Syracuse;

WHEREAS, the Almond Street "boulevard" and parallel streets in Syracuse would bear the burden of scores of thousands of additional vehicles each day, displaced by the removal of

the elevated highway;

WHEREAS, additionally, if Interstate 81 is not retained as an interstate highway, trucks headed north through Syracuse to Interstate 690 or the New York Thruway would encounter a boulevard laced with 14 signalized intersections, then have to make a right turn onto Erie Boulevard, travel east two blocks, make a left turn to pass under I-690, and then another left turn onto a westbound I-690 ramp. It is very unlikely that trucks traveling north on I-81 with a destination to the west would travel this route, nor would they divert miles out of the way to the east of Syracuse and pay increased tolls on the Thruway to reach their goal. The result would be communities west of Syracuse experiencing a greatly increased burden of truck traffic, with many of the trucks carrying hazardous wastes.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Manlis 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 Manlius 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.

		Ayes	Nays
Edmond J. Theobald	Supervisor	X	
Vincent Giordano	Councilor	X	
Karen Green	Councilor	X	
John R. Loeffler	Councilor	X	
David M. Marnell, Sr.	Councilor	X	
Nicholas J. Marzola	Councilor	X	
Richard Rossetti	Councilor	X	

Adopted Unanimously

Town of Marcellus

Resolution of the Town Board of the Town of Marcellus
Pertaining to Interstate 81 Renovations
Dated: _____

A motion was made by Councilor _____ to adopt the following Resolution and the motion was seconded by Councilor_____;

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF MARCELLUS, 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 the local hospitals, Syracuse University, Destiny USA, present and future businesses and residents along I-81 corridor; 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 may irreparably harm the regional economy and corresponding employment dependent upon the highway network and may further negatively impact neighborhoods in close proximity to I-81; 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, redirecting Interstate 81 traffic to Route 481 will have the result of pushing traffic traveling on I-81 further to the east of Syracuse and traffic wishing to travel west on I-90 will consequently be forced further east. This may result in increased traffic through the Town of Marcellus by way of Route 175 Seneca Turnpike and Route 20 for those wishing to travel west, thereby increasing the noise and environmental pollution and otherwise having a detrimental impact on the social welfare of the Marcellus community; 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 Marcellus 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, The Town of Marcellus Board 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.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it

RESOLVED, that the Marcellus 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 Marcellus 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.

The question of the adoption of the foregoing Resolution was duly put to a vote and the vote was as follows:

Karen Pollard	**Supervisor**	**Voted**	**Yes/No**
Christopher Hunt	**Councilor**	**Voted**	**Yes/No**
Kevin O'Hara	**Councilor**	**Voted**	**Yes/No**
John Cusick	**Councilor**	**Voted**	**Yes/No**
Laurie Stevens	**Councilor**	**Voted**	**Yes/No**

The foregoing Resolution was thereupon declared duly adopted.

DATED: _____, **2016**

_____

Town of Marcellus Clerk

Village of Minoa

MAYOR
William F. Brazill

TRUSTEES
John M. Abbott
John H. Champagne
Eric S. Christensen
Gregory A. Rinaldi

CLERK-TREASURER
Lisa L. DeVona

LEGAL COUNSEL
Law Offices of Courtney M. Hills, P.C.

VILLAGE OF MINOA
240 N. Main Street
Minoa, New York 13116
Office 315-656-3100
Fax 315-656-0825
www.villageofminoa.com

Celebrating 100 Years
1913 - 2013

IN THE MATTER

OF

VILLAGE OF MINOA

RESOLUTION

The **VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF MINOA,** in the County of Onondaga, State of New York, met in regular session at the Municipal Building, located at 240 N. Main Street, in the Village of Minoa, County of Onondaga, State of New York, on the 14th day of May 2018, at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor William Brazill, and the following were present, namely:

	John Champagne	Deputy Mayor/Trustee
	Eric Christensen	Trustee
	John Abbott	Trustee
	Gregory Rinaldi	Trustee
Absent:		
Also present:	Lisa DeVona	Village Clerk-Treasurer
	Courtney M. Hills	Village Attorney

The following resolutions were moved, seconded and adopted:

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, many of the region's workers and businesses rely on I-81's current Interstate Highway designation, it is vital that 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 designation could harm businesses along I-81's path and potentially result in loss of jobs for area workers; and

WHEREAS, Village of Minoa Board of Trustees ("Village Board") believes that any solution to deal with I-81's aging infrastructure must not compromise one the most significant advantages of living, working, and doing business in the region and;

WHEREAS; the Village Board urges I-81 decision-makers to 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, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that Village Board does hereby oppose replacing I-81 in Downtown Syracuse with a boulevard and rerouting existing highway traffic around the City of Syracuse, and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Village Board memorializes its determination that Interstate 81's current Interstate Highway designation through Syracuse and Central New York should not be altered; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Village of Minoa Clerk 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.

The adoption of the foregoing Resolution was moved by John Champagne, seconded by John Abbott, and duly put to vote, which resulted as follows

John Champagne, Deputy Mayor/Trustee	_Aye__
Eric Christensen, Trustee	_Aye__
John Abbott, Trustee	_Aye__
Gregory Rinaldi, Trustee	_Aye__

THIS RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

I, LISA DEVONA, Village Clerk of the Village of Minoa, **DO HEREBY CERTIFY** that the preceding Resolution was duly adopted by the Village Board of Trustees of the Village of Minoa at a regular meeting of the Board duly called and held on the 14th day of May, 2018; that said Resolution was entered in the minutes of said meeting; that I have compared the foregoing copy with the original thereof now on file in my office; and that the same is a true and correct transcript of said Resolution and of the whole thereof.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that all members of said Village Board had due Notice of said meeting.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the seal of the Village of Minoa, this 14 day of May 2018.

Lisa DeVona

LISA DEVONA
Village Clerk of the Village of Minoa
Onondaga County, New York

Town of Moravia

TOWN OF MORAVIA

138 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

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 outlaying 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

Town of Onondaga

January 9, 2017

The Town Board of the Town of Onondaga met at a regular meeting at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, January 9, 2017 at Town Hall, 5020 Ball Road, Syracuse, New York.

Present:	Supervisor	Thomas P. Andino, Jr.
	Councilman	Charles Petrie
	Councilman	Donald Hamilton
	Councilwoman	Suzanne Belle
	Councilwoman	Mary K. Ryan
	Town Clerk	Lisa M. Goodwin
	Town Attorney	Kevin Gilligan
	Town Engineer	William Perrine

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

The following resolution was offered by Supervisor Andino, who moved its adoption, seconded by Councilman Petrie,

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 Onondaga; 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 local neighborhoods and quality of life; 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 Onondaga 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, Onondaga Town Board supports a balanced, comprehensive approach, a regional transportation plan that ensures 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 and electric vehicles for our suburban communities which are in dire need of a traffic diet as well; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Onondaga 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 Onondaga 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.

The question of the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly put to a vote and upon roll call, the vote was as follows:

Councilman	Petrie	Voted	Yes
Councilman	Hamilton	Voted	Yes
Councilwoman	Belle	Voted	Yes
Councilwoman	Ryan	Voted	Yes
Supervisor	Andino	Voted	Yes

The foregoing resolution was thereupon declared duly adopted.

DATED: January 9, 2017

Town of Otisco

Memorialization on the Future of Interstate 81 Passing Through the City of Syracuse by the Town Board of the Town of Otisco, Onondaga County

Motion made by Supervisor Wayne S. Amato and seconded by Councilman Peter J. Murphy (December 12, 2016)

WHEREAS, the present configuration of Interstate 81 through the City of Syracuse has served the City of Syracuse and the various towns of Onondaga County for many decades, and

WHEREAS, the present configuration of Interstate 81 has also served commercial, educational, medical, military and residential requirements for many decades, and

WHEREAS, losing the effective direct links of Interstate 81 to Route 690 and the NYS Thruway would be against logic in forcing a convoluted route around the City of Syracuse, and

WHEREAS, an extended route around the City of Syracuse would have an adverse effect on commerce, emergency service, and general vehicular travel, while contributing to an increase of emissions to the expanded area, and, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the town board of the town of Otisco memorializes its conviction that any rebuild of the section of Interstate 81 passing through the City of Syracuse should preserve the existing configuration of Interstate 81 in both function and designation, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Supervisor of the town of Otisco is directed to send a copy of this resolution to the New York State Department of Transportation, to the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and to the state senators and assemblymen representing our area.

Passed: Ayes 4; Nays 0

Supervisor Wayne S. Amato _____

Councilman Peter J. Murphy _____

Councilman Steven J. Loeffler _____

Councilman Scott Kipp _____

Town of Owasco

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 outlaying 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 Yes; Councilperson Gucciardi Yes; Councilperson Knaul Yes; Councilperson Lattimore Yes; Supervisor Wagner Yes

Town of Pompey

Pompey Town Board Resolution
12/5/16

Motion by Councilor Carl Dennis, seconded by Councilor Gregory Herlihy.

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF POMPEY,
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 Pompey; and

WHEREAS, turning Interstate 81 to Route 481 leaves no alternative north- south Route for emergency access, 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 Pompey's neighborhoods and its residents quality of life; and

WHEREAS, Pompey is close to the eastern border of Syracuse and its neighborhoods already suffer the consequences of commuter traffic to and from the City of Syracuse. Consequently, moving Interstate 81 to Route 481 will only exacerbate local traffic leaving a heavy toll on already taxed Pompey resources. Namely, increasing the wear and tear on Pompey'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 Pompey 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, Pompey 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 Pompey 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 Pompey 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.

Adopted

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	Yes
Colleen A. Gunnip, Councilor	Yes
V. James Magnarelli, Councilor	Yes
Gerald Ciciarelli,	Yes
Michael J. Del Vecchio Jr., Councilor	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 of Sennett

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 outlaying 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.

Town of Skaneateles

RESOLUTION OF THE
TOWN BOARD
OF THE
TOWN OF SKANEATELES

WHEREAS, with the prosperity and quality of life of the town, the lake and the region at stake, The Town Board officially resolved in 2013 and 2016 its determination that the existing Interstate 81 route must be maintained through Syracuse and Central New York; and

WHEREAS, we commend Governor Andrew M. Cuomo for his principled and decisive statement opposing the proposed trash incinerator in Romulus over obvious environmental concerns; and

WHEREAS, many of the same considerations must also be weighed when it comes to the future of Interstate 81 and of the Finger Lakes region. The same environmental standards must be applied to this decision-making process as well; and

WHEREAS, even without an incinerator looming, dirty trash- and hazardous waste-hauling trucks would still surge en masse through the Finger Lakes area if I-81 were to be downgraded to a street-level routing, otherwise known as the "community grid;" and

WHEREAS, an environmental study by the New York State Department of Transportation regarding the future of this vital north-south artery is being completed, necessitating an updated and renewed focus on protecting the environment and preserving vital access to and through Syracuse and Central New York; now therefore it is

RESOLVED, that the Town Board of Skaneateles reaffirms in the strongest possible terms its support for maintaining the existing Interstate 81 route through Syracuse and Central New York and opposition to the downgrading of Interstate 81 to a street-level routing; and it is further

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Supervisor 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, the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council, and to the to the various state legislative and congressional members representing Central New York.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that at a meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Skaneateles, Skaneateles, New York on June 4, 2018 the foregoing Resolution was duly moved by Councilor Badami and seconded by Councilor Coville a quorum of four members of the five-member Board being present, and each voted on the Resolution as follows:

Supervisor	Janet L. Aaron	Yes
Councilor	David Badami	Yes
Councilor	Robert Coville	Yes
Councilor	Kevin McCormick	Yes
Councilor	Mark Tucker	Yes

The Resolution was, therefore, duly adopted.

Dated: June 4, 2018

Julie A. Stenger
Town Clerk
Town of Skaneateles

Village of Skaneateles

RESOLUTION
OF THE VILLAGE TRUSTEES
OF THE
VILLAGE OF SKANEATELES

WHEREAS, for the last 50 years, Interstate 81 has served a vital function for the economy of Central New York; and

WHEREAS, Interstate 81 provides vital access to downtown Syracuse, hospitals, Syracuse University, Destiny USA, present and future businesses and residents along the I-81 corridor; and

WHEREAS, removing the current alignment of I-81 would negatively impact the Village of Skaneateles by increasing truck and car traffic on local roads; and

WHEREAS, excessive truck traffic is currently an ongoing problem in the Village of Skaneateles; and

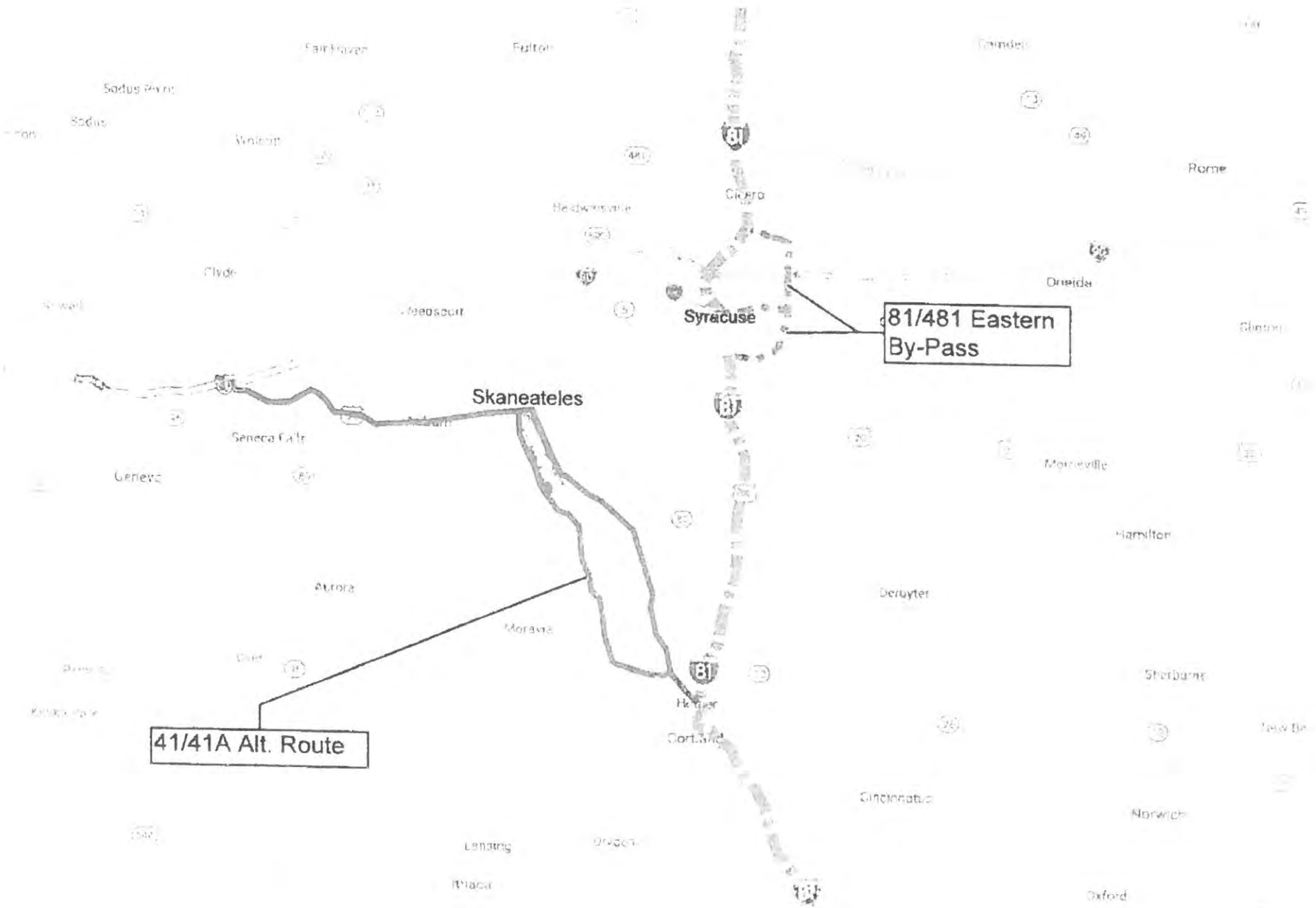
WHEREAS, increased traffic causes increased use of petroleum based fuels, noise, dust, emissions and atmospheric deposition of pollutants on land and water, business, homes, and schools; now therefore it is

RESOLVED, that the Village Board of Trustees 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 it is further

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

The foregoing Resolution was adopted this 8th day of December, 2016.

Patricia Couch, Clerk/Treasurer


Syracuse
81/481 Eastern By-Pass
Skaneateles
41/41A Alt. Route

Town of Spafford

January 5, 2017
Town of Spafford Town Board Resolution #8-2017

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF SPAFFORD, 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 Spafford; 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 local neighborhoods and quality of life; 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 Spafford 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, the Spafford Town Board 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; and,

WHEREAS, if Interstate 81 is not retained as an interstate highway through Syracuse, truck traffic will become a greatly increased burden for communities to the west of Syracuse;

WHEREAS, the Almond Street "boulevard" and parallel streets in Syracuse would bear the burden of scores of thousands of additional vehicles each day, displaced by the removal of the elevated highway;

WHEREAS, additionally, if Interstate 81 is not retained as an interstate highway, trucks headed north through Syracuse to Interstate 690 or the New York Thruway would encounter a boulevard laced with 14 signalized intersections, then have to make a right turn onto Erie Boulevard, travel east two blocks, make a left turn to pass under I-690, and then another left turn onto a westbound I-690 ramp. It is very unlikely that trucks traveling north on I-81 with a destination to the west would travel this route, nor would they divert miles out of the way to the east of Syracuse and pay increased tolls on the Thruway to reach their goal. The result would be communities west of Syracuse experiencing a greatly increased burden of truck traffic, with many of the trucks carrying hazardous wastes;

WHEREAS, the Town of Spafford is primarily a rural and residential community with farming as one of the Town's primary industries; and

WHEREAS, the elimination of Interstate 81 as it currently exists would force westbound traffic to be channeled through western communities such as Spafford and said additional traffic would jeopardize the health, safety and welfare of the resident and in particular interfere with farm equipment traveling on said roads thereby causing additional safety concerns,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the SpaffordTown 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 Spafford 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.

Adopted 4 Ayes 0 Nayes 1 Absent

Town of Tully

Town of Tully Interstate Route # 81 Resolution

February 8th 2017

The intent of the Town of Tully Board regarding the need to maintain the existing alignment of Interstate Rt. # 81through Syracuse follows:

1) For the last 50 years Interstate Rt. 81 has served as a vital backbone for the economy and welfare of Central New York
2) Interstate Rt.# 81 provides necessary links to downtown Syracuse, our Hospitals, Syracuse University, Destiny U.S.A. , Hancock Airport and our many neighbors to the North
3) Removing the Highway (Rt#81) as it exists today would create an adverse condition to the quality of life in the immediate area and access as it is today to the above mentioned locations

Resolved that the Town of Tully Board keep the existing configuration of Highway Rt. # 81, remain an Interstate and keep the same alignment through the City of Syracuse

Motion by Frank Speziale
Seconded by John Masters

W. Lund—Yes
Chris Chapman—Yes
John Snavlin—Yes
Frank Speziale—Yes
John Masters--Yes

Town of Van Buren

TOWN OF VAN BUREN

OFFICE OF THE TOWN CLERK/RECEIVER OF TAXES

7575 Van Buren Road
Baldwinsville, NY 13027-6706
(315) 635-3010
Fax: (315) 635-8247
clerk@townofvanburen.com

January 5, 2017

The following is a true and correct copy of a resolution that was made at the January 3, 2017 Regular Town Board meeting of the Town of Van Buren:

The following Councilors were present and voted in the affirmative:

Mr. Rick Zaccaria	Councilor
Ms. Darcie Lesniak	Councilor
Ms. Mary Frances Sabin	Councilor
Mr. Howard Tupper	Councilor
Mr. Claude Sykes	Supervisor

012-17-025 MOTION BY Mr. Zaccaria, seconded by Mr. Tupper, to approve the following resolution:

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF VAN BUREN, COUNTY OF ONONDAGA, REGADING 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 Van Buren; 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 local neighborhoods and quality of life; 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 Van Buren 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; and

WHEREAS, Town of Van Buren 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; and

WHEREAS, if Interstate 81 is not retained as an interstate highway through Syracuse, truck traffic will become a greatly increased burden for communities to the west of Syracuse; and

WHEREAS, THE Almond Street "boulevard" and parallel streets in Syracuse would bear the burden of scores of thousands of additional vehicles each day, displaced by the removal of the elevated highway;

WHEREAS, additionally, if Interstate 81 is not retained as an interstate highway, trucks headed north through Syracuse to Interstate 690 or the New York State Thruway would encounter a boulevard laced with 14 signalized intersections, and a convoluted route to access I-690 West. It is very unlikely that trucks traveling north on I-81 with a destination to the west would travel this route, nor would they divert miles out of the way to the east of Syracuse and pay increased tolls on the Thruway to reach their goal. The result would be communities west of Syracuse experiencing a greatly increased burden of truck traffic, with many of the trucks carrying hazardous wastes.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren 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 Van Buren 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.

Mr. Zaccaria – Yes, Ms. Lesniak – Yes, Ms. Sabin – Yes, Mr. Tupper – Yes, Mr. Sykes – Yes

All Ayes – Motion Carried & Adopted

Lynn Preeburt

Lynn Preeburt, Town Clerk

Seal

Damian M. Ulatowski
Supervisor

Joseph A. Bick
Deputy Supervisor

Office of the Supervisor

Town of Clay

"One of America's 100 Best Places to Live"

Councilors:
Brian E. Hall
David J. Hess
Kevin J. Meaker
Ryan A. Pleskach
Eugene B. Young

October 14, 2021

Mark Frechette, P.E.
Project Director
NYS Department of Transportation, Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Rick Marquis
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Federal Building
11A Clinton Avenue, Suite 719
Albany, NY 12207

RE: Interstate 81

Dear Mr. Frechette and Mr. Marquis:

As President of the Onondaga County Supervisor's Association a body that represents nearly 70% of the population of Onondaga County, I write you today to continue to express significant concerns with the adverse impacts of the stand-alone community grid alternative included within the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Some 90,000 cars and trucks travel the elevated portion of Interstate Route 81 as they commute and trek to and through the City of Syracuse every day. More than 90% of these travelers begin and end their trips within the community and many are middle-and lower-income city, suburban and rural residents commuting to work. In short, they rely on Route 81 to support their livelihoods.

From a climate perspective, the "community grid" as proposed would set this community backward precipitously. Without the infrastructure to support those 90,000 commuters and travelers, every day would force them to divert to city streets as well as suburban and rural roads. Urban streets would then become gridlocked, fuel consumption would be wasted on extended travel time, greenhouse gas emissions on residential streets and rural roads would spiral out of control, all because of the endless cars and trucks starting, stopping and idling through thirteen traffic controlled intersections. Diverted traffic would crowd streets near Dr. Martin Luther King School and the entire south side neighborhood. Heavy traffic would multiply the number of vehicle-pedestrian accidents.

Attached are previously submitted communications including resolutions passed by Town and Village Boards in Onondaga County. Cayuga County has also weighed-in with their own concerns punctuating the issues our representatives have already identified as problems with the community grid. We strongly believe the community grid would be a huge mistake, and that there are better alternatives that should be explored representative of the stakeholders and residents of all of Central New York.

Sincerely,

Damian Ulatowski
Supervisor, Town of Clay
President, Onondaga County Board of Supervisors Association

Attachments

Cc: Governor Kathy Hochul
Senator Charles Schumer
Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
Congressman John Katko

5400 Butternut Drive
East Syracuse, NY 13057-8509
Phone: 315.446.3910
Fax: 315.449.0620

Town Board:
Joe Chiarenza
Karen Docter
Jack Dooling
Kerry Mannion
Kerin Rigney
Sam Young

RECEIVED
AUG - 2 2021
BY:

Edward M. Michalenko, PhD.
Supervisor

TOWN OF DeWitt
more than you think

July 30, 2021

Mark Frechette, P.E.
Project Director
New York State Department of Transportation, Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Rick Marquis
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Federal Building
11A Clinton Avenue, Suite 719
Albany, NY 12207

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Statement - Time Extension For Review and Comment

Dear Mr. Frechette and Mr. Marquis:

The Town of DeWitt is hereby requesting an extension of time to review and comment on the Route I-81 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). The proposed project will have profound impacts on the future for residents and businesses in the Town of DeWitt, the City of Syracuse and all Central New York. I formally request that the public comment period be extended through the end of the year and into 2022 to allow for sufficient public feedback and permit adequate review of the 28,000 page DEIS document. Given the ongoing COVID pandemic, Summer schedules, Fall holidays, and most importantly the amount of data just made available, it is not feasible to complete a technical evaluation and prepare a comprehensive response by September 14th. It is critical that the public be provided adequete time to have their voices heard and considered.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Edward M. Michalenko, Ph.D.
Supervisor

5400 Butternut Drive
East Syracuse, NY 13057-8509
Phone: 315.446.3910
Fax: 315.449.0620

Town Board:
Joe Chiarenza
Karen Docter
Jack Dooling
Kerry Mannion
Kerin Rigney
Sam Young

Edward M. Michalenko, PhD.
Supervisor

TOWN OF DeWitt
more than you think

September 9, 2021

Mark Frechette, P.E.
Project Director
New York State Department of Transportation, Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Rick Marquis
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Federal Building
11A Clinton Avenue, Suite 719
Albany, NY 12207

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Mr. Frechette and Mr. Marquis:

On behalf of the Town of DeWitt, we appreciate the extension of time given for the review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. We would like to request an additional meeting held in DeWitt to give our residents and businesses an opportunity to provide feedback regarding the impact specifically on DeWitt. We would be happy to provide space in DeWitt Town Hall or any of our buildings.

Thanks in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Edward M. Michalenko, Ph.D.
Supervisor

RECEIVED
SEP 13 2021
BY:

5400 Butternut Drive
East Syracuse, NY 13057-8509
Phone: 315.446.3910
Fax: 315.449.0620

Town Board:
Joe Chiarenza
Karen Docter
Jack Dooling
Kerry Mannion
Kerin Rigney
Sam Young

RECEIVED
OCT 13 2021
BY:

Edward M. Michalenko, PhD.
Supervisor

TOWN OF DeWitt
more than you think

Mark Frechette, P.E.
Project Director
New York State Department of Transportation, Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

October 12, 2021

Dear Mr. Frechette

Our Town of DeWitt, adjacent East of the City of Syracuse recognize that the I81 project will have a sizable impact as the current I-481 bypass will become the new rerouted Interstate I-81 after its removal from the Syracuse city center. Though this important project has the potential to have a transformative effect on the entire region, it is critical to understand that this rerouted Interstate highway will cut directly through our town, as I-481 does now, thus requiring some strategic mitigation to be in harmony with the beneficial effects the new design will bring. No other town in the region will be more impacted by the removal of I81.

This construction of I-81 through DeWitt will be a transformative event, likely equivalent to the completion of the Erie Canal through our town completed in 1825.

We have an unprecedented opportunity to use this construction as a catalyst to not only better our region but also our Town. Unfortunately, the current plans by the New York State Department of Transportation show minimal improvements with little attention to noise mitigation, environmental sustainability, connected community or pedestrian safety.

We, the Town of DeWitt have determined the following be incorporated into the redesigned I-81 through DeWitt:

The new Rt. 81 interchange must be designed with 21st century appreciation for human/community living needs.

Design must be centered around human use *other than cars.* Walking, running, bicycling – all modes on non-motor vehicle use; and for families with children, seniors, the disabled; *everybody*.

A DOT interchange plan without dedicated & protected pedestrian / bike access across Rt. 92 is not acceptable.

There must be protected, grade separated, dedicated walkways, cycling paths, under &overpasses for the human beings of Dewitt. *On both sides of Rt. 92,* bicycle and pedestrian access is essential. Connecting the current **Erie Canal Heritage** trail at Kinne Rd. to a future trail the length of the Feeder Canal along Butternut Dr. from Kinne, requires an under/overpass at East Genesee which ultimately connect to pathways at Jamesville Rd. into Jamesville and Fiddler's Green resulting in the "Green, Walkable, Bikeable Dewitt" we strive to be.

Modern, efficient, sound mitigation walls of maximum height, tastefully designed.

We insist on a ***state-of-the-art sound mitigation construction along the entire affected area of the new Rt. 81 in Dewitt.*** Any day trip down Rt. 81 through Pennsylvania, or even just up Rt 481 in Cicero reveals many places where communities have benefitted from this. Dewitt's Rt. 481 construction left this out. We trust the DOT will not make the same mistake. These residential neighborhoods include DeWittshire, Orvilton, those along Maple Drive, and the Kinne/Butternut area. With the alterations of Exit 3, sound and air pollution mitigation must be installed to protect the Pickwick neighborhood.

We are aware of the limitations of using sound barriers to mitigation unwanted noise; therefore we ask that the DOT focus on the many other techniques that can have a more widespread positive effect such as the following:

- That hardwood **trees** be planted to handle the increased levels of carbon dioxide associated with the increased vehicular capacity;
- That the State cease using the lands of the interchange as staging and construction spoils areas and restore the neighbor-planted daffodil beds and supplant them with additional ornamental plantings;
- That the design of the highway through DeWitt take on the appearance of a parkway rather than an expressway, incorporating pedestrian and bicycle pathways;
- That the State post maximum decibel reading signs;
- That drastic pedestrian improvements be made at Lyndon Corners including well marked and possibly raised pedestrian crosswalks, pedestrian controlled traffic lights, flashing lights to signal a pedestrian crossing, etc.;
- That sufficient bus infrastructure such as bus pull over areas along East Genesee St. be installed up to Lyndon Corners to facilitate the use of Bus Rapid Transit; and
- That all efforts be made in the design and during construction to protect Butternut Creek and the many acres of wetlands that line the present 481. *Please note the attached report to understand the sensitivity of wildlife in this area.

We appreciate your vigorously investigating our concerns and we look forward to working with you to make the relocated I-81 a road of distinction.

Most Sincerely,

Kerin Rigney, Chair, DeWitt Comprehensive Planning Committee

The Town of Dewitt Comprehensive Plan Committee

Peter Webber, Chair, DeWitt Planning Board

The Town of DeWitt Planning Board

Tom Carello, Chair, Town of DeWitt Zoning Board of Appeals

Dennis Payne, Chair, DeWitt Advisory Conservation Committee

The DeWitt Advisory Conservation Committee

The DeWitt Town Board:

- Kerin Rigney
- Kerry Mannion
- Jack Dooling
- Joseph Chiarenza
- Sam Young

Linda Ervin, Onondaga County Legislature, DeWitt Representative

Mary Kuhn, Onondaga County Legislature, DeWitt Representative

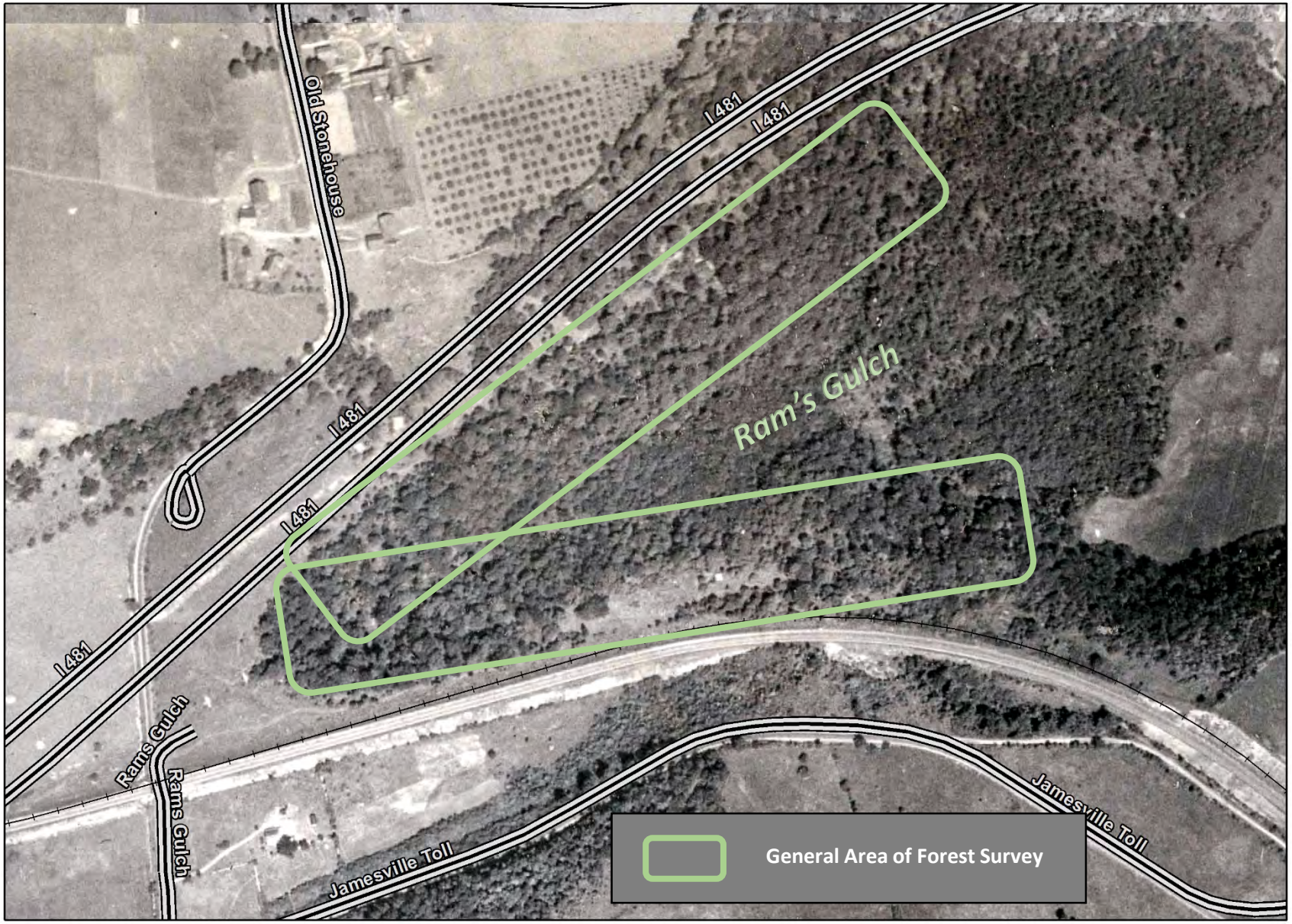
ATTACHMENT 1 –
UNIQUE GEOLOGIC FEATURES
WITHIN RAM'S GULCH

Attachment 2
Overview Map
Ram's Gulch Old Growth Forest Survey

N

0 250 500 1,000 Feet

Attachment 2
Survey Area with Contemporary Aerial Imagery
Ram's Gulch Old Growth Forest Survey



N

0 250 500 1,000 Feet

Attachment 2
Survey Area with 1926 Aerial Imagery
Ram's Gulch Old Growth Forest Survey

Considerations for the Wildlife along the I481 corridor with the I-81 Project

The wetlands along the 481 Corridor contain a variety of bats, wading and ariel birds and amphibians which must be protected from ill-effects due to the construction and design resulting from the I-81 project. It is important to note that some of these are **Endangered or Threatened.**

Bats are very sensitive to noise and light so any increase in these would disturb the bats as well as other wildlife. In the summer, many of these areas around the Butternut Creek corridor would most likely be used as maternity and paternity colonies as well as areas where the bats would hunt for food. Any disruptions to the bats' ability to effectively hunt for food or care for their young would be hindered by higher noise levels. Please refer to the following link to a study that found bats avoid foraging in areas that have high noise levels: https://files.cfc.umt.edu/cesu/NPS/CSU/2008/08_10Crooks_NSP_wildlife%20acoustics_09rpt.pdf.

Eight out of the nine NYS bat species use areas of the Butternut Creek corridor along 481 where the soon-to-be route 81 will be constructed. Two of these species are state-listed and two are high priority species of greatest conservation need. These include **Indiana Bat** - *Myotis sodalis* (Endangered), **Northern long-eared bat** - *Myotis septentrionalis* (Threatened), **Little Brown Myotis** - *Myotis lucifugus* and **Tricolored Bat** - *Perimyotis subflavus* (both Priority Species of Greatest Conservation Need).

The same study found that increased anthropogenic noise disrupts other wildlife as well, including birds. The areas along 481 are areas that have excellent bird habitat. There are several eBird birding hotspots along the 481 Butternut Creek Corridor in which over 150 different species have been documented - including numerous state-listed species. These include: **Endangered:** Peregrine Falcon *(Falco peregrinus),* Black Tern *(Chlidonias niger)*, and Short-eared Owl *(Asio flammeus)* **Threatened:** Pied-billed Grebe *(Podilymbus podiceps),* Least Bittern *(Ixobrychus exilis),* Bald Eagle *(Haliaeetus leucocephalus),* Northern Harrier *(Circus cyaneus),* Common Tern *(Sterna hirundo),* and Henslow's Sparrow *(Ammodramus henslowii)* **Special Concern:** Common Loon (*Gavia immer*), American Bittern (*Botaurus lentiginosus*), Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*), Sharp-shinned Hawk (*Accipiter striatus*), Coopers' Hawk (*Accipiter cooperii*), Common Nighthawk (*Chordeiles minor*), Horned Lark (*Eremophila alpestris*), Vesper Sparrow *(Pooecetes gramineus)* and Grasshopper Sparrow (*Ammodramus savannarum*) **High Priority Species of Greatest Conservation Need:** American Black Duck (*Anas rubripes*), Bay-breasted Warbler (*Setophaga castanea*), Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*), Brown Thrasher (*Toxostoma rufum*), Cape May Warbler (*Setophaga tigrina*), Eastern Meadowlark *(Sturnella magna*), and Rusty Blackbird (*Euphagus carolinus*).

Increased traffic from the 81 project will also bring more potential pollution - both air pollution and run-off into roadside habitats. Several areas along 481 contain marsh/wetland habitat which could be damaged by increased run-off. Amphibians and wading birds nest/breed in these wetlands and could feel the detrimental effects of the increased pollution the 81 project will bring.

Measures should be taken to protect these important wildlife habitats and the wildlife they contain.

The Onondaga Escarpment
Critical Environmental Area
DeWitt, NY

Written justification per 6 CRR-NY 617.14(g)

Prepared by the DeWitt Advisory Conservation Commission (DACC)

August 2020

Introduction

This Onondaga Escarpment Critical Environmental Area report has been prepared by the DeWitt Advisory Conservation Commission (DACC) at the direction of Town Supervisor Ed Michalenko and former Director of Planning and Zoning Sam Gordon. The author of the report is Brian Solomon; the executive summary has been written by Angela Weiler. Additional contributions to the text have been made by Angela Weiler and Olivia Green. Some original work was done by former DACC members Debbie Shanahan and Diane Menzies. Map 1 is the work of SUNY ESF graduate student Daniel Tinklepaugh and DeWitt Planning Department staff member Nicholas Quilty-Koval.

2020 DACC Members:

Olivia Green

Gordon Heisler

Sonia Kragh

Jonathon Kresge

Martha Loew

Brian Solomon

Ann Stevens

Angela Weiler

Dennis Payne, Chair

September, 2020

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FIGURES

Map 1 – Onondaga Escarpment Critical Environmental Area

Map 2 - Onondaga Escarpment in DeWitt, 1938 and 1943 United States Geologic Survey Topographic Mapping

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – Unique Geologic Features within Ram's Gulch

Attachment 2 – Ram's Gulch Old Growth Forest Survey

1 Executive Summary

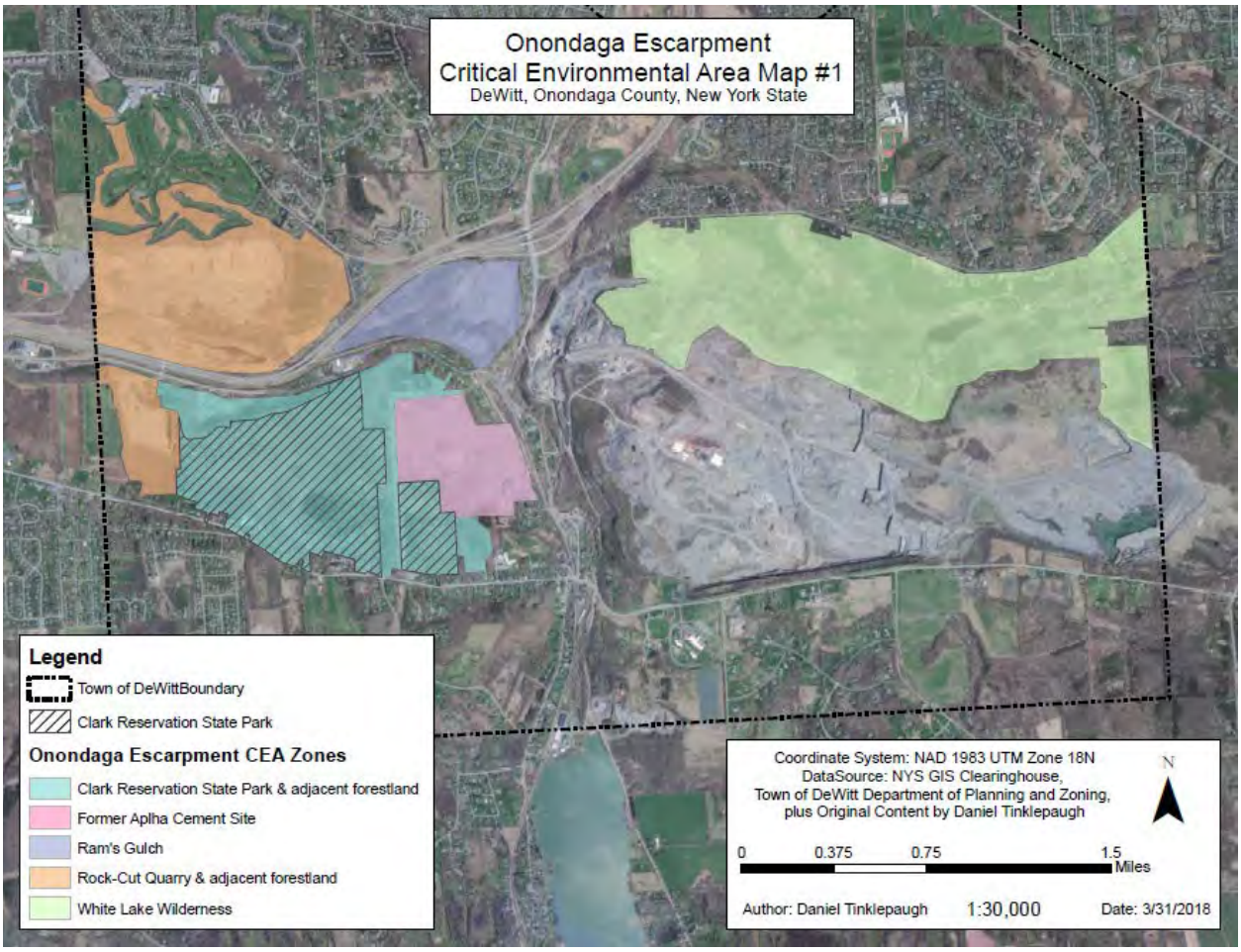
This document provides the written justification to support designation of certain portions of the Onondaga Escarpment within the Town of Dewitt as a Critical Environmental Area (CEA), per the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act [6 CRR-NY 617.14(g)]. This justification document was compiled and prepared by the Dewitt Advisory Conservation Commission (DACC).

A Critical Environmental Area (CEA) is a specific geographic area within the community that contains sensitive or unique features that require protection. CEAs are significant designations under the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA), which require local and state agencies to examine a proposal's environmental impacts and methods of mitigation prior to committing to, funding, or approving an "action" (be it a project, plan, or policy).

The Onondaga Escarpment is a geologic remnant of glacial times which traverses New York State from east to west. It runs along the northern edge of the Appalachian Highlands where it meets the southern Central Lowlands (National Park Service map of Physiographic Regions). Other examples of escarpments existing along this line across New York State have already been protected (e.g., the Helderberg Escarpment in John Boyd Thatcher State Park; the Niagara Escarpment, site of Niagara Falls). These escarpment areas are typified by fairly straight runs of sharp cliffs rising up alongside relatively flat land. For the purposes of this report, the geologic features and areas of the Onondaga Escarpment refer only to the section of the escarpment located in the Town of DeWitt.

In DeWitt, the Onondaga Escarpment begins at the southern portion of the Town near the Hamlet of Jamesville at the easternmost end, and extends to the Manlius line near Sweet Road at the westernmost point. From Manlius moving east, it runs through five main sub-areas of concern: the White Lake Wilderness, Rams Gulch, Clark Reservation State Park, the former Alpha Cement Plant, and the Rock Cut quarry to the border with the Town of Onondaga.

The boundaries of the Onondaga Escarpment considered for this CEA are identified below (and on Map 1 attached), which includes these five CEA sub-areas, comprising approximately 1,912 acres in total.



A summary of these sub-areas is presented here; further details can be found in the full document.

Clark Reservation State Park and adjacent forestland: The park itself covers 377 acres and includes Glacier Lake, the plunge basin of an extinct glacial waterfall; it is surrounded on three sides by 180 foot cliffs. The lake is 6.2 acres in size and 52 feet deep, and is a rare meromictic lake in which the deep waters don't mix annually with the surface waters. Hiking trails run through the mixed hardwood and conifer woodlands and across the bare limestone bed of the extinct glacial river. A number of unique ravines and basins are found throughout the park which provide habitat for the rare American Hart's Tongue Fern.

Although already protected as a New York State Park, development on adjacent lands, starting in the 1980s with the Doubletree housing complex has demonstrated the urgent need to protect lands adjacent to the park. Runoff from the complex resulted in permanent damage to a lake ecosystem within the park.[1] (Figure 1) The current Hummel Estates subdivision lies even closer to park lands, and has even more potential for damage to previously pristine habitats within the park.

[1] http://www.urbanhabitats.org/v05n01/runoff_full.html

White Lake wilderness area: This area is comprised of 701 acres of private lands and 52 acres of public lands consisting of a small pure water lake, a marl fen, wetlands, a wooded valley and steep limestone ledges with large crevices and caves. It has faced challenges since the early 20th century, when, despite rescue attempts by the community, a glacial pool as well as a population of the rare American Hart's-tongue fern were permanently buried by mining operations. Subsequent contractual safeguards attached to this property will last only while mining operations in the area are active.

Ram's Gulch: Consisting of 124 acres of lush old-growth forest and cedar swamp, this property borders I-481. Despite the public opposition, this interstate highway was built through a 5-mile strip running adjacent to the Onondaga Escarpment in the early 1970's, burying a historic Boy Scout camp along the northern ridge. In addition, Allied Chemical (former owner of Jamesville Quarry) expanded its tailings pond at the eastern side of Ram's Gulch into an area where rare wetland plants were documented.

The Rock Cut Quarry and adjacent forestland: The so-called "Rock Cut" area consists of a naturally long, flat valley cutting through otherwise rocky and uneven terrain. This area has historically been used to advantage by railroads (19th century), the interstate highway system (1970s), and a trash incinerating plant (1994). The Rock Cut Quarry consists of the South Pit (20 acres; due west of Clark Reservation State Park) and the North Pit (80 acres; due south of Drumlins Country Club), which operated from the late 1920s to the early 1980s. Some 200 acres of forested area exists (much of it since at least the 1920s) within the quarry parcels (outside the permitted mining boundaries) and the adjacent Drumlins Country Club. In years past, the Rock Cut area also contained a junkyard and automobile "graveyard." In 2015 the North Pit area was considered for development of an inland port despite not being zoned for such a use, which would further degrade the unique terrain.

The former Alpha cement site: The Alpha site is comprised of a former sand and gravel quarry, abandoned cement kilns and other structures, and limited undisturbed open space primarily along the southern boundary of the site. The cement plant operated for nearly a century, and large quantities of cement kiln dust (CKD) are stockpiled on site despite Consent Order by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) to be removed. More recently the site operated as a sand and gravel pit and is undergoing reclamation as of 2020 under the oversight of the NYS DEC.. The 127 acre site has been considered by outside interests for a number of industrial uses, most of which have been opposed by the community. The most recent of these challenges was a coal gasification facility proposed by Empire SynFuel of New York in 2007. Due primarily to local resistance, the project was eventually relocated.

In addition to the above-noted recent or ongoing challenges to the integrity of these natural areas within the Onondaga Escarpment in DeWitt, there are many other justifications for protecting these areas per 6 CRR-NY 617.14(g)(1), which are detailed in the full report, including:

- Benefits to human health

    - The forests of the Onondaga Escarpment are estimated to sequester approximately 830 metric tons of CO2 per year.
    - Research has shown that, in addition to mitigating climate change, mature tree cover saves more than 850 human lives a year and prevent 670,000 incidents of acute respiratory symptoms.

- Their relatively pristine natural settings
    - Some areas of the Onondaga Escarpment provide intimate views of old growth woodland essentially unchanged since the settlement of Onondaga County

- Educational value
    - Beginning in the 19th century, these lands have been researched and studied by area educational institutions, including Syracuse University and the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry.
    - Because of this attention to these unique areas, endangered and rare species have been identified within the escarpment lands, including the rare American Hart's-tongue fern.

- Cultural/historic impacts
    - Clark Reservation has been an attraction since the late 19th century
    - A historic Boy Scout Camp at Ram's Gulch was buried by construction of I-481
    - There are early references to "Stone Giants" by the False Face Society, one of the most well-known Iroquois medicinal societies, indicating that certain points in this area served as gathering places.

- Ecological, geological and hydrological sensitivity
    - The natural resources of this area are uniquely sensitive and have been noted as such in research and study.
    - An expert has referred to the erosional features of Clark Reservation Park as "world class".

- Maintenance of dwindling plant and animal species
    - Areas of the forests of the Onondaga Escarpment contain plant species that do not return to lands that have been developed and then abandoned, indicating that these areas have most likely remained undisturbed by development.

- Social/recreational use of these areas
    - Many trails within the sub-areas have been used for well over a century
    - The full report documents use of these areas by many residents of the Town of Dewitt for walking, hiking, and biking

Due to the combined effects of both historic and ongoing challenges to the integrity of the Escarpment, this landscape is especially sensitive to further change, be it ecological, geological, and/or hydrological. In addition, the NYS DEC recommended in its 2006 New York State Open Space Conservation Plan:

"Protection of existing open space in the suburbs of Syracuse in a corridor running from Clark Reservation State Park through White Lake to the Three Falls Woods. The area contains an exceptional number of natural heritage elements and outstanding geological features."

It is hoped that, by designating the Onondaga Escarpment a Critical Environmental Area, the Town of Dewitt will be able to protect not only these unique natural areas, but also the air, water, and other natural resources of this area while maintaining the health, welfare, and cultural heritage of all residents of the Town of Dewitt.

2 What is a CEA?

A Critical Environmental Area (CEA) is a specific geographic area within the community that contains sensitive or unique features that require protection. CEAs are significant designations under the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR), which require local and state agencies to examine a proposal's environmental impacts and methods of mitigation prior to committing to, funding, or approving an "action" (be it a project, plan, or policy).

When a CEA is designated, a written justification supporting the exceptional or unique environmental characteristics of the area, along with the area's mapped boundary, must be filed with various State and local agencies per 617.14(g)(2). Once an area is designated as a CEA, proposals to alter that area must specifically address any potential impairment of the environmental characteristics of the CEA.

This document provides the written justification for the Onondaga Escarpment Critical Environmental Area (CEA) designation in the Town of DeWitt, presented on Map 2.

Per Title 6 of the New York Codes, Rules and Regulations (NYCRR), part 617.14(g)(1):

> Designation of a CEA must be preceded by written public notice and a public hearing. The public notice must identify the boundaries and the specific environmental characteristics of the area warranting CEA designation.
>
> (1) To be designated as a CEA, an area must have an exceptional or unique character covering one or more of the following:
>
> (i) A benefit or threat to human health;
>
> (ii) A natural setting (e.g., fish and wildlife habitat, forest and vegetation, open space and areas of important aesthetic or scenic quality);
>
> (iii) Agricultural, social, cultural, historic, archaeological, recreational, or educational values; or
>
> (iv) An inherent ecological, geological or hydrological sensitivity to change that may be adversely affected by any change.

3 The Onondaga Escarpment in DeWitt, NY

3.1 Introduction

The Onondaga Escarpment is a geologic remnant of glacial times which traverses New York State from east to west at the juxtaposition of two physiographic regions. As demonstrated on New York State mapping, the escarpment runs along the northern edge of the Appalachian Highlands(8c) at roughly the point where it meets the Central Lowlands (12a) on the National Park Service's map of Physiographic Regions.[2] Other examples of escarpments existing along this line across New York State have already been protected (e.g., the Helderberg Escarpment in John Boyd Thatcher State Park). The Niagara Escarpment is perhaps the most well-known of these, as the site of Niagara Falls. These escarpment areas are typified by fairly straight runs of sharp cliffs rising up alongside relatively flat land. For the purposes of this report, the geologic features and areas of the *Onondaga Escarpment* refer only to the section of the escarpment located in the Town of DeWitt.

In Onondaga County, limestone formations and karst topography typical of the Onondaga Escarpment are found in a narrow corridor of land that stretches from Split Rock to Green Lakes State Park. [3] In DeWitt, the Onondaga Escarpment spans the southern portion of the Town near the Hamlet of Jamesville, extending from the Manlius line near Sweet Road on the east, west through the White Lake Wilderness, Rams Gulch, Clark Reservation State Park, and the Rock Cut quarry to the border with the Town of Onondaga.

The full boundary of the Onondaga Escarpment considered for this CEA is identified on **Map 1** (attached), which includes five CEA sub-areas, comprising approximately 1,912 acres in total. These include *Clark Reservation State Park and adjacent forestland* (332 acres within the State Park; 128 acres adjacent private land), the *White Lake wilderness* (701 acres private; 52 acres public), *Ram's Gulch* (private; 124 acres), the *Rock Cut Quarry and adjacent forestland* (private; 448 acres), and the *former Alpha cement site* (private; 127 acres).

A summary of the "exceptional or unique character" of this CEA, per the criteria in 6 NYCRR 617.14(g)(1), are presented below, with additional specific details on each of the CEA sub-areas in subsequent sections of this chapter.

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[2] (https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_MEDIA/nrcs143_014530.gif

[3] "A Feasibility Study for the Onondaga Escarpment Greenway" (draft), 2009. SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, FOR 476/676: Ecotourism and Nature Tourism; D. Kuehn (editor and supervising professor). http://www.esf.edu/for/kuehn/documents/completeOENCreport2_000.pdf

3.1.1 Natural Setting

The scenic nature of the Onondaga Escarpment is evident as one enters the Town of DeWitt from the west via I-481, and represents an important viewshed within the Town of DeWitt. Between the western town line and Jamesville Avenue, forested cliffs can be seen from this vantage point on flanking I-481, with Clark Reservation State Park to the south and the inactive Rock Cut Quarry beyond the cliffs both to the north, as well as to the south (due west of Clark Reservation). The east-west valley through which I-481 traverses here is known as Rock Cut. It was created by glacial recessions over thousands of years and has steep cliffs of Onondaga limestone rising to elevations of 600 to 700 feet on either side. The Rock Cut provides a naturally long, flat area cutting through otherwise rocky and uneven terrain, and it has been used to advantage by railroads, the interstate highway system, a trailer park, and a trash incinerating plant. In years past, the Rock Cut area also contained a junkyard and automobile "graveyard."[4]

The cliffs and the woodlands along the top of the escarpment in this area represent unique natural community types in New York State. A natural amphitheater is visible as a backdrop to the Cliffside Community trailer park (near the northwest corner of Clark Reservation State Park), which has been noted as the site of a fossil, or historic, waterfall. Continuing east on I-481, the lush old-growth forest and cedar swamp in Ram's Gulch can be seen along the highway's southern edge before Exit 2 at Jamesville Road.

3.1.2 Benefit to Human Health

In the context of environmental conservation, it is beneficial to consider health as it relates to the seven dimensions of wellness: social, emotional, spiritual, environmental, occupational, intellectual, and physical; as they interact to influence our overall state of being.

The section of the Onondaga Escarpment within DeWitt includes approximately 1,000 acres of forestland and serves an important open space function for the Town. This area includes State parkland (approximately 380 acres), land that is owned and managed by the Central New York Land Trust (approximately 50 acres), and other open space areas that are privately controlled but actively utilized for their recreational value (e.g., hiking, running, mountain biking). This area has been identified as a *greenway corridor* by the Town of DeWitt in its 2014 Sustainability Plan. The escarpment areas provide direct health benefits (e.g., recreational opportunities) while also limiting fossil fuel emissions (that may otherwise occur due to traveling to open space opportunities elsewhere in the region) and acting as a carbon sink for emissions due to the extensive forest cover:

[4] https://ottohmuller.com/nysga2ge/Files/1964/NYSGA%201964%20Surficial%20Geology%20of%20the%20Syracuse%20Field%20Area.pdf

- Based on average data from U.S. forests, this forestland is estimated to sequester approximately 770 metric tons of CO_2 per year[5]. This is equivalent to nearly 2 million miles driven by an average passenger vehicle, 850,000 pounds of coal burned, or nearly 1,800 barrels of oil consumed.[6] The overall benefits from forest-based carbon sequestration are significant in helping to reduce climate change.

- Research has shown that trees save more than 850 human lives a year and prevent 670,000 incidents of acute respiratory symptoms. Tree cover correlates positively with greater benefit to human health.[7]

3.1.3 Social, Cultural, Historic, Recreational, and Educational Values

The Onondaga Escarpment exhibits exceptional and unique environmental characteristics regarding its natural setting, social, cultural, historical, recreational, and educational values.

3.1.3.1 Social/Recreational

This area is frequently used by the community for hiking, mountain biking, running, and nature study. Both the White Lake wilderness area and Ram's Gulch have existed as un-official nature preserves, frequented by the public for nature study and recreation for over a century. Trails at the White Lake wilderness are more than a century old based on historic records of community usage. The abandoned Rock Cut Quarry north pit has become a popular unsanctioned mountain bike park, connecting to an extensive trail network in the surrounding forests, extending through Ram's Gulch and Clark Reservation State Park, and around the south pit and back. The Rock Cut Quarry north pit is also used extensively by people hiking and walking their dogs.

3.1.3.2 Educational

There are endangered and rare species that have been identified within the escarpment, including the rare American Hart's-tongue fern. Clark Reservation State Park is frequently used by local colleges, universities, and schools for its educational value particularly in the study of botany, and for specimen collection. Beginning in the 19th century, the Syracuse Botany Club documented numerous state-protected plants, including specimens listed as endangered, rare, threatened, and exploitably vulnerable. In addition to the Clark Reservation State Park site, the Syracuse Botany Club and the

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[5] Based on 0.77 metric tons (tonnes) of CO2 sequestered per acre per year (https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gases-equivalencies-calculator-calculations-and-references#pineforests; per EPA this is an estimate for "average" U.S. forests in 2017). Note, this value is likely representative of forest types dominated by conifers and is likely higher in a mixed deciduous forest.

[6] https://www.epa.gov/energy/greenhouse-gas-equivalencies-calculator

[7] https://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/news/release/trees-save-lives-reduce-air-pollution https://www.researchgate.net/publication/251099297_Urban_Forests_and_Their_Ecosystem_Services_in_Relation_to_Human_Health

State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY ESF) have conducted botanical research at both Ram's Gulch and the White Lake wilderness for many decades.[8]

3.1.3.3 Cultural/Historical

The local presence of the American Hart's-tongue fern held special significance during the Victorian era of the late 19th century as "Fern Fever" – or the cultural phenomenon surrounding ferns – swept the United States and Great Britain. The term "pteridomania" was coined (combining the terms *Pteridophytes* and *mania*), underscoring the intense level of interest over the botanical study of ferns, their ubiquitous use as a household decorative motif, and cultivation in gardens and terrariums[9]. The Syracuse Botany club was formed by a group of fern enthusiasts during this time.

The 19th century also saw the emergence of local limestone quarrying industry, giving rise to the community of Jamesville as an important center of activity on the heels of the Erie Canal era.

The area has long been valued for its unique natural setting and prominent geologic features. From 1919-1970, Ram's Gulch was the site of a popular Boy Scouts of America Council-owned campsite. Today, many community members fondly recall patronizing the camp, which was situated in the unique glacial valley near the limestone cliffs and caves until the construction of I-481 flattened at least half of the camp site.

The unique geological formations of the escarpment were significant markers to members of the Onondaga Nation; references to "Stone Giants" by the False Face Society, one of the most well-known Iroquois medicinal societies, indicate certain points in this area served as gathering places[10].

Historical conservation efforts are closely tied to the cultural composition of this area due to the long and well-documented history of the community rallying to thwart threats to open space and the public's use thereof; conservation of unique natural features; concern for air and water quality; and the general public health within this area.

3.1.3.3.1 White Lake Wilderness.

From 1915 to the early 1920s, there were attempts by the community to save a small glacial plunge pool known as Green Pond (Figure 3), as well as a community of the rare American Hart's-tongue fern. However, the pond was eventually buried by mining operations. In 1997, efforts to prevent the development of several large homes in the White Lake area were successful, but the litigated

[8] For example: "Wild orchid threatened: Rare plant may become extinct". The Syracuse Herald-American, December 10, 1967; and "Rams Gulch lives on, happy botanists report". The Syracuse Herald-American (n.d.)

[9] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clark_Reservation_State_Park#Ferns

[10] Syracuse New York Daily Journal, Dec 16, 1890: "Onondaga Folk Lore." by William Beauchamp

contractual safeguards attached to this property will last only while mining operations in the area are active.[11]

With over a century of historic preservation battles, the White Lake Wilderness is a significant site with respect to both the natural and cultural heritage in the Town of DeWitt.

3.1.3.3.2 Clark Reservation State Park.

In the early 20th century, noted philanthropist Mary Clark Thompson purchased 75 acres of land including Glacier Lake and the fossil waterfall, and granted the tract to the New York State Museum. This purchase and preservation was prompted in part due to the expanding quarrying along the escarpment to the east, at the present-day Jamesville Quarry[12].

In the late 1980s, the Doubletree housing complex was built uphill from Clark Reservation State Park on land situated across East Seneca Turnpike, despite the concerns of the Council of Park Friends of Clark Reservation State Park that construction activities would adversely impact park lands. Although drainage facilities had been built by the developer to intercept stormwater runoff, the system has not accommodated typical storm flows from recent years, evidenced by silt-laden runoff flowing from the development following hard rains. Additionally, few sediment control measures were implemented to prevent silt runoff during the construction process, resulting in permanent damage to Dry Lake within the Park. A small glacially-created plunge pool, Dry Lake typically held water annually in the spring season. The layer of silt and additional volume of water changed the balance of the habitat, eradicating species from the natural plant community which are intolerant of standing water conditions (e.g., Eastern Hemlock).[13]

This subdivision has been in development since the early 1990s, and the latest phase of development is currently under construction. The Hummel Estates subdivision lies even closer to Glacier Lake in Clark Reservation state park than the Doubletree development, and once again members of the Council of Park Friends have voiced concerns that this development has even more potential than Doubletree for damaging previously pristine habitats within the park.[14] (Figure 1)

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[11] A few examples of numerous coverage in the local media: "Discuss Plans for Saving of Lakes To-Night". The Post-Standard, Syracuse, N.Y. March 25, 1915; "Make Preserve of Green Lakes, Plan Suggested". The Post-Standard, Syracuse, N.Y. March 26, 1915; "Quarry considers selling forest land DeWitt neighbors call 'forever wild'". Syracuse Herald-Journal, July 8, 1997; "Officials may fight wilderness area sale". Syracuse Herald-Journal, July 17, 1997; "Inside White Lake's Tug-of-War". Syracuse Post-Standard, October 6, 1997.

[12] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clark_Reservation_State_Park

[13] http://www.urbanhabitats.org/v05n01/runoff_pdf.pdf

[14] https://www.syracuse.com/news/index.ssf/2014/12/first_proposed_in_1991_plan_for_new_homes_in_jamesville_is_resurrected.html

3.1.3.3.3 Ram's Gulch

In 1969, the public opposed threats to the Ram's Gulch glacial valley area from highway construction and the expansion of quarry tailing ponds.[15] Despite the public opposition, I-481 was built in the early 19070's, burying the historic Boy Scout camp along the northern ridge. In addition, Allied Chemical (former owner of Jamesville Quarry) expanded its tailings pond at the eastern side of Ram's Gulch into an area where rare wetland plants were documented.

3.1.3.3.4 Rock Cut Quarry and Adjacent Forestland

In 1992, the Onondaga County Resource Recovery Agency (OCRRA) issued its decision to locate its proposed waste incinerator on Rock Cut Road in the middle of the escarpment area. Although this decision was met with great opposition from the community, the plant was constructed and fully operational by November of 1994.[16]

In 2015, the Port of Oswego proposed to construct an inland port on the unused Rock Cut Quarry's north pit area, which was met with active community opposition.[17] An alternate site in DeWitt located outside of the escarpment area is currently being considered.

3.1.3.3.5 Former Alpha Cement Site

The Alpha site has been considered by outside interests for a number of industrial uses, most of which have been opposed by the community. The most recent of these challenges was a coal gasification facility proposed by Empire SynFuel of New York in 2007. The plans were met by local resistance and the company eventually relocated the project to Oswego County.

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[15] "Ram's Gulch fate in balance". Syracuse Herald-American, July 27, 1969.

[16] https://www.cgr.org/consensuscny/docs/Onon_Cty_Change_Study_2007.pdf

[17] The DeWitt Town Board, Town of DeWitt Planning Board, the DeWitt Advisory Conservation Commission, a large community group [Community First Coalition (CFC)], and other concerned citizens led efforts to thwart this proposal.

Figure 1 - Google Earth view of Dry Lake and Glacier Lake, their watershed areas (dotted light blue), the Doubletree development (solid red border), and the original proposed development Hummel Estates (dotted red border). The detention basin for Doubletree and the intermittent outflow stream that connects to Dry Lake are shown in medium blue.

3.1.4 Inherent Ecological, Geological and Hydrological Sensitivity to Change That Could Be Adversely Affected by Change

The Onondaga Escarpment is a unique natural heritage feature in DeWitt. Some areas have been preserved in perpetuity (e.g., Clark Reservation State Park), while other areas have succumbed to intensive development and resource extraction (e.g., complete destruction of Green Pond in the early 20th century by mining operations). The environmental integrity of this landscape has faced large scale challenges in the past as detailed above, but there are also more subtle threats such as invasive species (e.g., plants such as pale swallow-wort and buckthorn, and pests including the emerald ash borer and hemlock wooly adelgid) which continue to compromise the escarpment landscape. This

CEA covers an area that has had well-documented cycles of environmental threats, community opposition to development (detailed beginning page 7), and destruction of habitat, followed by further proposals which threaten and compromise the environmental integrity of this area. The following list documents ongoing significant environmental impacts to this area:

- Jamesville Quarry [operations began in 1909]: 863 acres (out of 1,174 total permitted acres[18]) have been impacted to date, not including additional disturbed areas like tailing piles.
- Rock Cut Quarry [operations began in 1926]: impacting the full 104-acre site permitted for excavation, not including additional disturbed areas.
- Former Alpha cement site [active 1917 to 1980, now abandoned]: impacts to land and wetlands from current 60-acre sand and gravel pit, and 400,000 cubic yards of stockpiled cement kiln dust (CKD).[19] CKD is a highly alkaline byproduct of the cement making process, and is categorized by the EPA as "special waste" with federal standards for management currently under development[20].
- Interstate 481 [constructed in the early 1970s]: extends through the entire eastern portion of the escarpment. The effects of interstate highways such as Interstate-481 on habitat have been well-documented. Habitat loss, degradation and fragmentation, road mortality, constant vibration and subsequent siltation, and ubiquitous emissions and noise all effect not only the numbers of wildlife living in the area, but also which species survive in the long term and which do not.[21]

Due to the combined effects of these historic and ongoing impacts, this landscape is especially sensitive to further change, be it ecological, geological, and/or hydrological.

3.2 Current Conservation Status

Clark Reservation State Park is a state-protected and publicly accessible open space area. Additionally, 50 acres in DeWitt along the eastern edge of the White Lake wilderness is owned and

[18] The total permitted acreage is deemed the "Life of Mine" acreage, which is the total number of acres of mineral reserves that will be mined over the duration of mining at that location (per NYS DEC; https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/materials_minerals_pdf/mlperm.pdf)

[19] Deborah Y. Wright of O'Brien & Gere Engineers, Inc. to Thomas Vigneault, Regional Enforcement Coordinator, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, RE: Beneficial Use Petition – Contaminated Soil Pre-Disposal Absorbent. June 28, 2011. Note, review of project documents indicates this CKD volume estimate to be potentially underestimated.

[20] https://archive.epa.gov/epawaste/nonhaz/industrial/special/web/html/index-2.html

[21] https://ag.umass.edu/sites/ag.umass.edu/files/pdf-doc-ppt/tws_overview_ms.pdf

managed by the Central New York Land Trust (CNY Land Trust) as part of the 97-acre Woodchuck Hill Field and Forest Preserve (along with 47 acres in the Town of Manlius). The Town of DeWitt also owns a 2-acre parcel within the White Lake wilderness. These parcels are protected and publicly accessible; all other portions of this CEA are privately owned.

While not a public conservation area, approximately 500 acres within the White Lake wilderness sub-area are currently protected by a restrictive covenant that was incorporated into a deed in 1986, for the portion of this property that was previously owned by Allied Corporation.[22] This covenant ensures the land remain in its natural state, but is only enforceable so long as the Jamesville Quarry remains in operation as a quarry. In response to a developer's purchase of the land in 1997 and proposal to build several mansions, this covenant was reaffirmed in 2008 by the State Supreme Court after several lawsuits.[23]

In reference to the Onondaga Escarpment within the Towns of DeWitt and Manlius, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) recommended in its 2006 New York State Open Space Conservation Plan:

> "Protection of existing open space in the suburbs of Syracuse in a corridor running from Clark Reservation State Park through White Lake to the Three Falls Woods. The area contains an exceptional number of natural heritage elements and outstanding geological features.[24]"

3.3 Unique Topography and American Hart's-Tongue Fern

3.3.1 Rock Cut Valley and Glacial Lakes

The Rock Cut Valley dissects the escarpment from the Town's western border east to the Butternut Valley at Ram's Gulch (southwest of I-481 and Jamesville Road). The escarpment's 100-foot tall cliffs that form the valley walls are visible along the I-481 corridor from east of the OCRRA Rock Cut Road incinerator. As described in the 1971 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the construction of the portion of I-481 near Jamesville:

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[22] "…so long as any part of the premises hereby conveyed is used as a quarry, the '*Buffer Lands*' will remain in their natural state. This covenant shall be a covenant running with the land, binding on and enforceable against the Grantee, its successors and assigns. This covenant is for the benefit of and enforceable by all parties owning property adjoining the premises hereby conveyed and the Grantor, its successors and assigns. This covenant is also enforceable by Nature Conservancy." https://www.leagle.com/decision/1999501253ad2d2481455

[23] "Judge: Congel can't build home near lake". Syracuse Herald, April 25, 2008.

[24] NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, & NYS Department of State, 2006, p. 219.

> The east-west valley containing the major portion of the project is known as Rock Cut due to the steep cliffs of Onondaga limestone rising 100 to 150 feet on either side. Rock Cut represents an outwash channel formed by east moving glacial waters overflowing the Onondaga valley during the retreat of the last glacier some 12,000 to 15,000 years ago. Following the further retreat of the glacier to the north, Rock Cut was left dry.
>
> A small meandering stream now located within the valley generally flows to the east end of Rock Cut. In leaving the relatively shallow soils within the gorge, it has cut a deep ravine into the glacial till. This area is known as Ram's Gulch because a hydraulic ram pump once used for water supply was located there.
>
> Due to the flat topography within Rock Cut, together with the shallow soil, the valley floor is poorly drained, with vegetation varying from typical elm-soft maple hardwood stands to white cedar on the swampy sites. Muck and marl areas are found in some locations.[25]

Figure 2 below provides an aerial view of the Rock Cut Valley from Jamesville Road towards the west, with the escarpment indicated by a dashed line. This figure was included in the 1971 DEIS for the portion of I-481 shown. A few notable features identified on this figure which are relevant to this CEA are the Rock Cut Quarry (original north pit [6b] and expanded south pit [6a]), Cliffside Community trailer park (7), Clark Reservation State Park (9), Ram's Gulch (14), and Jamesville Quarry tailings pond and settling basin (15). Figure 3 shows the Rock Cut Valley, in reference to its origins as a glacial meltwater channel.

[25] Draft Environmental Impact Statement: Interstate Route Connector 571; Forest Interchange – Jamesville; Onondaga County, New York State Department of Transportation, Region 3, July 30, 1971. https://books.google.com/books?id=r7o1AQAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false

Figure 2 - Aerial view of the Rock Cut Valley looking west from Jamesville Road

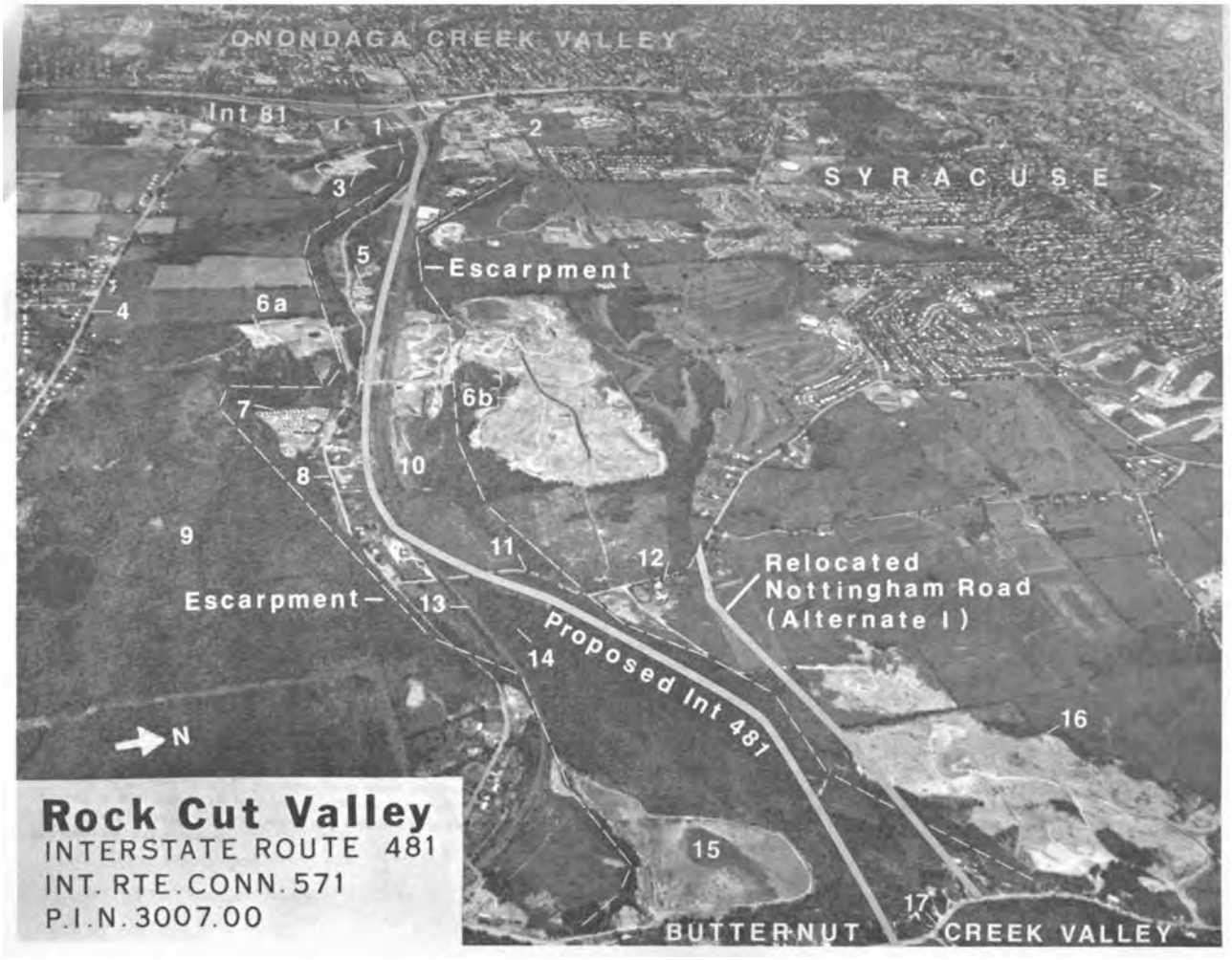
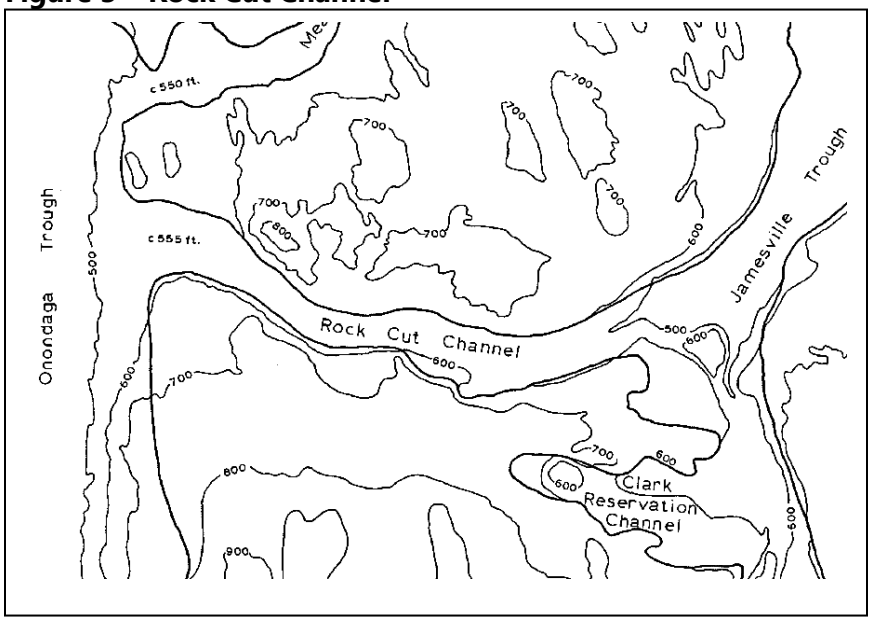
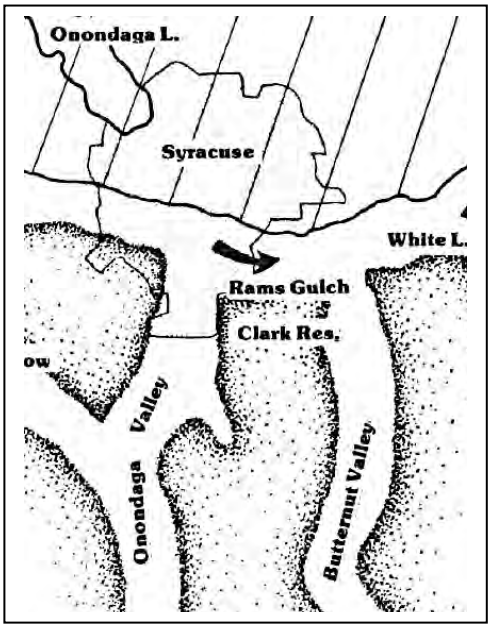


Figure 3 – Rock Cut Channel





The glacial lakes in Central New York, including Glacier Lake within Clark Reservation State Park (originally called Green Lake; renamed to avoid confusion with Green Lake in Manlius), White Lake, Green Pond (buried by quarry rubble), and Lost Lake within the White Lake wilderness, as well as Round Lake and Green Lake in Green Lakes State Park (in Manlius, NY), have been studied for over a century.[26] Several of these lakes, including Glacier Lake, are meromictic lakes in which the layers of water do not intermix. Although they are sometimes clustered together geographically, meromictic lakes are quite rare globally with a ratio of 1:1000 between meromictic and holomictic (standard) lakes.

Map 2 (attached), presents spliced excerpts from the 1938 and 1943 United States Geologic Survey topographical maps of the Onondaga Escarpment in DeWitt. [27] The historic Green Pond, which was located within the White Lake wilderness and was destroyed from nearby quarrying impacts in the 1920s, is shown on this mapping.

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[26] For example, see Fairchild, H.L., 1909, Glacial waters in central New York: N.Y. State Mus. Bull., 127, 66 p.

[27] U.S. Geological Survey. Syracuse East, N.Y. quadrangle. 1:24,000. 7.5 Minute Series. Washington D.C.: USGS, 1938; U.S. Geological Survey. Jamesville, N.Y. quadrangle. 1:24,000. 7.5 Minute Series. Washington D.C.: USGS, 1943.[28] http://www.acris.nynhp.org/guide.php?id=9819

3.3.2 American Hart's-Tongue Fern

Glacier Lake, White Lake, and Green Pond and other various locations along the Onondaga Escarpment in DeWitt have been documented to harbor the now state and federally listed American Hart's-tongue fern (AHTF)[28]. Considerable interest in Clark Reservation State Park during the 19th century (when pteridomania was in full effect) due to its diversity of fern species led to the identification of AHTF at several sites along the escarpment. AHTF has been studied across the entire span of the Onondaga Escarpment in DeWitt, with periodic surveys dating back to the late 19th century through to the present. The following excerpted figure from Hunter (1922) identifies eight substations where AHTF was documented on at least one of several prior field visits by others.[29] [Note: Ram's Gulch, identified by station (A), was known as "Howlett's Gorge" at this time.]

Figure 4 –

American Hart's-Tongue Fern distribution across the Onondaga Escarpment in DeWitt* as documented in Hunter (1922)

[* Note, the DeWitt Town line runs north/south at approximately the arrow point of Station G; on the west, the Town boundary is generally consistent with the extent of this map]

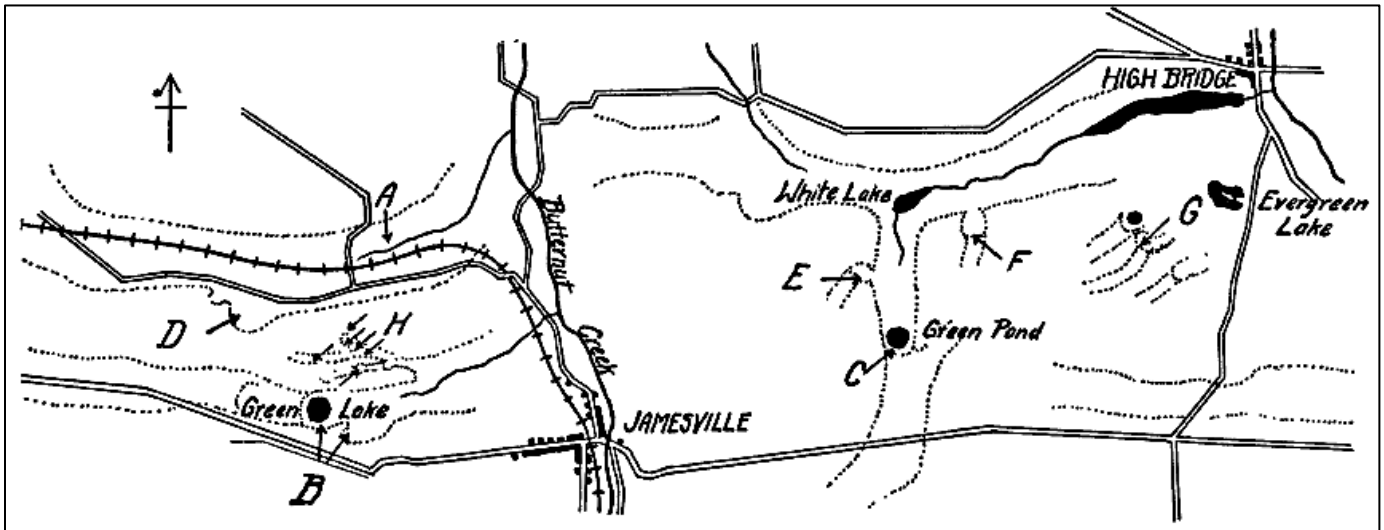

FIG. 2. Detail map of the Jamesville station. Colonies of Scolopendrium are indicated by arrows; cliffs bordering glacial channels and plunge basins are shown by dotted lines. Substations are as follows: *A*, Howlett's Gorge; *B*, Green Lake; *C*, Green Pond; *D*, Rock Gorge; *E*, West White Lake; *F*, East White Lake; *G*, Evergreen Lake; *H*; Jamesville Woods. Scale: 1 inch = 1½ miles.

[28] http://www.acris.nynhp.org/guide.php?id=9819

[29] *The Present Status of Scolopendrium in New York State*, Mabel R. Hunter. American Journal of Botany, Vol. 9, No. 1 (Jan., 1922), pp. 28-36. (http://www.jstor.org/stable/2435560).

Later field reports indicated the ferns were no longer found at substations D (reason unknown), C (Green Pond was buried under quarry rubble by the mid-1920s), and E and F (likely due to clearing and disturbance from the Jamesville Quarry).[30] Substation D indicates ferns observed at and near the base of the escarpment behind the current Cliffside Community trailer park, though AHTF has not been observed at this historic location for several decades. Interestingly, geologists in the late 19th century suggested the rounded, incised section of the escarpment wall behind the trailer park resulted from an ancient glacial meltwater falls) similar to (but smaller than) the fossil waterfall and plunge pool (Glacier Lake) at adjacent Clark Reservation:

> "…about midway its length—and on the south side of the gorge the wall of the gorge is out back in the form of an amphitheater, which is semicircular in outline and about 125 feet deep by 250 feet wide. The walls, as elsewhere in the gorge, are nearly perpendicular, with their bases concealed by recent talus accumulations. At the foot of the walls the floor of the amphitheater is depressed in a singular manner, or rather there is a series of pit-like depressions, such as might be found at the foot of a waterfall. The idea which suggested itself on my first visit to this place, that there had actually been a waterfall here, was enforced by finding later evidences of an old channel above, leading to the edge of the amphitheater."[31]

As reported in 2012, AHTF populations continue to be observed at several of these same sub-stations, and recent declines have been noted within Ram's Gulch. [32]

3.4 White Lake Wilderness

This forested area spans half a mile between Woodchuck Hill Road to the north and the Jamesville Quarry to the south, stretching some 2 miles from the DeWitt Fish & Game Club on the west, to the Manlius town line on the east. In addition to the contiguous Woodchuck Hill Field and Forest Preserve, three undeveloped parcels totaling 480 acres (including the lake) are in private ownership.

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[30] Faust, M.E. 1960. *Survival of hart's tongue fern in central New York.* Amer. Fern J. 50: 55-62.[31] Quereau, E.C. 1897. Topography and history of Jamesville lake, New York, Bulletin of the Geological Society of America Vol. 9: 173-182.[32] See Table 2 of American Hart's-tongue Fern (Asplenium scolopendrium var. americanum) 5-Year Review: Summary and Evaluation. October 2012 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Ecological Services Field Office Cookeville, Tennessee https://esadocs.cci-dev.org/ESAdocs/five_year_review/doc4110.pdf

[31] Quereau, E.C. 1897. Topography and history of Jamesville lake, New York, Bulletin of the Geological Society of America Vol. 9: 173-182.[32] See Table 2 of American Hart's-tongue Fern (Asplenium scolopendrium var. americanum) 5-Year Review: Summary and Evaluation. October 2012 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Ecological Services Field Office Cookeville, Tennessee https://esadocs.cci-dev.org/ESAdocs/five_year_review/doc4110.pdf

[32] See Table 2 of American Hart's-tongue Fern (Asplenium scolopendrium var. americanum) 5-Year Review: Summary and Evaluation. October 2012 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Ecological Services Field Office Cookeville, Tennessee https://esadocs.cci-dev.org/ESAdocs/five_year_review/doc4110.pdf

In the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's 2002 Open Space Conservation Plan[33], the 'White Lake Complex' was included as a Region 7 Priority Project, described as follows:

> "The White Lake wilderness complex is a unique composite of about 650 acres containing a small pure water lake, a marl fen, wetlands, a wooded valley and steep limestone ledges with large crevices and caves. It fills the gap between densely developed lands in the Town of DeWitt in Onondaga County on the north and a large limestone quarry on the south. The limestone ledges and caves contain one of the largest known hibernacula for the Indiana Brown Bat, a federal and state endangered species, and the ledges and valley floor have been documented to contain up to 60 species of rare and endangered plants including Harts Tongue Fern, Moonwort and Puttyroot."

From the 1970s through the early 2000s, The Nature Conservancy (TNC) acted as stewards for several parcels that had been donated, and as preservation advocates for the privately-owned parcels. TNC's land holdings from that time are now managed by the CNY Land Trust as the Woodchuck Hill Field and Forest Preserve. From a 10-acre donation in 1973, TNC grew the preserve east of White Lake to the 97 acres it is today, accumulating parcels as they were donated over the years.

In 1977, TNC developed an Ecological Inventory and Management Plan for the 'White Lake Swamp Preserve'.[34] The following passage is presented as part of the introduction to that report[35]:

> "The White Lake Swamp natural area complex, only six and one-half miles from the center of Syracuse, is an important natural area of approximately five hundred acres. The area is noted for its many rare plants and its unique geologic features. Contained in the area is a large wetland system; White Lake, Lost Lake, Evergreen Lake, and Snooks Pond. Upland forests of mixed hardwoods and of pure stands of northern white cedar occur. The escarpment to the south displays talus slopes, limestone ledges, cliffs, and caves.
>
> "During an effort to protect the area from road construction in the late 1960's, Stanley J. Smith, the N. Y. State Curator of Botany, and Eugene C. Ogden, the N. Y. State Botanist, prepared a list of notable plants of the area. This list includes the rare ferns: Moonwort (*Botrychium lunaria*), Harts Tongue fern (*Phyllitis scolopendrium*), Walking-leaf fern (*Asplenium rhizophyllum*), Slender Rock Brake (*Cryptogramma stelleri*), and Purple-stemmed Cliff Brake (*Pellaea atropurpurea*) all of which are rare or local in New York State. The rare orchids in the area include Early Coral-root

[33] The most recent priority project in the NYS DEC's 2016 Open Space Conservation Plan expanded this area as "Onondaga Escarpment"

[34] Yanuck, E. (1977). Master Plan: White Lake Swamp Preserve. The Nature Conservancy. 118pp.

[35] According to eBird.org, Woodchuck Hill has also been identified as an important birding area. See eBird Hotspot: https://ebird.org/hotspot/L997796

(*Corallorrhiza trifida*), Small Yellow Ladyslipper (*Crypripedium colceolus parviflorum*), and Little Whorled Pogonia (*Isotria medeoloides*). This Pogonia is said to be the rarest orchid east of the Rockies and one of the rarest orchids in the world.[36]

"Other special plants of the area are: Ginseng (*Panox quinguefolium*); the northern bog plants, Labrador tea (*Ledum groenlandicum*), and Rounded leaved Sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*); and the Coastal plain plant, Bayberry (*Myrica pennsylvanica*).

"The diverse and unusual plant communities of the area support a rich and unusual fauna. Many of the breeding birds of the White Lake area are northern and rare for this region. The most outstanding breeder at this time is the Sharp-shinned Hawk, a bird which has not been known to breed in this region for over a decade. Also in the area are migrating shorebirds, a very important occurrence since there are few places in this region for shore bird stop overs. The caves of the area are reported to shelter the Indiana Bat (*Myodis sodalis*), which is on the Federal Endangered Species List, and is known to occur in only one other site in New York State.[37]

"Geologically, the White Lake complex occurs in a steep sided glacial outwash channel, unusual in an undeveloped or undisturbed condition. Lost Lake is an ephemeral lake which lies in an extinct glacial plunge basin.

"The area has long been visited and utilized by both scientists and naturalists for educational and research purposes. Botanists, especially those interested in ferns, have kept a close watch on the area since the discovery of Hart's Tongue Fern there in the early 1900's. Dr. Mildred Faust, Professor Emeritus from Syracuse University, has been active in the area since the 1920's and is considered the authority on all plant life there.

"The area has a long history of individuals and organizations fighting for its preservation. In the early 1900's, naturalists and scientists attempted to have the area purchased by New York State at the same time as its acquisition of nearby Clark Reservation. The push for this preservation, lead [sic] by the Syracuse Botanical Club and the American Fern Society, reached its climax in the mid-1920's when the Solvay Process Co. (eventually Allied Chemical Co. *[now Honeywell]*) started using the area as a dumping station for their quarry waste; The effort failed and Green Pond, or Blue Lake, said to have been the most impressive of the glacial plunge basin in the area, was filled in and destroyed. Surrounding this lake were colonies of the rare Hart's Tongue Fern, many of which were unsuccessfully transplanted to Clark Reservation.

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[36] *Stanley J. Smith and Eugene C. Ogden - letter to N.Y.S.-D.O.T., January 9, 1968*

[37] Through ongoing efforts, more bird, reptile, amphibian, informal bat acoustic surveys will be performed by EPA and/or NYS DEC in 2019

"In the late 1960's, plans were made by the New York State Department of Transportation to reroute Rts. 92 and 20 directly through the White Lake Corridor. Once again, there was a gathering of forces to fight for the area's preservation. Fortunately, the fight was successful and plans for construction were halted. The most recent threat came in 1976 with Allied Chemical's plans for use of the Quarry floor as a solid waste disposal site. Because recent studies have shown that the groundwater from the Quarry drains northward into the White Lake area, destruction of the natural area's quality would have been inevitable. Once again, the fight was successful, and the plans have been halted."

Beyond TNC's 1977 report, additional preservation battles occurred beginning in 1997 when some 450 acres were sold, and the new owner proposed to install a perimeter fence and construct several mansions on the property. This resulted in community uproar and several lawsuits, finally concluding with a State Supreme Court judgment in 2008 which upheld the restrictive covenant in the deed, preventing the current owner from altering the natural state of the property as long as Jamesville Quarry operates as a quarry.[38]

3.4.1 New York Natural Heritage Program

The New York Natural Heritage Program has identified the following rare plants, rare animals, and significant natural communities within the White Lake wilderness:[39]

	COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	NY STATE LISTING	NY STATE RANK*
Mammals	Indiana Bat winter hibernaculum	*Myotis sodalis*	Endangered [Federally listed as Endangered]	S1
	Northern Long-eared Bat winter hibernaculum	*Myotis septentrionalis*	Threatened [Federally listed as Threatened]	S3S4
	Bat Colony winter hibernaculum			
Plants	Sheathed Pondweed	*Stuckenia filiformis* ssp. *occidentalis*	Endangered	S1
	Marsh Arrow-grass	*Triglochin palustre*	Threatened	S2
	+ Blunt-lobe Grape Fern (1975)	*Botrychium oneidense*	Threatened	S2S3
Communities**	Marl Fen			S1

[38] Examples of media coverage on this topic include the following: "Quarry considers selling forest land DeWitt neighbors call 'forever wild'". Syracuse Herald-Journal, July 8, 1997; "Officials may fight wilderness area sale". Syracuse Herald-Journal, July 17, 1997; "Inside White Lake's Tug-of-War". Syracuse Post-Standard, October 6, 1997.

[39] *Report on Rare Animals, Rare Plants, and Significant Natural Communities.* New York Natural Heritage Program, March 2016.

	Northern White Cedar Swamp			S2S3

** Conservation status in NYS as ranked by NY Natural Heritage Program on a 1 to 5 scale:*
S1 = Critically imperiled; S2 = Imperiled; S3 = Rare or uncommon; S4 = Abundant and apparently secure

***Natural communities in this report are considered significant from a statewide perspective by the NY Natural Heritage Program. They are either occurrences of a community type that is rare in the state, or a high quality example of a more common community type. By meeting specific, documented criteria, the NY Natural Heritage Program considers these community occurrences to have high ecological and conservation value.*

+ = historical record only (with year last seen)

3.5 Ram's Gulch

The area of Ram's Gulch was known as Howlett's Gorge until the mid- to late- 19th century. Aside from the state highway right-of-ways surrounding I-481, the land is privately owned by Hanson Aggregates.

The following text describes the features and interests within Ram's Gulch as described by Gordon DeAngelo (landscape architect with the New York State Department of Transportation) around 1970.[40,41] Emphasis is added within several clauses to indicate particular relevance to significant environmental features and considerations per 6 NYCRR part 617.14(g)(1).

> "Geologic Interest. The gulch represents the eastern terminus of an ancient glacial outwash channel (Rock Cut). During the retreat of the last glacier of the Pleistocene epoch, water from a glacial impoundment in the Onondaga Valley ran through Rock Cut seeking the lower elevations in the Butternut Valley. Following the further retreat of the glacier to the north, Rock Cut was left dry and Ram's Gulch remained essentially undisturbed for approximately the last 12,000 to 15,000 years. During this period, the Gulch developed into the unique area it is today with its exposures of water-worn Onondaga limestone and natural vegetation.
>
> "Ecological Interest. Due to its steep topography**, the Gulch was left undeveloped during the settlement of Onondaga County. This, in turn, has resulted in a relatively undisturbed ecosystem of plants and animals**. Ram's Gulch Brook, as a tributary of Butternut Creek, provides a natural spawning area for native Brook Trout. The Gulch also provides a wide range of habitat for animals and has served for many years as a choice location for local ornithologists.

[40] Portions of Mr. DeAngelo's report on Ram's Gulch were incorporated into the 1971 Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for constructing a portion of the present day I-481 highway. (https://books.google.com/books?id=r7o1AQAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false)

[41] This "Data Sheet" was obtained courtesy of the William Hillcourt Scout Museum & Carson Buck Memorial Library at Camp Woodland, Constantia, N.Y.; Longhouse Council - Boy Scouts of America.

"Botanical Interest. Since the founding of the Syracuse Botanical Club in 1879, Ram's Gulch has been an area of special interest. During the nineteenth century, such famous botanists as Asa Gray, Sir Joseph Hooker, John Muir and Charles Darwin corresponded with the Syracuse Botanical Club and congratulated the Club on its work. Ram's Gulch, in addition to at least 25 different species of trees, contains a number of unusual plants. The stream contains a rare water moss, while the unique acid and alkali soil conditions permit the growth of scarce bog plants, including the insectivorous sundews and pitcher plants. Over twenty ferns and related plants, as well as rare sedges and several species of wild orchid are located in this area.

"The most unusual plant in the area is undoubtedly the Hart's-tongue fern (*Phyllitis scolopendrium*). This fern is one of the rarest plants in the United States being originally found native in one county in Tennessee and in several localities in Onondaga and Madison Counties. Ram's Gulch provides the only south slope native habitat for Hart's-tongue fern in Central New York area.

"Recreational Interest. **Ram's Gulch represents a potential for a "wilderness experience" within a designated Urban Area with a population of approximately 500,000 people.** Such areas are becoming extremely rare within spheres of urban influence and Ram's Gulch is especially unique in being located less than 4.2 miles from the center of Syracuse[42].

"With the exception of Clark Reservation (Central New York State Park Commission) which is located on part of the south escarpment overlooking Rock Cut, the only major recreational use in the area has been in Ram's Gulch, where the Boy Scouts of America operated a camp from the 1920's to the 1950's.

"Scenic Interest and Open Space. **The scenic aspects of Ram's Gulch center about the intimate views of old growth woodland essentially unchanged since the settlement of Onondaga County.** The addition of properly designed trails would permit the urban population a glimpse of the primitive woodlands now largely gone from Central New York State. In addition, the preservation of Ram's Gulch would contribute an important segment to a desirable "green belt" of "open space" through the southeastern portion of the Syracuse Urban Area.

"Highway Construction. At present, the proposed Interstate 281[43] running east-west through Rock Cut has been located on the plateau (present location of Boy Scout Buildings) above Ram's Gulch

[42] While heavily impacted by construction of I-481, there remains unique habitat/wildlife areas present throughout the corridor

[43] NYS DOT references "Interstate 281" above prior to issuing the DEIS; this interstate was eventually designated as Interstate 481. In addition, the reference to "a proposed cul-de-sac just north of the present railroad underpass" currently exists as the northern terminus of Ram's Gulch Road.

in such a manner as to leave the wooded slopes and the Gulch itself untouched throughout the Boy Scout and Alexander parcels.

"A proposed cul-de-sac just north of the present railroad underpass on Nottingham Road would provide adequate access to Ram's Gulch for its use as a natural area.

Although much of the land surrounding Ram's Gulch was ultimately impacted by the construction of the highway corridor, three distinct areas of interest remain intact: the gulch, where a small stream tributary to Butternut Creek flows; the wetland, comprised of marsh grasses and stands of spruce and cedar; and the cliff top, where the main trail through the area is located. Remnants of the historic water ram pump that gave the gulch its name are still present.[44]

3.5.1 Geological Features

To highlight the "exposures of water-worn Onondaga limestone" described by NYSDOT above, the following descriptions were provided by Carlton E. Brett, University Distinguished Research Professor, Geology Department, University of Cincinnati after review of the photos included in **Attachment 1**.

"…appear to be features in the uppermost Silurian Manlius Formation, probably the Thatcher Member, though the section gets into the Rondout Fm, lowest unit in that region. They show some nice examples of stromatolitic laminae and possible tidal rhythmites. I suspect a close look might yield nice desiccation cracks at some levels. In some ways this may be regarded as an exemplar of such peritidal (or tidally influenced) facies, meaning the products of deposition on lagoons to tidal flats toward the close of the Silurian.

"Also of interest is that this section lies very close to and may include the Silurian-Devonian boundary (which has recently been in debate and moved upward from its formerly entrenched position at the base of the Manlius. This is not to say that there is not Onondaga Limestone there, at least the lower Edgecliff Member is probably present in bluffs at the top of the valley. It rests on a very thin (typically < 1 meter), but very interesting succession of Lower Devonian rocks including the Schoharie-Bois Blanc Formation with large round phosphatic sandstone pebbles and in places thin lenses of the underlying Oriskany Sandstone. This in turn fills crevices and low spots on the top of the Manlius Formation, mainly Jamesville Member or higher units at a classic karsted (cave-sinkhole) surfaces at the great Devonian Wallbridge unconformity Exposures of this succession are seen in the nearby Split rock and Moorehouse Penitentiary quarry and of course in the classic Jamesville Quarry. But I do not know if this succession is well exposed in Rams Gulch.

[44] https://syracuseparksconservancy.org/wp-content/uploads/completeOENCreport2_000.pdf

"But probably the most important features of this Gulch area are erosional features produced by glacial melt waters…The erosional features of the very nearby Clark Reservation Park are world class, including a bedrock benched channel, "fossil "waterfall and plunge pool lake, as well as modern (late Pleistocene-Holocene) karst features. The Rock Cut Channel to which Rams Gulch is tributary, is a slightly younger (later) channel cut by melt water when ice retreated farther north. [45]

3.5.2 Old Growth Forest Survey

To further investigate the "intimate views of old growth woodland essentially unchanged since the settlement of Onondaga County" as described by NYSDOT above, members of DACC conducted a BioBlitz, or informal tree survey, within Ram's Gulch. This survey primarily focused on the north slope of the ravine south of I-481, and along the southern slope as well. Diameter at breast height (DBH) measurements were recorded for many of the trees observed to be at least 24-inches in diameter. **Attachment 2** identifies the areas within Ram's Gulch over which these measurements were made, with contemporary aerial imagery included on page 2 and aerial imagery from 1926 included on page 3. It is most evident from the historic imagery that a dense forest has existed here for some time. The following table provides a summary of the results from this survey, along with the estimated age range of measured trees.[46]

Scientific Name	Common Name	Number of Trees Measured	Minimum DBH measured (inches)	Maximum DBH measured (inches)	Growth Factor	Estimated age range (years)
Acer saccharum	Sugar maple	9	24	32	5.5	132 - 176
Acer spp.	Maple species	2 (snag)	22	28	5.5	121 - 154
Betula alleghaniensis	Yellow birch	1	29	29	--	growth factor not available
Carya ovata	Shagbark hickory	3	18	24	7.5	135 - 180
Fagus grandifolia	American beech	4	22	24	6	132 - 144
Liriodendron tulipifera	Tulip poplar	17	26	35	3	78 - 105

[45] Personal communication between Brian Solomon of DeWitt Advisory Conservation Commission and Professor Carlton E. Brett; Dec 13, 2017.

[46] Tree age estimates are based on often cited "growth factors". These growth factors should be considered general estimates, with more reliable data on tree age being typically quantifiable by means of an incremental borer and counting tree rings. These growth factors were obtained via https://intownhawk.com/estimate-tree-age/, and are noted as having originated from the International Society of Arboriculture.

Quercus rubra	Northern red oak	2	22	44	4	88 - 176
Thuja occidentalis	Northern white cedar	9	18	28		growth factor not available
Tilia americana	American basswood	3	22	24	3	66 - 72
Tsuga canadensis	Eastern hemlock	3	24	26	--	growth factor not available
Tsuga canadensis	Eastern hemlock	1 (snag)	29	29	--	

DBH - diameter at breast height

3.6 Clark Reservation State Park and Adjacent Forestland

From the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP):

> "Clark Reservation State Park is a geologic wonder of the last ice age and a botanist's paradise. The park's natural features include rugged cliffs and rocky outcrops, woodland and meadow, a wetland and a glacial plunge basin lake in which the surface waters and bottom waters do not mix."[47]

This parkland was generously purchased by Mary Clark Thompson in 1915, in hopes of saving some of this unique geological and natural landscape—as nearby areas were being destroyed by quarrying. The land was donated to the New York State Museum under the condition that it be preserved as a memorial commemorating her father, former New York State governor Myron H. Clark. Clark Reservation officially became a State Park in 1926. Over 80,000 people visited the Park in 2016.[48] Per the Wikipedia entry for the Park:

> "It was the site of a large waterfall at the end of the last Ice Age; the plunge basin at the base of the old falls is now a small lake. James Macfarlane described the area in 1879, "On approaching the lake from the turnpike on the south side, the tourist is startled at finding himself, without any notice, on the brink of a yawning gulf, precisely like that of the Niagara River below the Falls, and nearly as deep." Clark Reservation is also noted for its many ferns; it harbors the largest population in the U.S. of American hart's tongue, which is so rare that it was declared endangered in the U.S. in 1989.
>
> "The park is 377 acres (153 ha) in size, and logs about 80,000 visitors per year. It encompasses the cliff, plunge basin and gorge of the ancient waterfall, and a number of secondary ravines and basins. Glacier Lake, which occupies the plunge basin of the former waterfall, is 6.2 acres (2.5 ha) in size and 52 feet (16 m) deep; it is a rare meromictic lake in which the deep waters don't mix annually with the surface waters. The surrounding limestone cliffs are 180 feet (55 m) high. Hiking

[47] https://parks.ny.gov/parks/126/details.aspx

[48] https://data.ny.gov/Recreation/State-Park-Annual-Attendance-Figures-by-Facility-B/8f3n-xj78/data

trails skirt a half-ring of cliffs surrounding the lake, as well as traversing the rugged limestone over which the old river flowed." [49]

3.6.1 New York Natural Heritage Program

The New York Natural Heritage Program has identified the following rare plants, rare animals, and significant natural communities within Clark Reservation State Park:[50]

	COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	NY STATE LISTING	NY STATE RANK*
Mammals	Indiana bat (summer location)	*Myotis sodalis*	Endangered [Federally listed as Endangered]	S1
	Eastern small-footed myotis (summer location)	*Myotis leibii*	Special Concern	S2
Plants	Hart's-tongue fern	*Phyllitis scolopendrium* var. *americanum*	Threatened [Federally listed as Threatened]	S2
	Cork elm	*Ulmus thomasii*	Threatened	S2S3
	Willdenow's sedge	*Carex willdenowii*	Threatened	S2S3
	+ Puttyroot (1890)	*Aplectrum hyemale*	Endangered	S1
	+ Woodland bluegrass (1916)	*Poa sylvestris*	Endangered	S1
Communities**	Calcareous cliff community			S3
	Calcareous talus slope woodland			S3
	Limestone woodland			S2S3
	Maple-basswood rich mesic forest			S3

** Conservation status in NYS as ranked by NY Natural Heritage Program on a 1 to 5 scale:*
S1 = Critically imperiled; S2 = Imperiled; S3 = Rare or uncommon; S4 = Abundant and apparently secure
***Natural communities in this report are considered significant from a statewide perspective by the NY Natural Heritage Program. They are either occurrences of a community type that is rare in the state, or a high quality example of a more common community type. By meeting specific, documented criteria, the NY Natural Heritage Program considers these community occurrences to have high ecological and conservation value.*

[49] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clark_Reservation_State_Park

[50] *Report on Rare Animals, Rare Plants, and Significant Natural Communities.* New York Natural Heritage Program, March 2016.

+ = historical record only (with year last seen)

3.7 Rock Cut Quarry and Adjacent Forestland

Hanson Aggregates currently owns the defunct Rock Cut quarry site[51]. Per the Syracuse Post-Standard:

> "According to the Onondaga Historical Association, the Rock Cut Stone Co., of Syracuse, opened a quarry at the site in 1908. General Crushed Stone Co., of Easton, Pa., acquired it in 1929. It was shut down temporarily from 1932 until 1947, when the company reopened its crusher operation. In 1956, with construction of the federal highway system under way, the company restarted mining rock at the site. In 1976, it was processing 650,000 tons of crushed stone annually. General Crushed Stone shut the quarry down in the early 1980s but continued to operate a quarry farther south in Jamesville. The company was acquired by Hanson Aggregates New York Inc. of Atlanta in 1992."[52]

Four parcels comprise the Rock Cut quarry. These consist of the approximately 378-acre north area (2 consecutive parcels) and the approximately 70-acre south area (2 consecutive parcels); the north and south areas are bifurcated by the I-481 corridor. The north and south areas each contain a quarry pit and adjacent forestland:

North area:

- Bounded by I-481 on the south, the Drumlins Country Club golf course on the north, Skytop Road[53] on the west, and Old Stonehouse Road on the east.
- Approximately 378 acres evenly split between forest, quarry pit, and other disturbed areas. The 90 or so acres of forestland are found along the quarry pit perimeter. Some of this forest can be seen on aerial imagery from 1926 (i.e., old-growth or near old-growth), while around 30 acres immediately west of Old Stonehouse Road was farmland at that time and has regenerated as forest. Areas outside the quarry pit that are also disturbed (e.g., tailing piles, settling ponds, access roads, staging areas) are generally located just north of Rock Cut Road to the escarpment base, as well as west of the quarry pit (settling pond and tailing piles).

[51] The site is also colloquially referred to as the Skytop quarry.

[52] "New value from an old quarry: 2,000 jobs at an inland port'". Syracuse Post-Standard, October 11, 2015.

[53] Skytop Road is privately owned by Syracuse University.

South area:

- Bounded by I-481 at the north and Clark Reservation State Park to the east. Private residences located along the NYS Route 173 corridor border the property at the south. The OCRRA incinerator, operated by Covanta, is located to the northwest.
- Approximately 40 acres of forest, 21 acres of quarry pit, and 14 acres other disturbed areas.

3.7.1 Natural Setting

A diverse forestland exists south of the Drumlins Golf Course, east of Skytop Road (in Syracuse), west of Old Stonehouse Road, and north of I-481, surrounding the Rock Cut Quarry north pit. This forest includes conifer stands of red pine (*Pinus resinosa*), eastern white pine (*Pinus strobus*), and northern white-cedar (*Thuja occidentalis*), as well as deciduous woodlands comprised of several species of hickory (*Carya*), oak (*Quercus*), maple (*Acer*), as well as American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*), Eastern Hophornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*), common hackberry (*Celtis occidentalis*), black cherry (*Prunus serotina*), eastern black walnut (*Juglans nigra*), and other native tree species. The forestland between the quarry pit and the golf Course contains many spring ephemeral plants such as White Trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum*), Jack-in-the-Pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*), Trout Lily (*Erythronium americanum*), and Cutleaf Toothwort (*Dentaria laciniata*), indicating that this area of forest has most likely remained undisturbed by development. White Trillium (*Trillium grandiflorum*) is a New York State protected native plant (as listed in 6 NYCRR 193.3). Other species found in these woodlands are bloodroot (*Sanguinaria Canadensis*), blue cohosh (*Caulophyllum thalictroides*), Moonseed (*Menispermum canadense*), false Solomon's seal (*Maianthemum racemosum*), and a variety of ferns and sedges. Such varieties of woodland plants have disappeared and not returned to many other local wooded areas due to past agricultural use or other development.[54]

3.7.2 Rare Plant and Natural Community Survey

In addition to many of the plants species detailed herein, members of the DeWitt Advisory Conservation Commission (DACC) have identified occurrences of several New York State protected native plants (as listed in 6 NYCRR 193.3) along the northern escarpment at the Rock Cut Quarry, including maidenhair spleenwort (*Asplenium trichomanes*) and purple-stemmed cliff brake (*Pellaea atropurpurea*). The cliff brake was not identified across the valley at Clark Reservation State Park

[54] Griffiths, G.R. and G.G. McGee. 2018. Lack of herbaceous layer community recovery in post-agricultural forests across three physiographic regions of New York. Journal of the Torrey Botanical Society 145(1):1-20.

(where Hart's-Tongue Fern is relatively plentiful) during a May 2014 BioBlitz[55], though it has been observed in at least one location within the State Park since that time[56]. Based on the characteristics within the forested areas surrounding the north quarry pit and south of the south quarry pit, it is evident the same significant ecological communities identified by the New York Natural Heritage Program within Clark Reservation State Park (as described previously, in Section 2.6.1) are also found here.

3.7.3 Recreation

Since the time the quarry was shut down, this area has become a very popular informal open space and recreational resource. It is likely that hundreds of people frequent this area on a regular basis (due to it being well known in the community and its physical ties to Clark Reservation State Park and the Syracuse University campus), whether for mountain biking, hiking, bird watching, trail running, snowshoeing, or generally exploring nature.

Figure 4 illustrates the extent of trail usage at the Rock Cut quarry. This "heatmap" is a graphical representation of aggregated public activities over the last two years by Strava users.[57]

[55] On May 3, 2014, nearly 70 volunteers with scientific backgrounds gathered at Clark Reservation State Park for a BioBlitz, to inventory of the park's biodiversity by documenting as many rare and common species and significant natural communities as possible during a 24-hour period.

[56] Personal correspondence between Brian Solomon of the DeWitt Advisory Conservation Commission and Katie Mulverhill (Environmental Educator, Central Region New York State Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation) and Mike Serviss (Conservation Project Coordinator at Clark Reservation State Park) on March 14, 2019.

[57] https://blog.strava.com/press/heatmap-updates/

Figure 4 –

Strava Heat Map of Rock Cut quarry trail network

3.8 Former Alpha Cement Plant Site

The Alpha Cement Plant on Ogle Road in Jamesville began as the Thomas Millen Company cement works in 1891; it was acquired by the Alpha Cement Company in 1917. The works continued to increase in activity and size until eventually it consisted of 14 buildings and 127 acres. The cement kiln was fired by coal.

It is understood that the Alpha Cement plant used the sand, gravel and bedrock from its property and the neighboring Jamesville Quarry as the raw product in its cement-making process. Large quantities of cement kiln dust (CKD) from the flues of the kiln were stockpiled on site and remain as of 2020, despite several Consent Orders from the New York Department of Environment Conservation specifying that all CKD is to be removed from the site. In the late 1970's until its closing in 1980, Alpha periodically burned hazardous waste, primarily liquid solvents and hydrocarbons, as a fuel supplement.

In its unused state, nuisance and illicit activity has befallen the former Alpha cement site. A popular "hangout", it is the site of vandalism, accidents, and fires, presenting many problems to the municipality. During a one-month period in 2016, DeWitt police made 19 arrests for trespassing. During that same year, officers responded to the site more than 50 times to investigate reports of

criminal mischief, and they have stated that the "crumbling concrete, failing stairwells and deep holes …pose a "substantial risk of serious injury or death" for trespassers."[58]

As detailed under *Cultural/Historical* anecdotes in Section 3.1.3, private development efforts to expand the site's industrial use have largely been opposed by the community. The Jamesville Hamlet Master Plan[59], adopted by the Town on April 22, 2019, has called for reclaiming the site and developing 18 acres of the total 127 into housing and retail space, with 9 acres reserved for park land. The remaining property (85%) would be reclaimed and remain as conserved open space. Relatively undisturbed open space primarily exists along the southern boundary of the site, consisting of several small stands of old-growth forest and a wetland/pond area adjacent to the Jamesville Nature Center located in the northwest corner of the Jamesville Elementary School property.

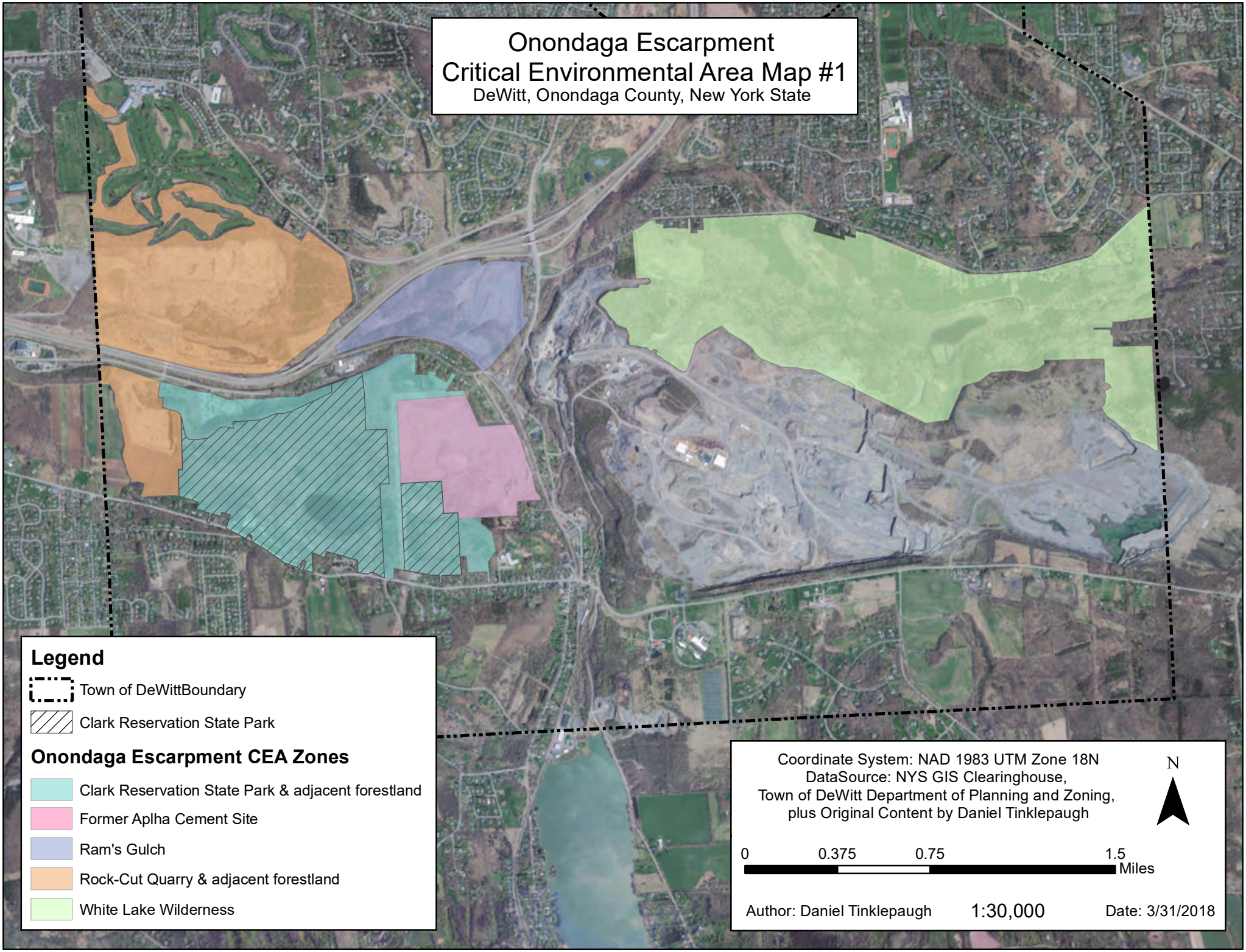
Future development of the site has recently been expanded through the adoption of the Mixed-Use Village Floating Overlay District, a zoning update adopted by the Town Board in 2018. This zoning designation, allowing a vertically-integrated mix of uses into a single structure and encouraging a higher density of development in selected areas of the Town, has been applied to this parcel as MUV-2. Any potential developer may elect to utilize this type of zoning at the discretion of the Town Board.

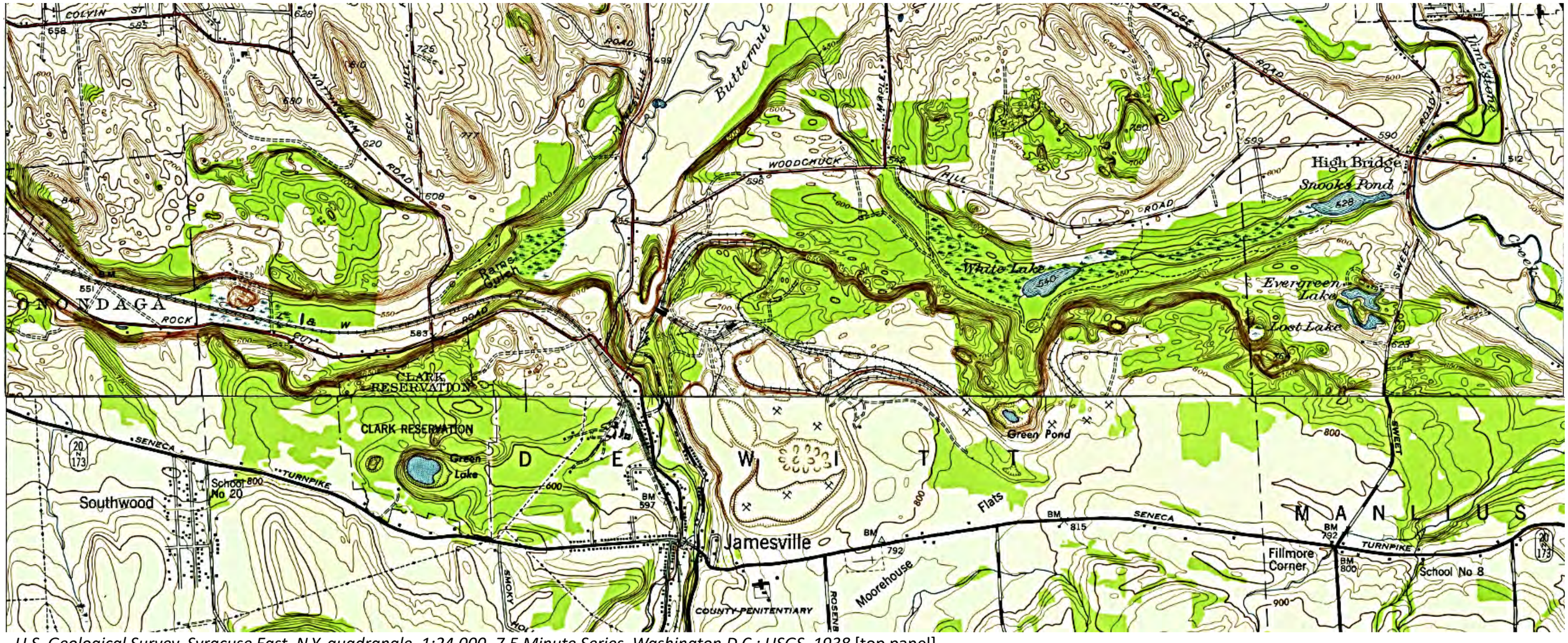
[58] https://www.syracuse.com/crime/index.ssf/2016/06/trespassers_beware_police_warn_public_to_stay_away_from_defunct_jamesville_cemen.html

[59] www.townofdewitt.com/documents/1451.pdf

4 Conclusion

Sensitive and unique areas in the Onondaga Escarpment, including the areas in this report to be designated by the CEA classification, are environmental resources that provide an important natural view shed, positively impact natural resources, provide health and welfare benefits, and act as unique cultural and historic areas for residents in the Town of DeWitt. From the benefits of carbon sequestering by the forests to health benefits from recreational trails, each CEA provides specific assets that are valued by community members statewide. By designating areas in the Onondaga Escarpment as CEA's, state and local agencies will be required to examine all proposed alterations to these areas to ensure any impairments to the environmental characteristics are addressed and the community value is protected. With development constantly growing, it is imperative these sparse natural areas be given specific attention so preservation efforts are not wasted and maintaining the environment becomes an important aspect of any future developments.


Onondaga Escarpment
Critical Environmental Area Map #1
DeWitt, Onondaga County, New York State
Legend
Town of DeWittBoundary
Clark Reservation State Park
Onondaga Escarpment CEA Zones
Clark Reservation State Park & adjacent forestland
Former Aplha Cement Site
Ram's Gulch
Rock-Cut Quarry & adjacent forestland
White Lake Wilderness
Coordinate System: NAD 1983 UTM Zone 18N
DataSource: NYS GIS Clearinghouse,
Town of DeWitt Department of Planning and Zoning,
plus Original Content by Daniel Tinklepaugh
N
0
0.375
0.75
1.5
Miles
Author: Daniel Tinklepaugh
1:30,000
Date: 3/31/2018



U.S. Geological Survey. Syracuse East, N.Y. quadrangle. 1:24,000. 7.5 Minute Series. Washington D.C.: USGS, 1938 [top panel].
U.S. Geological Survey. Jamesville, N.Y. quadrangle. 1:24,000. 7.5 Minute Series. Washington D.C.: USGS, 1943 [bottom panel].

N

Map 2
Onondaga Escarpment in DeWitt
1938 and 1943 United States Geologic Survey Topographic Mapping

From:	Frechette, Mark (DOT)
To:	Bjorness, Joan E (DOT)
Subject:	FW: I-81 DEIS Comments from DeWitt
Date:	Thursday, October 14, 2021 2:39:11 PM
Attachments:	image001.png DeWitt I81 DeWitt Comments 10.14.21.pdf Attachment 1 481 E Genesee.pdf Attachment 2 Mitigating Truck Traffic.pdf Attachment 3 - LWRP Projects.pdf Attachment 4 Engineer and highway comments.pdf

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Comments.

From: Epolito, Angela <aepolito@townofdewitt.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 14, 2021 1:11 PM
To: Frechette, Mark (DOT) <Mark.Frechette@dot.ny.gov>; rick.marquis@dot.gov
Cc: supervisor@townofdewitt.com; Town Board Members <TownBoardMembers@townofdewitt.com>; Smith, Kelly <ksmith@townofdewitt.com>
Subject: I-81 DEIS Comments from DeWitt

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

Please see attached the Town of DeWitt comments and attachments regarding the I-81 DEIS.

Thank you,

TOWN OF DeWitt
more than you think

Angela K. Epolito
Town Clerk/Tax Receiver
5400 Butternut Drive
East Syracuse, NY 13057
Phone # 315.446.3910 ext. 140
aepolito@townofdewitt.com

5400 Butternut Drive
East Syracuse, NY 13057-8509
Phone: 315.446.3910
Fax: 315.449.0620

Town Board:
Joe Chiarenza
Karen Docter
Jack Dooling
Kerry Mannion
Kerin Rigney
Sam Young

Edward M. Michalenko, PhD.
Supervisor

TOWN OF DeWitt
more than you think

October 14, 2021

Mark Frechette, P.E.
Project Director
NYS Department of Transportation, Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Rick Marquis
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Federal Building
11A Clinton Avenue, Suite 719
Albany, NY 12207

RE: Interstate 81

Dear Mr. Frechette and Mr. Marquis:

Please find attached comments from the Town of DeWitt regarding the I-81 Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Sincerely,

Edward M. Michalenko, PhD.
Supervisor

Attachments

Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS): The comment period was not long enough to provide adequate review of the voluminous documents and properly address the multitude of issues and concerns, nor provide specific comments on the document narrative.

Overall Statement: As an environmental scientist and Supervisor of the Town of DeWitt, I oppose the plan to eliminate the north-south connection of Route 81 through the City of Syracuse.

The conversion of Route 481 into Route 81 will be detrimental to DeWitt neighborhoods due to significantly increased traffic on Route 481 and on DeWitt's secondary County and Town roads, thereby resulting in significantly increased air and noise pollution.

The conversion of Route 81 into a business loop will be detrimental to Syracuse southside and northside neighborhoods due to separation, significantly increased traffic on neighborhood secondary streets, thereby resulting in significantly increased air and noise pollution. In addition, the selected option, community grid will have negative economic, social, and environmental impacts on a regional scale. The CNY community will suffer over the long term by disconnecting Route 81 through the City of Syracuse.

The proposed project(s) will have severe negative social, economic, and environmental impacts on DeWitt and CNY far into the future.

Please see a copy of the Town Board Resolutions dated June 10, 2013 and August 22, 2016 outlining our position at:
https://cms8.revize.com/revize/dewittny/supervisor/Town%20Board%20Resolution.pdf
https://cms8.revize.com/revize/dewittny/1-81.2013%20resolution.pdf

This position is supported by majority of the DeWitt Town Board; 19 of 19 Supervisors and 18 of 19 Town Boards in Onondaga County have formally opposed the community grid as a standalone option.

Sustainability: A sustainable solution to a complex problem requires a deep evaluation of the economic, social, and environmental factors involved at both a local and global scale. The community grid option is a sustainable option on a microscale with short and long-term benefits for a minority of stakeholders including Syracuse University, Upstate Medical Center, several local developers and businesses. The community grid option violates sustainability principles on a macro-scale. The community grid as a stand-alone project has long term negative implications to the vast majority of Central New Yorkers including adjacent and nearby city residents. I am not anti-community grid, in fact, I support the intended goals of the community grid, and yet the goals of the community grid can be met with other options such as a box tunnel, depressed, or combination highway or iconic bridge.

I fully support smart growth and sustainability principles. The proposed community grid works against sustainability principles on a regional scale:

- by disconnecting direct routes,
- isolating existing neighborhoods,
- causing the travelling public to drive greater distances,
- redirecting short distance travelers through at-grade city streets,
- lowering public safety,
- increasing wait times at greater number of intersections,
- consuming large amounts of personal time of the course of a career or lifetime,
- increasing fuel consumption,
- increasing transportation costs for gasoline and vehicle wear and tear,
- increasing air pollution, and thereby
- exacerbating climate change.

Each of these items can be dismissed by proponents of the grid on an individual basis and looking through a short-term lens. However, collectively and over the long-term, have a profound negative economic, social, and environmental impacts on CNY.

Regional transportation study: NYSDOT has spent over a decade promoting the removal of Route 81 through the City of Syracuse and the accompanied conversion of Route 481 into Route 81 without conducting a regional transportation study.

NYSDOT has fostered the public perception that extensive study has been performed; yet, by confining the study area to the one and one-half mile stretch of Route 81 elevated highway between approximately Kennedy Street and Route 690 and by constraining the scope of the analyses, NYSDOT limited the study findings. The outcome of a biased study can be predetermined by a flawed study design and inappropriate hypothesis testing. In this case, NYSDOT structured the wrong hypothesis as "What should be done with a short segment of elevated highway within the City of Syracuse?" Hence, NYSDOT failed to evaluate other problematic highway segments and additional highway needs throughout CNY. For instance, NYSDOT should have evaluated and addressed the need for connections between Route 690 and Route 81; NYSDOT should have attempted to establish connections for those traveling Route 690 West bound to Route 81 North and those traveling Route 81 South bound to Route 690 West.

A project of such magnitude, with regional economic, social, and environmental impacts warrants an in-depth study on a regional scale. Rather than focus on a single segment of elevated highway comprising one and one-half miles within the City of Syracuse, a regional evaluation of transportation needs for the future of CNY would have developed a multifaceted strategy addressing a variety of road and neighborhood improvements throughout CNY. Results and outcomes would likely be entirely different than the current community grid as a standalone project. A more comprehensive approach could have identified solutions to multiple problematic locations throughout the CNY highway system. A holistic strategic plan could have

laid out a series of road improvements that could be implemented in discrete units over an extended period of time. The long-term implementation of such a plan would benefit the large majority of stakeholders and citizens throughout CNY. The failure to conduct a regional transportation study has led to the current proposal which will severely and negatively impact the vast majority of citizens and stakeholders throughout CNY far into the future.

Predetermined outcome: I was invited as DeWitt Supervisor and attended a NYSDOT Stakeholder Meeting in Lafayette Town Hall on the evening of September 17, 2009, along with Mr. Kerry Mannion, Deputy Supervisor, Mr. Michael Lazar, Chair of DeWitt Planning Board, and Mr. Richard Robb, Director of Planning, Development and Operations in DeWitt. Representatives from the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council (SMTC) and NYSDOT were present. It was at this meeting that we were first introduced to the notion that Route 81 would be dropped to ground level through the center of Syracuse and Route 481 would become Route 81, CNY's only major north-south federal freeway. We were told by NYSDOT representatives that CNY's population "was too small to maintain two federal highways". Later, on the ride back to DeWitt, Mr. Lazar concluded "that it was a done deal". It was apparent then, and it is evident now, that the decision was made prior to conducting the process; perhaps by a higher office in state government than that of NYSDOT.

Federal highway system: The modern federal highway system is largely a result of the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956. Congress mandated a system of divided and controlled access roadways with no at-grade intersections for multiple purposes including:

1. accommodating an increasing number of automobiles,
2. providing greater efficiency and reduced time-of-travel,
3. improved safety,
4. public works measure,
5. economic expansion, and
6. national defense.

Because Route 81 is part of the federal highway system, it belongs to the citizens and business enterprise of the United States. It services the traveling public, including out-of-state citizens, in addition to serving national defense, international trade, interstate shipping, business and commerce. Each of these items is an important factor in establishing the federal highway system. Each of these areas warrants an in-depth evaluation of the local, regional, and national impacts of disconnecting Route 81 through Syracuse. Each of these topics and others should be part of the discussion, and should be addressed in the DEIS, and each should have been topics included in a comprehensive regional transportation study.

The federal highway system continues to expand to this day, especially in areas of population and economic expansion. For all six reasons cited above, the conversion of Route 81 to an at grade business loop is a step backwards. Those cities throughout the U.S. that currently possess a business loop are striving to increase connections and construct divided controlled access roadways. For the most part, the highways to boulevards movement has occurred on urban highway appendages that extend in and out of an urban center with an already existing terminus point at the urban center (Harbor Drive Expressway, Portland, OR; Clairborne Expressway, New Orleans, LA; Inner Loop, Rochester, NY; Park East Freeway, Milwaukee, WI; Central Artery [John F. Fitzgerald Expressway] Boston, MA; Terminal Island Freeway, Long Beach, CA); very few urban highways that extend across and through the urban center have or are being disconnected. What is being proposed for Syracuse is tantamount to removing a section of the Southern State Highway in Queens, NY because the neighborhood of Lynnwood was divided and separated from Howard Beach, or removing the Van Wyck Expressway which connects LaGuardia and Kennedy airports through Queens. The Van Wyck Expressway also divided dozens of neighborhoods. On a smaller scale, the removal of Route 81 through Syracuse would be analogous to the Village of Marathon, NY deciding to convert Route 81 to a Boulevard. In fact, Route 81 bisects the jurisdictional boundaries of Marathon such that neighborhoods have been divided and the downtown area is separated from important schools. Similar situations are pervasive throughout the federal highway system. Still these highways are part of the major federal highway system.

The number of vehicles continues to expand even in the absence of population growth due to greater numbers of drivers and greater numbers of vehicles per household, and the growing numbers of delivery and service vehicles resulting from rapidly expanding ecommerce and the gig-economy. Online shopping and the associate mobile job pool is expected to grow far into the future. The time of travel will increase significantly for those traversing the grid, and the number of accidents will rise as safety will be diminished for those who cross the City-highway travel route which will be eliminated and sent to ground level secondary streets.

National defense: President Dwight D. Eisenhower promoted Congress to enact and he signed the Federal Aid Highway Act on June 29, 1956, in part, because he knew the importance to national defense. The bill was popularly referred to as the National Interstate and Defense Highways Act. It was the largest public works project in American history at the time, it authorized $25 billion for the construction of 41,000 miles (66,000 km) of the Interstate Highway System over a 10-year period. President Eisenhower recognized the ability to move armies, supplies, materials, and weapons via convoy across the federal highway system was critical to the nation's long-term interest. President Eisenhower served as Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Europe during World War II. As an opposing General, Eisenhower was impressed with the Reichsautobahn highway system, and Germany's ability to rapidly deploy troops and armaments.

The conversion of Route 81 to a business loop through the City of Syracuse will potentially weaken national defense, particularly amongst deployments in the northeast. Currently both Route 81 and Route 481 serve as conduits for military purposes. Should an enemy or terrorist

group disable one route the other can be utilized in its stead. The concept is similar to the internet with the movement and delivery of electronic messages. Both Routes 81 and Route 481 are important to Fort Drum in Watertown, NY and other military installations such as those at Hancock Air Force Base, Griffiths Air Force Base, and the Seneca Depot.

Alternatives: Several primary options have been looked at to date: a tunnel, depressed highway, elevated highway, and a community grid. Very few, if any, favor maintaining the status quo. The current elevated highway configuration is unacceptable for the future, and is counter to securing a walkable, more densely populated, and sustainable downtown. Clearly, the construction of the original viaduct in the 1960's destroyed the 15th ward neighborhood and caused irreparable damage to families and thriving businesses; accompanied deed records and the practice of redlining are further evidence of systemic racism.

Hybrid Community Grid: Still, opportunity exists to accomplish the goals of the community grid and also maintain the north-south Route 81 connection through the city of Syracuse via a "Hybrid Community Grid" approach. The Hybrid Community Grid alternative would integrate the north-south Route 81 connection through the city of Syracuse through a design that does not impact the Community Grid design. An innovatively designed Hybrid Community Grid could work with a depressed highway, an elevated highway, or even a tunnel.

Tunnel: Many assert the tunnel option is too expensive. Given the significant economic challenges our region faces, they cite additional tax dollars could be better spent on other needed infrastructure (See comments on federal funding). The tunnel option was dismissed by NYSDOT due to costs and geologic conditions. Several of the identified tunnel routes were agreed to be impractical. However, a localized box tunnel option was never included in the analysis. A box tunnel could be installed at relatively low cost and adequately address poor geologic substrates. Further a box tunnel or series of box tunnel sections could easily be incorporated into a depressed highway design. The box tunnel highway option has a distinct advantage of requiring that nearby underground public utilities such as gas and electric, and municipal infrastructure such as sewer and water would be rebuilt.

Depressed highway: The depressed highway option has distinct advantages such as allowing the secondary cross streets to maintain connections between both sides of the highway. A depressed highway as would a tunnel, require rebuilding Syracuse's underground public utilities and municipal infrastructure, which is sorely needed. A depressed highway could accommodate the community grid by incorporating "shelves," with street level traffic extending over the depressed highway like the Grand Central Parkway in Queens, NY. A depressed highway would work well in combination with a box tunnel or perhaps a series of box tunnels, particularly located at cross secondary streets.

Elevated Highway: The elevated highway option also presents advantages, an elevated highway doesn't have to look like our existing highway; it could take a different route through the city, be a different height, and could allow for the community grid and also new buildings and green space underneath. Architect Steve Buechner has put forth an excellent proposal (Moriarty 2019,

Architect resurrects I-81 central park proposal, adds sailboat bridge https://www.syracuse.com/news/2019/02/architect-resurrects-i-81-central-park-proposal-adds-sailboat-bridge.html , Syracuse.com, Feb. 6). An innovative elevated highway design could be architecturally unique, visually appealing, or even iconic. Combining infrastructure with public open space like the Presidio in San Francisco is not only aesthetically pleasing, it can become a tourist attraction and often supports increased real estate values.

Iconic bridge: While highways are unappealing and often look alike, bridges can be used to create identity, establish a sense of place. Bridges often "brand" a city. If we envision the 1.5 mile section through Syracuse as a bridge, that section of highway could be a unique landmark, even architecturally iconic and help define the city's skyline, an added feature to the Dome, the Crouse Hospital Clock Tower, AXA twin towers, and the State Tower building.

Footprint: The supposition that a modern Route 81 requires more space and would require the removal of a large number of buildings is false. In fact, the footprint of the highway could actually be smaller than the existing footprint, and yet safe, and still conform to NYS highway standards and guidelines, by stacking both the north and south bound lanes over one another.

Federal Funds: Any project highway would be largely paid for with federal tax dollars. NYS has allocated 800 million dollars for the project; majority of the funds (80%) are federally sourced. One-fifth of the costs would be provided by NYS.

New York is seventh from the bottom amongst the state's return on federal tax dollars. For every dollar paid, New York receives about 90 cents back. Yet, New York State ranks second in total taxes paid to the federal government. It is incumbent upon our federal representatives, Senator Charles E. Schumer, Senator Kirsten E. Gillibrand, and Congressman John M. Katko, to obtain the necessary federal funds to implement a project that serves the greatest number of citizens, stakeholders and interested parties. The community grid option alone supports a strong and powerful minority of institutions and entities at the expense of the majority.

Mass transit: Why sell CNY and the future short? Why not think big? Are we not worthy of the best option for the future? And why hasn't there been any discussion of a regional mass transit system that would relieve pressure on our highways? Why not light rail transit?

A mass transit system would also support our very serious poverty issue, providing affordable transportation for low wage earners and helping the jobless get to available jobs outside of their local area. At a minimum, a regional rapid bus transit should be part of the long-term comprehensive plan and implemented across CNY. It would also support a reduction in our use of fossil fuels. The best long-term option for CNY should include mass transit. Perhaps a solar powered electric train system could be planned, deigned, and constructed over the next generation. I want my grandchildren to view burning fossil fuels as we view riding horses. We have the technology, but lack the vision and political will.

Approaches: NYSDOT has consistently reiterated the project is restricted to the elevated downtown highway between Kennedy Street and Route 690. NYSDOT has also recently spent years rebuilding, restoring, rehabilitating and reconditioning the approaches to the elevated highway designated for removal. Many of the bridges have been repaired and a number of adjacent road sections have been resurfaced. Consequently, the approaches to this stretch of highway will pretty much remain; there will be some re-engineering for the grid; however; road elevations are fixed and connections to a depressed highway, box tunnel, or iconic bridge will be difficult at best. Approaches would need to be re-designed in order to meet the proper grades and elevations if a viable alternative other than the community grid were to be implemented. The following summarizes NYSDOT's work approaching the elevated highway over the past several years:

1. South: NYSDOT has rebuilt Route 81 approaching the study area from the south. The road has been re-paved and the bridge at Colvin Street has been refurbished.
2. North: The Route 81 approach from the north has been repaved. The bridges at Butternut Street, Spencer Street, and the Court Street exits and south bound entrance have been refurbished. The exit to Court Street and the two entrances off Genant Street along with the extensive exchange between Hiawatha Boulevard and Park Street and Long Branch Park have been refurbished including the Route 81 southbound exits to Clinton Street and Salina Street.
3. West: Extensive work has been performed on Route 690 including the West Street Arterial and the bridges over Onondaga Creek. Work has been performed along Route 690 from downtown to and including exits at the NYS Fairgrounds.
4. East: The Route 690 bridge over Teall Avenue has been recently rebuilt. The craftsmanship and final appearance is excellent, especially in comparison to the Route 690 bridge at Bridge Street in DeWitt. A significant amount of work was recently performed at Bridge Street. The final bridge presentation is poor. The bridge deck was replaced, Bridge Street was widened, an additional lane was added, and the concrete wall forming the bridge abutment was scribed to appear as a block wall. The center median was left unattended, and the volunteer growth of weeds were left in place. Minimal cost and minimal design effort were spent on Bridge Street. An unequal level of resource and funds were dedicated compared with that afforded to the Teall Avenue Bridge. This is only one of many examples, but the attention to detail, the final design, and the work product delivered at Teall Avenue registers concern that DeWitt is not equal in value as the City of Syracuse to NYSDOT. This appears to be a theme, in NYS DOT's proposal for the community grid. From artwork to creek walk, the City is receiving premier treatment, while DeWitt receives band aids and minimus remedies.

Approach Summary: The previous recent work on the approaches to the area proposed for the community grid was a clear signal from NYSDOT that other alternatives or options were not to be selected because significant investment has been made in locations that now would be required to be removed and replaced should another alternative be selected. For instance, the approach to an iconic bridge would likely need to meet at higher elevations which would need greater distance to meet the desired elevation. Likewise, the option of a box tunnel, depressed highway

or some combination would need lower elevations on the approach, and would also need greater distance. Because the approach to these other options cannot be made in the distances allowed within the current infrastructure. The road elevations, heights, widths, and supports do not permit a re-engineering of the larger system on a scale necessary to accommodate a continued connection across the one and one-half mile elevated highway study area.

Impact on City Neighborhoods: The community grid option standalone has been accepted by many based on the assumption nearly all commuters are headed downtown. NYSDOT published in earlier documents that about 88% of the traffic on Route 81 heading towards Syracuse from either the northern or southern intersections with Route 481 did not exit at the opposite Route 481 intersection.

The implication is two-fold. The first based on a false and leading assumption that over three fourths of the travelers using Route 81 are heading downtown. The second false assumption is predicated on the first false assumption and that is only 12% of the Route 81 traffic is through traffic, and therefore, redirecting this miniscule through traffic to Route 481 would be minimal in its impact to Route 481 and DeWitt. Both assumptions and concomitant illogical conclusion are false. Further, the data are suspect and were collected for a short duration that excludes the seasonal migration of snowbirds to the south, and possibly more important, the summer recreational and vacation travel to the many lakes, waterways, and parks throughout central and northern NY.

Still, much of the traffic heading towards Syracuse may redirect at Route 690 or the NYS Thruway and never reach the opposite entry Route 481 intersection. Northbound traffic entering from the south and cutoff by the community grid will subsequently be added to Route 481. Some heading west will exit somewhere to the south and impact the western townships.

The largest groups to lose according to the proposed community grid option will be residents from the northside and southside neighborhoods of Syracuse. The grid will further isolate these residents and destroy rapid connections to each other. What's missing from the public discussion is everyone who crosses downtown in their daily travels, including city residents. Those who live south and work north, at places like Lockheed-Martin, Destiny, Salina Meadows, etc. and those who live north and work south, at places like Community Hospital, OCC, Loretto, etc. All will experience rush hour delays and downtown congestion at street level as they navigate city streets rather than safer and faster divided highway. Those likely affected that appear excluded from public discussion are those city residents who travel through and past downtown in their daily commute. Those that live in a northside neighborhood who travel south daily. Those who live in southside neighborhood and travel north beyond downtown daily. I do not possess a large sample size, but I do frequent neighborhoods adjacent to Onondaga Creek in Syracuse as it relates to my work with the Onondaga Environmental Institute. Whenever I have opportunity, I ask residents from surrounding neighborhoods opinion of the community grid. One southside resident informed me he gets on at Colvin Street and off at Brighton Avenue and works at Crouse-Hinds. His commute will be broken by the community grid. Most southsiders respond with a question. I am paraphrasing, but I commonly hear: "how am I to get to the mall?"

or “how am I to get to the airport?” The simple answer is they will navigate city streets at ground level. They will consume more time from their lives, spend greater amounts of money on gasoline, and increase their contribution of toxic gases to the atmosphere.

The farther away from center the starting point, the more likely the traveler will choose to travel roundabout using Route 481, Route 690, and/or the Thruway to complete their travel loop. In any case, there will be added time-of-travel, added fuel consumption, added costs, added noise, and added air pollutants (see comments regarding the same).

Another critical misconception is that everyone stays in the workplace for eight hours. That has never been less true. With the new “gig” economy, more and more workers are mobile throughout the day. The ability to travel quickly and efficiently is critical for postal carriers, package delivery, repair and medical services, students, IT and maintenance workers, vendors, and suppliers. Many scoff that the added 5 to 10 minutes per commute is nominal; but there are those whose work week will expand, costs will increase, due to hours of lost productivity. The collective effect will add to inflate prices and dampen an already weak local economy. The most vulnerable will be impacted the most. Further, the proliferation of internet purchasing necessitates the transportation of goods and services be dependable and rapid. Adopting a plan that works against the demands of e-commerce is a mistake, especially in trying to attract and recruit new business to the CNY region.

Social Justice: Many proponents of the community grid cite social justice as the rationale for supporting the grid. I ask, “Just how is the community grid going to help residents of the southside?” To the contrary, the community grid option alone will serve to disconnect Syracuse neighborhoods from the CNY highway transportation network, further isolate southside neighborhoods economically and socially contribute to the food desert phenomenon in areas away from downtown.

As a member of the Urban Jobs Task Force, I fully support racial inclusion in providing training and construction jobs to local companies and Syracuse City residents. Again, I support a hybrid option, hence, the community grid network of road improvements would be constructed along with a box tunnel, depressed highway, some combination, or iconic bridge. In addition, there is a need for road improvements to Route 481 irrespective of the outcome for Route 81. Those same jobs could be provided long-term as construction crews progress through a series of projects throughout CNY outlined in a long-term regional transportation plan.

The community grid option has been promoted as an environmental justice issue for southside neighborhoods, yet commuters coming from the south destined for the hospitals, university, or downtown will still be travelling the same Route 81 approach only now a business loop. Residents along and near South State Street, Garfield Avenue, Leon Street, South McBride Street, Oakwood Avenue and others will still be impacted by commuters heading to the hospitals, Syracuse University, downtown offices, government, businesses, and beyond. The community grid will not provide relief to existing neighborhoods. In fact, plans have already identified removal and displacement of the residents of Pioneer Homes. New housing along the grid, just

as that comprising the "downtown housing renaissance," will likely gentrify the near downtown neighborhood at a price beyond that which would benefit the underserved communities of the Southside. Not long ago fourteen of the area's most prominent developers penned an editorial in support of the community grid. We all support further economic benefits gained via the redevelopment of downtown. A strong Syracuse urban core is important to the overall health of CNY and developers will be quick to capitalize on downtown revitalization. Is their support of the community grid, self-interest, and profit, or is it altruism?

The individuals that will profit and capitalize on future development will bring projects that ultimately will lead to gentrification; those same individuals are citing the social justice argument. I question why the disenfranchised are being fronted to dissuade the argument for maintaining a Route 81 connection while no real project or plan to benefit Southside residents has been put forth to date.

Waste: We can all agree the shortest distance between two points is a straight line. Forcing people to drive a round-about route through DeWitt leads to wasted time and money, lost productivity, added fuel consumption, noise and air pollution, and climate change exacerbation. A Hybrid Community Grid could address these issues wisely and innovatively.

Time: Proponents of the community grid cite an added 10 minutes per commute is nominal. Still, conservative calculations of the numbers show significant negative impact. The average workers commute will increase 10 miles by utilizing Route 481 and Route 690. With an average speed of 60 mph, the commute would increase by 10 minutes. The average worker with an additional 8 minutes per commute will lose 64 hours each year (assuming 2 trips per day, 5 days per week, 50 weeks per year) on top of their already existing commute. The same individual will lose nearly 11.5 weeks (1920 hours) added over a 30 year career. The collective lost time for 60,000 commuters is an individual equivalent of 438.36 years (3,840,000 hrs/yr) in a single year, and 13,150.7 years (115,200,000 hrs/30 yr) over the course of 30 years. Again, actual lost time could be more than 20% greater. Further, these numbers do not include added idling time to traffic navigating across the community grid. The impact to commerce and business is expected to be far worse. Time is money. For mail carriers, package deliveries, business suppliers, and other mobile enterprises, the work week will expand, costs will increase due to thousands of hours of lost productivity. The community grid will negatively impact the quality of life for thousands of individuals who will lose significant time. The collective loss of time will negatively impact the local economy and people's lives socially.

Fuel consumption: The community grid will increase time and mileage for majority of commuters, in addition to added idling time to traffic diverted onto the grid, all of which greatly increases fuel consumption. Conservative calculations of the numbers show significant negative impact. The average worker with an added 10 mile commute will burn an additional 200 gallons of gasoline each year (assuming 25mpg, 2 trips per day, 5 days per week, 50 weeks per year) on top of their already existing gasoline consumption rate. The same individual will burn an additional 6000 gallons of gasoline over a 30 year career. The collective annual gasoline consumption for 60,000 commuters will be 12,000,000 gallons. The collective added gasoline

consumption over 30 years will be 360,000,000 gallons. Again, the actual amounts of increased fuel consumption are expected to be much greater. The estimates of added distance and daily vehicles are likely low. Further, these numbers do not reflect added idling time to traffic navigating across the community grid. Likewise, these numbers do not reflect commercial, business, fleet trucks, and tractor trailer trucks which are likely to consume diesel fuel at a much lower mileage efficiency.

Fuel costs: The community grid will increase time and mileage for majority of commuters, in addition to added idling time to traffic diverted onto the grid, all of which greatly increases fuel consumption. Increased fuel consumption translates to increased fuel costs. Conservative calculations of the numbers show significant negative impact. The average worker with an added 10 mile commute will pay an additional $600 for gasoline each year (assuming $3.00 per gallon for an added 200 gallons) on top of their already existing fuel bill. The same individual will spend an additional $18,000 for gasoline over a 30 year career. The collective annual increase in cost for gasoline will be $36,000,000. The collective added gasoline costs over 30 years will be $1,080,000,000. Again, these are conservative estimates as no increase in the cost of gasoline was applied, and the actual amounts of increased fuel consumption are expected to be much greater. The estimates of added distance and daily vehicles are likely low. Further, these numbers do not reflect added idling time to traffic navigating across the community grid. Likewise, these numbers do not reflect commercial, business, fleet trucks, and tractor trailer trucks which are likely to consume diesel fuel at a much lower mileage efficiency and much higher cost per gallon. Therefore, added fuel costs will have a negative effect on families, especially those that can least afford it. Syracuse and Onondaga County lag NYS and the country economically; from 2016 to 2019, the median household income in the United States and New York State increased 7.05% and 7.59% respectively; the median household income in Onondaga County increased just 1.42%. While households in NYS gained $5,087 and households across the U.S. gained $4,329 during this same time period, households in Onondaga County gained only $861. Moreover, approximately one-third of the residents in the City of Syracuse live in poverty; as do one in two children. In addition, added fuel costs will have a negative effect on the business community which will pass costs along to consumers through rising prices for goods and services. The community grid option alone will have a significant negative overall impact on the local economy.

Environmental Impact: The overall impact of the community grid to the environment will be negative as a result of increased vehicle use and increased noise and air pollution. Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from transportation account for about 29 percent of total U.S. GHG emissions, making transportation the largest contributor of U.S. GHG emissions. Between 1990 and 2019, GHG emissions in the transportation sector increased more in absolute terms than any other sector. The community grid option will contribute to this trend locally. Motor vehicles emit many types of pollutants including nitrogen oxides (NO_x), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide (CO), carbon dioxide (CO_2), particulates, sulphur dioxide (SO_2) and lead. Emissions vary by use and type of engine, fuel type and combustion temperature. Automotive air pollutants cause human health complications including cancer, asthma, eye irritation, poisoning, heart disease and birth defects. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

estimates motor vehicles emit almost 75% of the carbon monoxide pollution in the United States. The Environmental Defense Fund estimates that transportation releases nearly 27 percent of GHG emissions. Air pollution from motor vehicles contributes to climate change as GHG heat the planet and deplete the ozone layer. Average global temperatures are rising, leading to rising sea levels, an increase in natural disasters and local climactic effects such as increased intensity of storm events and greater frequencies and longer periods of drought. The community grid option will increase GHG emissions as demonstrated by the following calculations:

Carbon dioxide pollution: The community grid will increase time and mileage for majority of commuters, in addition to added idling time to traffic diverted onto the grid, all of which greatly increases fuel consumption, and therefore increases air pollution. Carbon dioxide (CO_2) is an important heat-trapping GHG released via human activities such as deforestation and the combustion of fossil fuels, as well as natural processes such as respiration and volcanic eruptions. Levels of CO_2 in the atmosphere have been increasing at an accelerating rate and CO_2 has become the scientific barometer for climate change.

Conservative calculations of the numbers for CO_2 show significant negative impact. On average a combusted gallon of gasoline yields about 20 lbs of CO_2. The average worker with an added 10 mile commute will burn an additional 200 gallons of gasoline each year thereby producing an extra 4000 lbs of CO_2 annually over that already being generated. The same individual will emit an additional 120,000 lbs of CO_2 to the atmosphere over a 30 year period of time. The collective annual incremental CO_2 discharge for 60,000 commuters will be 240,000,000 lbs. The collective added incremental discharge over 30 years will be 7,200,000,000 lbs. Again, the actual amounts of increased CO_2 emissions are expected to be much greater. The estimates of added distance and daily vehicles are likely low. Further, these numbers do not reflect added idling time to traffic navigating across the community grid. Likewise, these numbers do not reflect commercial, business, fleet trucks, and tractor trailer trucks which are likely to consume diesel fuel at a much lower mileage efficiency, and over 10% greater CO_2 production per gallon. On average a combusted gallon of diesel fuel yields about 22.4 lbs of CO_2. Hence, the overall effect to the environment of the community grid is negative.

Carbon dioxide is just one of hundreds of hydrocarbons emitted by motor vehicles. Those hydrocarbons will increase in output due to the community grid just as that of CO_2. All are air pollutants and harmful to human health, and all are GHG emissions and will contribute to climate change. The community grid option is an ill-fated environmental choice. It will negatively impact and perturb the environment downtown, in DeWitt, and across the CNY region.

Toxic gases: The community grid will increase time and mileage for majority of commuters, in addition to added idling time to traffic diverted onto the grid, all of which greatly increases fuel consumption, and therefore increases air pollution. Gasoline combustion produces many types of pollutants including nitrogen oxides (NO_x), volatile organic compounds (VOCs), carbon monoxide (CO), CO_2, particulates, Sulphur dioxide (SO_2) and lead. Many of these pollutants are

toxic and harmful to human health. The category for toxic gases includes a subset of byproducts; CO_2, particulates, and metals are not included.

Conservative calculations of the numbers for toxic gases show significant negative impact. On average a combusted gallon of gasoline yields about 4.2 lbs of toxic gases. The average worker with an added 10 mile commute will burn an additional 200 gallons of gasoline each year thereby producing an extra 840 lbs of toxic gases annually over that already being generated. The same individual will emit an additional 25,200 lbs of toxic gases to the atmosphere over a 30 year period of time. The collective annual incremental discharge for 60,000 commuters will be 50,400,000 lbs of toxic gases. The collective added incremental discharge of toxic gases over 30 years will be 1,512,000,000 lbs. Again, actual amounts of increased toxic gases emissions are expected to be much greater. The estimates of added distance and daily vehicles are likely low. Further, these numbers do not reflect added idling time to traffic navigating across the community grid. Likewise, these numbers do not reflect commercial, business, fleet trucks, and tractor trailer trucks which are likely to consume diesel fuel. Calculations were not performed for diesel fuel, which will add to the overall impact.

The calculation of toxic gases output is representative of the impact of hundreds of hydrocarbons emitted by fossil fuel burning motor vehicles. All are air pollutants. Several have greater negative effects than CO_2. The effects of air pollution include human health and environmental impacts.

Human health effects: There are a number of issues that will impact the residents of the City of Syracuse and the Town of DeWitt that are associated with the Community Grid option which has been selected to replace the elevated portion of Route 81 through the City of Syracuse. The primary cause of these impacts in DeWitt is associated with the increased traffic that will be created by the increased by-pass traffic which will be created on the Route 481 corridor. The two most important involve the impact on human health caused by the increase in traffic noise pollution and the further impairment in air quality which will be created by the increased by-pass traffic. Automobile air pollution is a major environmental risk factor in the incidence and progression of diseases such as asthma, lung cancer, ventricular hypertrophy, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases, psychological complications, autism, retinopathy, fetal growth, and low birth weight. Air pollution is also a leading cause of climate change, acid rain, freshwater eutrophication, ocean acidification, wildlife extinction, and ozone depletion.

Benefactors: Those that benefit from the community grid alone will be a select minority of stakeholders including Syracuse University, Upstate Medical Center, and a few developers. Future development along the community grid has been cited as a major benefit of the community grid, in particular, that along the newly constructed community grid boulevard along Almond Street. Many have touted tax revenue will increase significantly to the City of Syracuse from future development. However, much of land is owned by non-profits that do not pay property taxes or owners that receive tax relief through payments in leu of taxes (PILOT) agreements made by either the Syracuse Industrial Development Agency or Onondaga County Industrial Development Agency.

Syracuse University[1], Upstate Medical Center, associates of New York State Housing, Hutchinson Psychiatric Center, Human Performance Center, Center of Excellence, or an associate non-profit currently own a large number of parcels along and near Almond Street and collectively these institutions are looking to possibly develop and expand further into downtown. Upstate Medical Center currently owns or rents 500 Harrison Street, the Presidential Plaza including the Madison and Jefferson Towers, 550 and 600 East Genesee Street. The current elevated highway divides the campus setting as 500 Harrison St. and the Presidential Plaza are located on the westside of the highway and Almond Street. Route 81 serves as a barrier to both Syracuse University's and Upstate Medical Center's main campus. Neither institution nor associated not-for-profits pays property taxes. Added revenue from property taxes along the grid is not likely to greatly benefit the City of Syracuse and these institutions are likely to remove additional parcels from the tax roles as campus footprints expand in the future.

Property tax benefits from developers is not likely to be realized. As most large developments have been provided PILOT agreements by either the Syracuse Industrial Development Agency or Onondaga County Industrial Development Agency in recent years, a trend that is likely to continue. In fact, it was recently reported Syracuse granted downtown and university-area developers over 50 million dollars in property tax breaks over a twelve year period (Knaus 2018. *40 Syracuse properties that save 5.3 million a year from generous tax break* https://www.syracuse.com/news/2019/12/syracuse-council-closes-tax-loophole-that-allowed-developers-to-save-millions.html, Syracuse.com, May 30; Knaus 2019. *Three vending machines saved a builder $3 million in property taxes* https://www.syracuse.com/news/2018/05/3_vending_machines_saved_a_builder_3_million_in_property_taxes_a_ny_law_exploite.html#:~:text=SYRACUSE%2C%20N.Y.,%243%20million%20in%20property%20taxes *; a NY law exploited*, Syracuse.com, May 30).

The Connective Corridor is a paradigm of Syracuse University's integration into downtown; a process that will likely continue. Likewise, Upstate Medical Center will likely continue to Integrate into downtown. Pioneer homes and Mulberry Square will likely be displaced as current residents will be gentrified out of their homes. The irony is the social justice arguments used to justify the community grid will have a negative impact on minority and underserved populations closest to downtown. Residents will be pushed further into the Southside and Valley via downtown gentrification. Those dwelling in the Southside and Valley neighborhoods will still experience the negative impacts of commuter traffic to the hospitals, University and downtown offices as the current Route 81 arterial will serve as the business loop. Tens of thousands of commuters will still traverse the Route 81 business loop and as reported by NYSDOT will still travel past their neighborhoods at 65 mph.

[1] Syracuse University may see its future as more of an urban campus (Syracuse University 2017. *Campus framework, full report: vision for excellence* 2017–2037). The University purportedly weighed the potential sale of south campus, establishing Manley Fieldhouse as its southernmost property, and migrating northward and westward into the City; however, this direction was subsequently abandoned (Simpson pers. Comm. 2016). Under a former Chancellor, the *Connected Corridor* was a potential pathway for future land acquisition and the further development of the urban campus, and some time ago, the former NYS Governor proposed to construct a Syracuse University indoor sports arena at Kennedy Square.

Syracuse University and Upstate Medical Center are both important institutions that have a tremendously beneficial role in CNY. Both are critical to the future. Both are major employers providing high paying jobs and exemplary citizens. Both contribute intelligentsia to the region, and enrich our body politic, arts, culture, and economy. Both further support the local economy via the dependency of supplemental service providers and secondary local business. Consequently, the position of both institutions in support of the community grid carries great weight and significance with decision makers. Yet with innovative design for a hybrid community grid with a maintained Route 81 connection, the goals of the community grid can be met, and the continued downtown integration of the Syracuse University-Upstate Medical Center complex could still occur.

Long-term economic shift: NYSDOT is shifting the economic capital of CNY away from the City of Syracuse and into DeWitt. Should municipal borders and jurisdictions not change via consolidations or restructuring of local governments, DeWitt will be the economic capital of CNY in 30 to 50 years. DeWitt currently accounts for 45% of Onondaga County's industrial and commercial lands, two-thirds of the Syracuse Hancock International Airport is located within DeWitt, and the DeWitt Railyards and are situated in the Village of East Syracuse and the Towns of DeWitt and Manlius. Now DeWitt is about to become the crossroads of the major federal highway system in CNY. Route 81, Route 690, and the New York State Thruway (Route 90) will converge in DeWitt. State Route 173, Route 92, Route 5, Route 635, Route 290, and Route 298 all cross DeWitt and contact one of the major Federal highways. Economic activity based on trade dates back to the times of Marco Polo. With the connections between air shipping, rail freight, and highway transport, DeWitt will be the central locale for the movement of goods and services in and out of CNY. Hence, DeWitt will transition to the economic center of CNY over the next several decades due to access to transportation. Positioned as the transportation hub of CNY, DeWitt will attract new business and industry. I liken the economic shift as analogous to the historic migration of commerce from Salina to the City of Syracuse as result of construction of the Erie and Oswego Canals and ensuing railroads. Business and commerce tend co-locate with transportation centers. No better examples exist than those communities that either suffered versus those that rose economically in prominence along the federal highway system. The rapid economic and population growth of Denver, CO commenced and progressed with the onset and surge in air travel and shipping over the Rocky Mountains.

Despite the many negative impacts of converting Route 481 to Route 81 on residents, neighborhoods, and residential properties, the long-term economic impact on business and industry in DeWitt will be beneficial. Yet, these benefits are far outweighed by the overwhelmingly negative effects to DeWitt neighborhoods, the City of Syracuse and the CNY region.

Required DeWitt Road Improvements

In addition to those concerns and issues expressed for the City of Syracuse and the CNY region, the Town of DeWitt's concerns are related to the effects that the potential rerouting of Route 81 to the Route 481 corridor would have on the character of the Town's neighborhoods and important open space systems. Yet, the following sections describe necessary road improvements required of NYSDOT irrespective of the translocation of Route 81 to Route 481.

Greenspace: The Butternut Creek corridor adjacent to Route 481 was identified by the Town as a conservation area by the Town of DeWitt Comprehensive Plan (2002) https://cms8.revize.com/revize/dewittny/Planning%20and%20Zoning/Planning%20and%20Sustainability/Comprehensive%20Plan%202002.pdf . At the same time, the Comprehensive Plan identifies the I-481 corridor as a significant barrier within the Town:

> 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."

Pedestrian and bicycle accommodations: Route 481 serves as a barrier at the interchange of East Genesee Street (NYS Rt 5) and Route 481, but problems exist at the Jamesville Road and Kirkville Road interchanges. The East Genesee Street 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 SMTC 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.

The Town requests that NYSOT consider the redesign of the Route 481 and East Genesee Interchange to adequately and safely accommodate pedestrians and bicyclists (see Attachment 1). Accommodations for Pedestrian and bike paths should be designed at all town exit and entrances.

Sidewalk installation: The Town is requesting sidewalk construction along major state routes throughout DeWitt in accordance with NYSDOT policy. The Town is willing to provide maintenance and snow removal via in-kind service and labor and is willing to enter into contract agreements with NYSDOT. Areas in further need of sidewalks include but are not limited to Erie

Boulevard (Route 5), Thompson Road (Route 635), Bridge Street, Route 92, Route 173, Route 290 and Route 298.

Bicycle path installation: The Town is requesting bicycle path construction along major state routes throughout DeWitt in accordance with NYSDOT policy. The Town is willing to provide maintenance and snow removal via in-kind service and labor and is willing to enter into contract agreements with NYSDOT. Areas in further need of bicycle paths include but are not limited to Erie Boulevard (Route 5), Thompson Road (Route 635), Bridge Street, Route 92, Route 173, Route 290 and Route 298.

Sound Barriers: Sound barriers are necessary to protect neighborhoods from increased noise levels. In particular, the Jonathan-Craig and Dewittshire neighborhoods are already exposed to extreme levels and constant highway noise on a daily basis. DeWitt neighborhoods should be afforded sound protection irrespective of moving Route 81 to Route 481.

DeWitt is located along the City of Syracuse entire eastern border. DeWitt is narrow geographically; only 3 miles wide at its greatest distance along its east-west orientation. DeWitt is approximately 9.25 miles long and entirely bisected by Route 481. Therefore, the entirety of DeWitt is currently impacted by sound and will be further impacted by the conversion of Route 481 into Route 81. Sound impacted neighborhoods include areas of Jamesville such as homes along and near Rockcut Road, Rt. 173, Doubletree, Apple Cross Woods, Boulder and Steinway Heights, and the Nottingham. Sound impacted neighborhoods in Central DeWitt include Orvilton and the homes along and proximate to Woodchuck Hill Road, Maple Drive, Jamesville Road, and Butternut Drive. Sound impacted neighborhoods in East Syracuse and the Northtown include Dunrovin and Collamer.

NYSDOT performed sound modelling for the DEIS. Model results are inaccurate, inadequate, and are questionable. For instance, the DEIS calls for sound attenuation on the eastside of Route 481 in front of Town Hall, but not on the western side directly across from Town Hall where the Jonathan-Craig neighborhood exists. The eastern “sound-protected” side at Town Hall is absent of homes and residents, whereas the western side has hundreds of occupants residing in the Jonathan-Craig neighborhood. A comprehensive sound measurement study should be conducted to obtain concrete data. Still, sound attenuation is warranted throughout DeWitt. Natural berms with plantings in open greenspace would be the preferred treatment. Sound barrier walls such as those along Route 81 in Binghamton with translucent panels that allow light and vision would be preferable in locations unable to accommodate a natural berm with plantings.

The following outlines potential mitigation options to lessen impacts of transportation generated noise pollution. A number of noise abatement measures can be utilized to lessen adverse noise impacts. These include:

- Solid obstructions or barriers
- Planting vegetation and trees

- Creating buffer zones

Noise barriers or walls can reduce noise levels by 5 to 10 decibels which cut the traffic noise in half and are built of wood, stucco, concrete masonry, metal and other materials meeting State specifications. The noise barriers function by deflecting the noise but can have an adverse visual effect and tend to draw graffiti. Alternatively, vegetation or trees coupled with earthen berms can be very effective in deflecting and absorbing sound. Large-leaf deciduous species of trees can be more effective in reducing noise during spring and summer, but evergreens provide better results year-round. Where trees are densely planted, noise can be reduced by 6 decibels over a distance of 30 meters and can reduce noise levels by 50%.

Air Pollution mitigation: The transportation generated air pollutants that will contribute to the further degradation of the air quality in the Town of DeWitt include carbon monoxide, CO_2, nitrogen oxides, volatile organic carbon compounds and particulate matter. A study conducted by researchers from the International Council on Clean Transportation at Washington University and the University of Colorado estimated that vehicle tailpipe emissions of ozone and PM2.5 were linked to 385,000 premature deaths in 2015. Recent evidence indicates that the public health response to PM2.5 pollution may actually be greater. We have also identified air toxics derived from the transportation sector that include benzene and formaldehyde. Efforts must be taken to reduce these impacts on air quality associated with this project and the transportation sector as a whole. The USEPA is working the issue and pressing to government, industry and business to move to electric vehicles. Coupled with alternate energy production at the source, electric vehicles could make a large difference. In the interim, the urban and suburban forestry resources should be enhanced along the Route 481 corridor as part of this transportation project. It has been demonstrated that urban forests can improve air quality by reducing atmospheric carbon dioxide levels and absorbing a wide range of air pollutants. Ottosen and Kumar 2019 have reported on the first long time-series of multiple pollutants to assess the mitigation of traffic generated air pollution when trees are planted along the road side. The results show concentration reductions as follows:

- -52% for PM1.5
- -44% for PM2.5
- -35% for PM10

Air pollutants can be directly removed from the air as contaminants deposited or absorbed on the surfaces of leaves. The citizens of the Town of DeWitt deserve the inclusion of these mitigation strategies in the overall Community Grid Option. The use of Urban or Suburban forestry practices to help mitigate serious air pollution and noise impacts associated with the transportation project will represent an extraordinary investment in helping to preserve the quality of life.

Exit 3 at East Genesee St: NYSDOT's proposal to remove the westbound cloverleaf exit and add additional lanes and a traffic light intersection with two lanes heading east and two lanes heading west is woefully inadequate. This remedy again demonstrates neglect and lack of

attention to the residents of DeWitt and beyond. The proposed exit ramp modification is of minimal effort and cost for NYSDOT, and is an interim remediation at best because eventually a more comprehensive modification of the entrance and exit ramps at East Genesee Street will be required. The Town of DeWitt requests a diverging diamond interchange.

There needs to be consideration of the increase in bypass traffic projected along Route 81. Some of the greatest industrial/commercial growth has been in the eastern towns and in particular the Town of DeWitt. The City of Syracuse has not observed similar commercial growth; the commercial growth in the eastern towns must be supported by improvements to the Route 481 corridor.

The upgrade of signage along Route 481 is also required. The Town of DeWitt would be in a position to help support this effort. Signage could be developed ranging from the initial "Welcome to the Town of DeWitt," to additional signage regarding available services. The AAA suggests mile markers, exit signs, state highway signs and the signature identification of the communities through which they pass.

Exit at Kirkville Road: NYSDOT recently invested a 20 million dollar grant award to CSX Railroad for infrastructure improvements at the CSX Railyards in DeWitt. In particular, the monies were used to install box lifts that transfer trailers from train to tractor trailer trucks. Truck traffic is projected to increase from 250-300 trucks per day to 750-800 trucks per day in the near future and to 1000-1200 in years to come. A direct connection from Route 481 into the CSX Inland Port railyards is imperative. Reconfiguration of the Kirksville Road exit ramps with traffic lights is required for safe access to a service road for trucks only entering and exiting the railyards. Perhaps a diverging diamond interchange would work at this location. This is best accomplished in close proximity to the current highway footprint due to wetland and floodplain issues. Route 481 has a stone and concrete base of construction materials, i.e. runner crush that support the existing elevated highway over the railyards. There is adequate room alongside or under the elevated highway to put a direct connection for a truck traffic in and out of the railyard. This would eliminate hundreds of tractor-trailer trucks exiting and entering the highway on local secondary roads travelling to and from the DeWitt Railyards. Trucks currently use Kirkville Road and Fremont Roads; thereby traversing the entrances of an East Syracuse-Minoa Elementary School, Middle School, and High School. The ESM District Bus Garage is proximate to the railyards. The co-mingling of hundreds of tractor trailer trucks and multiple dozens of school buses can and should be avoided. One young male student on a bicycle was killed by accident with a tractor trailer truck. One life lost is too many. Therefore, the railyards in DeWitt should have direct access to the highway irrespective of the Route 81 conversion, and most certainly should be included in any list of improvements to Route 481 as a consequence of Route 81 conversion. See Attachment 2, Mitigating Truck Traffic.

Additional entrance ramp: The Town of DeWitt currently has a right of way to Route 481 off of Towpath Rd. The installation of a southbound entrance ramp just south of Kinne Rd would

alleviate rush hour traffic and aid in removing out-bound traffic from Glacier Creek Park, Widewaters Office Park, BlueCross Blue Shield, Shoppingtown Mall future development, Marshall's Plaza and other multiple nearby office parks and shopping centers.

Route 690 extension: Currently East Genesee Street to Lyndon Corners and Routes 5 and 92 serve as the Route 690 extension. East Genesee Street has up to 10 lanes of traffic along this corridor. Hundreds of thousands of cars traverse through DeWitt on a daily basis. DeWitt would like road reduction and a traffic diet through our Town. This is not an unreasonable request it follows the same logic as taking Route 81 down through the City of Syracuse. If the City of Syracuse does not have to allow traffic on a major interstate highway to run north south through its jurisdiction, then why should Dewitt accommodate commuter traffic between the City of Syracuse and the eastern most suburbs.

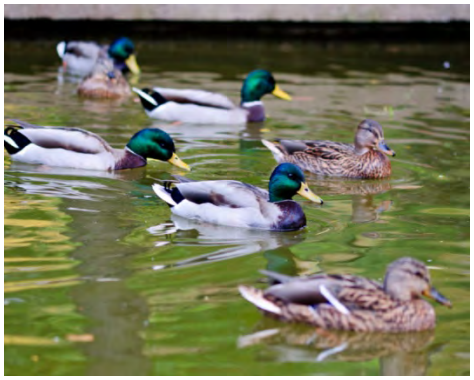
DeWitt is requesting Route 690 be extended eastward through the Town of Manlius and as far east as Chittenango. Route 690 was originally designed to extend into the eastern suburbs and the interchange between Route 690 and Route 481 is still in place. At a minimum, NYSDOT could utilize the existing interchange between Route 690 and Route 481 to provide entrance and exit to and from the two highways from Butternut Drive. Further, an at-grade road similar to Northern Boulevard should be extended eastward at a minimum to Burdick Avenue in the Town in Manlius. This would help to relieve traffic on both Route 290 and East Genesee Street.

Additional amenities: New York State DOT is proposing amenities to the Onondaga Creek walk within the City of Syracuse. We concur that alternative transportation paths such as bike lanes and walkable trails are important. The Town of Dewitt would like equal treatment as the City of Syracuse, especially because NYSDOT is shifting the major federal interstate highway system for CNY through DeWitt. The Route 481 corridor parallels the Butternut Creek floodplain of which the Town has made numerous investments in green space, parklands, bike paths and trails. Several of these projects have been completed, initiated, or have commenced planning or are conceptual and have been included in our comprehensive plan, parks and recreation master plan, climate action plan, and/or are contained in DeWitt's Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan (LWRP).

Widewaters Pond: The Town of DeWitt is working to establish a pocket Park along the National Heritage Erie Canal Trail at the intersection of Bridge Street and Erie Boulevard. The Town is requesting to acquire Widewaters Pond from NYSDOT similar to the process being conducted with NYSDOT for property acquisition for the Town's Butternut Creek Park. I thank NYSDOT for its continued good faith effort in working through this process with DeWitt.

DeWitt also requests NYSDOT dredge the Widewaters Pond. The Widewaters Park would include water fountains, colored decorative lighting, a boardwalk, benches, and other amenities. (See LWRP projects in Attachment 3).

The concept is similar to a municipal duck and/or trout pond. The site is situated along the Erie Canal National Heritage Corridor.



The property is 35 Acres in size, and the pond is about 1500 ft long. Properly managed the site could be a local and tourist attraction including water fountains and colored lighting.

The trail would encircle the pond totaling nearly 5000 ft in length, and connect to the NYS Heritage trail along Towpath Drive at 3-4 locations, and at Erie Blvd at two locations and from its Eastern side at multiple locations from the Best Buy Plaza and Marshalls Plaza. Park amenities would include gezebo, benches, public art, monuments, historic markers, small ampitheather, benches, picnic tables, drinking fountains, LED solar lighting, safety railing, signage, and trail connections including contour earth moving, filter fabric, crushed limestone (crusher run/runner crush), and stone dust for about 5250 linear feet of trail (including connections).

The Town of DeWitt needs to acquire ownership from NYSDOT. The pond requires dredging and water quality improvements. Sediments and surface water need to be monitored for contaminants. Fountain aeration will provide oxygen for fish survival in addition to aesthetics. Fish populations and pond life would be managed. Small craft/paddle boat rentals along with canoe and kayak launch site and ice skating in winter months could be provided.

Erie Canal restoration: The Town owns a remanent of the former Erie Canal between Widewaters Pond and Route 481 along Towpath Road and the newly constructed National Heritage Erie Canal Trail. The Town is looking to restore this section of the old Erie Canal. DeWitt requests NYSDOT dredge the former canal along towpath Drive along with Widewaters Pond, thereby restoring the Erie Canal as a waterway from nearby Kinne Road to Erie Blvd. NYSDOT should also install a barrier wall separating the canal and the Erie Canal Heritage Trail from neighborhood backyards. The Town would work with property owners and NYSDOT to establish easements and install vegetative plantings to buffer homeowner's backyards along the entire barrier wall. Working together with NYSDOT, the Town would:

- Hold public hearing with Jonathan Craig neighborhood (in particular Westminster Rd).

- Establish easement (may require purchase [compensation to property owners]) and buffer along back property line for properties along Westminster Rd (includes privacy wall, fence and/or tree plantings).
- Remove trees and dredge canal.
- Reconstruct/repair canal walls.
- Re-establish/design hydrology for permanent water containment and flow through former canal (may require clay lining).
- Relocate access for 6724 Towpath Drive (may require easement/purchase of access through 5794 Widewaters Parkway parking lot from the West). Requires construction of road/driveway around house.

East Genesee Street Box Tunnel Path: Butternut Creek flows through a set of three box tunnels underneath East Genesee St in DeWitt and the east bound Fayetteville off-ramp and northbound on-ramp at the intersection with Route 481.

The project proposes to construct a pedestrian/bike path under East Genesee Street and the northbound on-ramp to Route 481. The proposed path would provide crosswalk connections between east-west sidewalks along Genesee Street and the existing Butternut Creek trail and two future trails proposed in a north-south orientation on both sides of Route 481 connecting all neighborhoods and businesses between East Genesee Street southward to the hamlet of Jamesville.

Permits would be required from NYSDOT, NYSDEC, and USACoE. Construction would include the placement of large stones under the highways at the creek's edge along the eastern most wall of the two box tunnels and placing a concrete slab on top forming the trail. Amendities would include LED solar lighting, safety railing, signage, and trail connections including contour earth moving, filter fabric, crushed limestone (crusher run/runner crush), and stone dust for about 800 linear feet of trail.

Trailways

East Genesee Street to Kinne Road: The proposed trail would run from East Genesee Street to Kinne Road approximately 4250 ft along the Orville Feeder Canal on the west side of Route 481. The trail would run in a north-south orientation and provide connections for adjacent neighborhoods, nearby business including Excellus and Shoppingtown. Access points to the trail would be at bridges located at E. Genesee St, Drovers Lane, and below Kinne Rd. Amenties would include LED solar lighting, safety railing, signage, and trail connections including contour earth

moving, filter fabric, crushed limestone (crusher run/runner crush), and stone dust for about 4500 linear feet of trail (including connections).

Jamesville Rd to East Genesee Street: The proposed trail would run from Jamesville Road to East Genesee Street along the Orville Feeder Canal on the west side of Route 481. The trail would run in a north-south orientation and provide connections for adjacent neighborhoods, nearby public greenspace including the Manlius Pebble Hill School, Community Library of DeWitt and Jamesville, and the First Tee Golf Course and Driving Range. Additional access points to the trail would be located at Jamesville Rd, Andrews Rd, and E. Genesee St. Amenties would include LED solar lighting, safety railing, signage, and trail connections including contour earth moving, filter fabric, crushed limestone (crusher run/runner crush), and stone dust trail (including connections).

Woodchuck Hill Rd at Jamesville Rd to East Genesee Street: The proposed trail would run from Woodchuck Hill at Jamesville Road to East Genesee Street along the currently Paul Fowler owned right-of-way (agreed to donate to Town, but never followed up) on the west side of Route 481. The trail would run in a north-south orientation and provide connections for adjacent neighborhoods, nearby public greenspace including town-owned property and St David's Episcopal Church. Additional access points to the trail would be located at Jamesville Rd, Flametree Drive, Gleason Pl, Thistlewood Ln,Miles Ave, and E. Genesee St. Amenties would include LED solar lighting, safety railing, signage, and trail connections including contour earth moving, filter fabric, crushed limestone (crusher run/runner crush), and stone dust f trail (including connections).

Rt 173 to Jamesville Rd: Through Fiddlers Green and would require donation from Hansen Quarry along the east side of Butternut Creek from Solvay Road to pump house. Two paths:

1. along Jamesville Road to Woodchuck Hill Road
2. box tunnel underneath Jamesville Road along creek to DEC fishing access

Amphitheater: Construct public amphitheater at eastern side of landfill.

- Stage
- Sound
- Lighting
- Restrooms
- Concessions
- Water fountains/colored lights in adjacent Erie Canal.

Parking located under National Grid right-of-way; entrance/exits at Butternut Drive, Rt 290, and Fisher Rd. Additional parking at Town Hall and Cedar Bay Park.

Beautification: The Town of DeWitt requests a number of aesthetic improvements to state owned routes with DeWitt of which the Town is willing to partner via monetary contributions and/or in-kind labor services.

State Routes, 5, 20 and 635: On numerous occasions over the past two decades the Town of Dewitt has requested NYSDOT remove the asphalt and vegetate the islands on Erie Boulevard, East Genesee Street, and Thompson Road. The Town will install water supply lines and provide long-term maintenance to vegetation, should NYSDOT plant fine-leaf trees and flowering plants. Fine-leaf material will not clog storm drains nor create slippery road surfaces during wet weather conditions.

Daffodils at East Genesee Street: The Town and the Syracuse Garden Society planted daffodils within the four cloverleafs at Exit 3 on East Genesee Street nearly 15 years ago. Just after the installation of the daffodils, NYSDOT and contractors began using the site for staging vehicles,

construction materials, and debris. NYSDOT also stages debris just north to the Jamesville Road entrance ramp in the center median. Both eyesores are unnecessary as the NYSDOT highway garage is less than a mile north at the intersection of Route 690. In addition to poor aesthetics, NYSDOT's activities have damaged or destroyed the daffodil plots. The Town of DeWitt herein requests NYSDOT vegetate the entire Route 481 median through DeWitt with a crown-vetch or clover plant. This would save considerable labor time and money in mowing costs over the long-term, be visually appealing to the traveling public, and provide nutrients to the soil as these plants are nitrogen fixing legumes, thereby enhancing or improving surrounding soils.

Maintenance and drainage issues: The Town is requesting cooperation with NYSDOT on a host of road maintenance and drainage issues on state roads and easements throughout the town. The Town is willing to contribute in-kind service and labor in exchange for permission and/or contract agreements to aid NYSDOT in weed control and water runoff. Areas include, but are not limited to Erie Boulevard, Thompson Road, Bridge Street, Route 173, Route 290 and Route 298. See Attachment 4 for comments from the DeWitt Highway Superintendent and Town Engineer.

Summary: DeWitt residents in the nearby neighborhoods will be exposed to greater amounts of noise and air pollution. DeWitt secondary roads will have greater traffic. NYSDOT has proposed a minimus approach and failed to identify or remedy the traffic problems in DeWitt. For numerous reasons the community grid is antithetical to sustainable principals on a regional scale. The community grid alone will have a number of negative social, economic and environmental impacts. Social justice arguments have been fronted with no real benefit to the past and subsequent generation of victims of past racist policies. For all these reasons and more, and as an environmental scientist, steward of my community, and an elected representative, I continue to strongly oppose Route 481 becoming Route 81. A Hybrid Community Grid could address all these issues wisely and innovatively.

Most sincerely,
Ed Michalenko, DeWitt Supervisor

With the support of:

Kerry Mannion, Deputy Supervisor
Jack Dooling, Town Councilor
Joe Chiarenza, Town Councilor
Karen Docter, Town Councilor

Exhibit A: I-481 and East Genesee Street Conceptual Redesign

Town of DeWitt

Erie Boulevard

Pickwick Rd

Interstate 481

IHOP

Dewitt Fire Department

481

I-87 Northway - Malta Interchange

TOWN OF DeWitt

Mitigating Truck Traffic While Growing DeWitt's Economy

The Central New York Inland Port Connector Project

A Community at a Crossroads

The Town of DeWitt proudly plays a major role in the international supply chain for the entire Northeastern United States. The Central New York Inland Port facility at the CSX Dewitt Rail Yard is the first stop for container trains leaving the Port of New York and New Jersey — often carrying goods from Asia via the Panama Canal — and it is the last stop for agricultural products, metals, wood, and other exports on their way to the rest of the world.

The recent $19 million investment to modernize the intermodal Inland Port drastically reduced transportation costs for haulers, making our region much more competitive. And with the growth of Amazon and other local developments on the horizon, our place in the regional economy and distribution networks will only grow more significant.

That's excellent news for DeWitt and Central New York, but it also means more trucks on DeWitt's roads — an estimated 700 to 1,000 more per day. Many will take the current route to the highway that passes near three schools and was the site of an accident that killed a student on a bike.

How do we capitalize on the opportunities before us without suffering the consequences of increased truck traffic?

The Town of DeWitt proposes the Central New York Inland Port Connector Project, which will create a direct roadway for trucks to take from the Central New York Inland Port to Routes 481, 690, and 90.

The Opportunity

Currently, trucks leaving the CSX Rail Yard and Central New York Inland Port travel along the route highlighted in [color] in the graphic at below left. The Central New York Inland Port Connector Project proposes to establish a new road — along the proposed route shown in [color] — that will divert highway-bound trucks away from Fremont Road and a significant portion of Kirkville Road.

Our proposed Central New York Inland Port Connector Project is inspired by our Town Sustainability Committee's mission to meet the needs of the present without compromising the needs of the future, along with "Central New York Rising," our broad region's comprehensive revitalization strategy. Our plan synthesizes economic, social, and environmental concerns to ensure the long-term viability of our community and our planet.

How You Can Help

The Town of DeWitt respectfully requests your support economically, politically, and in the business community to bring this project to life. Contact us to learn more about this project and to help:

- **Improve safety** for DeWitt residents and students at Woodland Elementary School, Pine Grove Middle School, and East Syracuse Minoa Central High School
- **Contribute to Central New York sustainability** and improve air quality in DeWitt by reducing carbon emissions near residences and businesses
- **Promote social and environmental justice** by protecting low-income residents and providing workers cost-efficient access to major employers like Amazon
- **Reduce costly wear and tear** on our town road infrastructure
- **Preserve the Town of DeWitt's distinct character** for generations to come

Thank you for supporting CNY and the Town of DeWitt!

Edward M. Michalenko, Ph.D. | Town of DeWitt Supervisor
5400 Butternut Drive | East Syracuse, NY 13057
(315) 446-3910, ext. 5 | supervisor@townofdewitt.com

The LWRP describes the proposed land and water uses for the DeWitt Waterfront Revitalization Area (WRA).

Land uses in the DeWitt WRA are proposed in a manner that will continue the general patterns of existing and proposed land uses. These character areas reflect the vision set forth in the 2017 Comprehensive Plan (See Map 9), and each character area has important qualities which either exist at present and are to be enhanced or preserved or are desirable and achievable as change occurs in the future. These generalized land use recommendations are compatible with the LWRP Policies contained in Section III.

This LWRP section includes recommendations to improve opportunities for future public access to the waterways within the town of DeWitt, whenever possible. The town's long-range goal for the waterfront is to make necessary changes for residents to maintain and improve the quality of life, enhance public access in appropriate places, and revitalize certain areas to bring about both economic development and increased active transportation. The following text recommends specific projects to achieve these goals. These projects vary according to the existing and desired character areas across the WRA. The proposed projects have a varied range that includes capital projects and programming initiatives, according to the existing or desired character of the area.

Erie Boulevard East Mobility and Wayfinding Enhancements

Project Description

The extension of the Erie Canalway Trail along Towpath Road and Erie Boulevard will help to keep multi-modal transportation at the town's "front door", where users will have greater access to goods, services, and employers. Though not without its challenges, this alignment will provide the maximum benefit to the town of DeWitt in terms of promoting attractive redevelopment along its primary commercial arterial.

In addition, it will provide safer connections between transportation infrastructure and local amenities throughout the corridor, regardless of mode. This will encourage trail users to walk and cycle more, which helps the town to retain businesses and residents, and increases the quality of life for the region. The portions of this corridor that contained the Enlarged Erie Canal should also be made to provide reference to their position in history through the development of wayfinding and interpretive elements, street furniture, landscape elements, lighting and other improvements.

The Erie Boulevard East corridor extends southward from Bridge Street until it merges with East Genesee Street (NYS Route 92). The town of DeWitt desires to extend the median bikeway and streetscape improvements along this southern portion of Erie Boulevard until its intersection with East Genesee Street.

Project Location and Map

Erie Boulevard East Corridor between Thompson Road on the West and East Genesee Street on the South.

Conceptual Design(s)

Visualization of proposed Erie Boulevard East median bikeway improvements

Erie Boulevard East Mobility Enhancements (Elevating Erie Ideas Competition)

Erie Commons Master Plan

Project Description

The Town of DeWitt will undertake the development of a master plan for the creation of a mixed-use walkable center to be located around the Widewaters Pond adjacent to Towpath Road and Erie Boulevard East. The pond is a remnant of the Enlarged Erie Canal. The goals of the master plan will be to identify opportunities for developing a public park facility around the Widewaters Pond, as well as to identify necessary public infrastructure improvements and amenities around the pond that would provide incentive for the redevelopment of adjacent areas into a walkable mixed-use 21st century neighborhood for DeWitt. DeWitt will investigate the realignment of Towpath Road to the north, by rerouting vehicular traffic along linked extensions of the existing interior streets. This realignment of circulation patterns would create an opportunity to take full advantage of the waterfront along Widewaters Pond. The future extension of the Erie Canalway Trail is aided by promoting public access and walkability along enhanced open spaces and commercial areas. Together with a greater emphasis on mixed-use redevelopment, the reconfiguration and improvement of public infrastructure and amenities in this area will increase property values and enhance community character.

Project Location and Map

Widewaters Pond is located adjacent to Towpath Road and Erie Boulevard.

Conceptual Design

Concept Plan for the redevelopment of the Widewaters Pond and adjacent neighborhood areas to create a public park and a 21st century mixed-use walkable neighborhood.

Entry for DeWitt Widewaters Park from the Elevating Erie International Ideas Competition

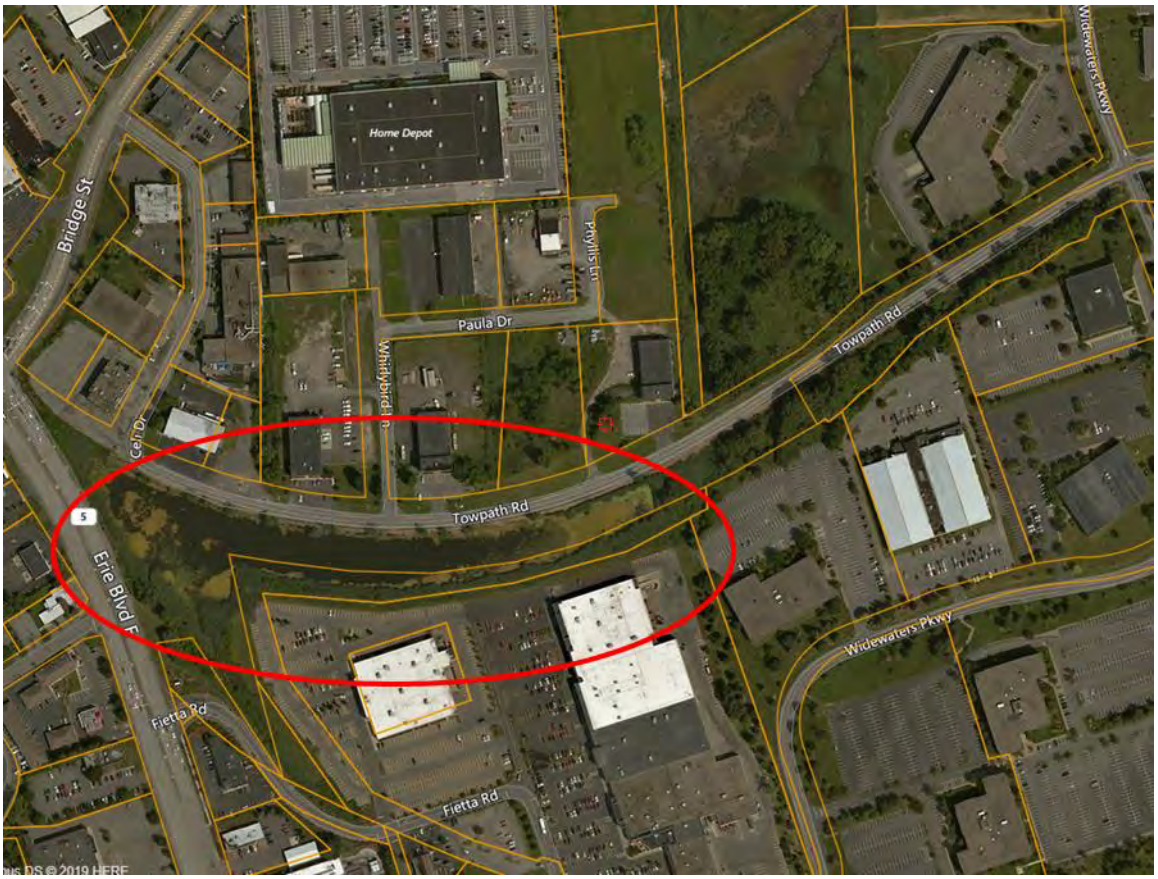
Widewaters Pond Water Quality and Sediment Conditions Assessment

Project Description

Located adjacent to large impervious surfaces and an existing brownfield, this canal remnant should be the subject of a detailed water quality analysis examining the presence of heavy metals and other pollutants, along with biological contaminants. Due to proximity to a nearby brownfield, for upland portions of Widewaters Pond, a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) should be conducted. This analysis may lead to a Phase II ESA. These analyses should be conducted in tandem with the development of the Erie Commons Master Plan and in consideration of future aquatic invasive species management. The invasion of phragmites has damaged both the pond and the native flora and fauna, and it severely limits public access to and even knowledge of, this important cultural resource. An integrated management effort working closely with the NYSDEC; drawing from an array of tools like mechanical mowing, chemical treatment, and hydrologic manipulation; is likely to be effective and sustainable for this inaccessible yet centrally-located waterbody.

Project Location and Map

Widewaters pond is located adjacent to Towpath Road and Erie Boulevard East.



Widewaters Pond Public Facility Improvements

Project Description

Based on the results of the Erie Commons Master Plan, the Town will develop and implement plans for a new public gathering area to be situated around the Widewaters Pond adjacent to Towpath Road and Erie Boulevard. The park will incorporate fountains, interpretive elements, public gathering nodes, public paths that connect to the Empire State Trail and adjacent properties, access to and across the water, ecological restoration and water quality improvements, site furniture and lighting, and other elements. The park will also include a perimeter trail system that connects to adjacent commercial areas. The Town seeks to create a public node that will support and enhance State investments in the Empire State Trail, as well as to catalyze the redevelopment of adjacent properties.

Project Location and Map

Widewaters Pond is located adjacent to Towpath Road and Erie Boulevard.

Conceptual Design

Entry for DeWitt Widewaters Park from the Elevating Erie International Ideas Competition

Towpath Road Old Erie Canal Restoration

Project Description

Towpath Road follows the historical alignment of the Enlarged Erie Canal for approximately 1.3 miles between the intersection of Erie Boulevard East with Bridge Street and 481 and Kinne Street. The Town seeks to engage adjacent commercial and residential property owners in order to re-envision the corridor, to improve water flow, and to establish interpretive elements to the corridor to tell the history of the Canal. The project may include restoration of historical Canal elements (e.g., stone walls), restoration of the clay lining, dredging of the corridor, and tree removal.

Project Location and Map

Widewaters pond is located adjacent to Towpath Road and Erie Boulevard East.

Towpath Road Realignment Study

Project Description

The Town of DeWitt will undertake an engineering study to determine the feasibility, conceptual layout, and preliminary cost estimates for realigning Towpath Road to support implementation of the Erie Commons Master Plan project

Project Location and Map

Location of Towpath Road

Erie Commons

White Lake Public Access

Project Description

The Town of DeWitt will conduct a feasibility study to determine opportunities for developing public access to the White Lake area through land acquisition, trail development, water access and interpretive/wayfinding signage at White Lake.

Project Location and Map

White Lake is located south of Woodchuck Hill Road

Conceptual Design

Photo of White Lake

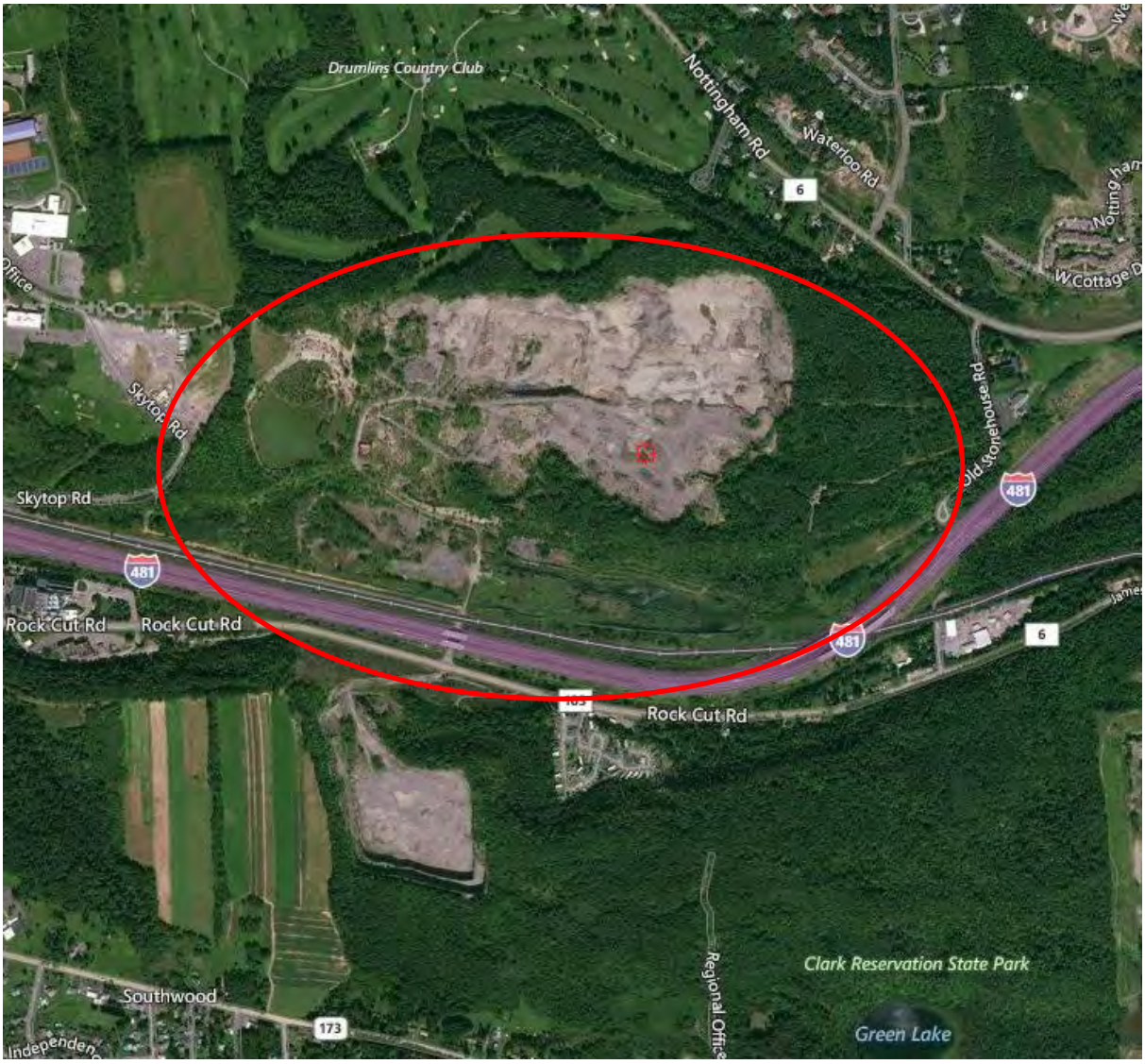
Rock Cut Quarry Recreation Access

Project Description

The Town of DeWitt will conduct a feasibility study to determine opportunities for developing public access to the Rock Cut Quarry area through land acquisition or development of a recreation easement and trail development.

Project Location and Map

Rock Cut Quarry



Conceptual Design

Photo of the Rock Cut Quarry

Fiddlers Green Connector Trail

Project Description

The Town of DeWitt will design and implement an approximate 1.5 mile connecting trail between the Fiddlers Green Park and the Butternut Feeder Canal Trail.

Project Location and Map

The Fiddlers Green Connector Trail will connect from Solvay Road along Butternut Creek toward the Butternut Creek Golf course and connect to the Butternut Feeder Canal.

Fiddlers Green Connector to North Street

Project Description

The Town of DeWitt will design and construct trails to connect newly-acquired property along North Street into the original Fiddlers Green trail system

Project Location and Map

The Fiddlers Green Connector Trail will connect the East and West sides of Butternut Creek near the old Glen Loch property.

Fiddlers Green Recreational Easement Connections

Project Description

The Town of DeWitt will work to aquire easements over adjacent properties to connect the Fiddlers Green park to nearby parks and open space systems such as Clark Reservation, Rock Cut Quarry, and White Lake

Project Location and Map

The Fiddlers Green Connector Trail network has the potential to connect to Clark Reservation State Park, Rock Cut Quarry, and White Lake.

Nominate Butternut Creek Aqueduct to the National Register of Historic Places

Project Description

The Town of DeWitt will pursue nomination of the Butternut Creek Aqueduct to the State and National Register of Historic Places.

Project Location and Map

The Butternut Creek Aqueduct is located just northeast of the intersection between Butternut Drive and Kinne Road.

Restoration of Butternut Creek Aqueduct

Project Description

The Town of DeWitt will complete an analysis of the structural conditions of the Butternut Creek Aqueduct and implement a restoration strategy

Project Location and Map

The Butternut Creek Aqueduct is located just northeast of the intersection between Butternut Drive and Kinne Road.

Conceptual Design

Photograph of the Butternut Creek Aqueduct.

Repair Butternut Creek Feeder Sluice Gate from Butternut Creek

Project Description

The Town of DeWitt will work with the NYS Canal Corporation to repair the Butternut Creek sluice gate from Butternut Creek

Project Location and Map

The Butternut Creek Feeder sluice gate is located equidistant between the DeWitt Library and the Butternut Golf Course and slightly northwest of the intersection of Jamesville Road with Tulipwood Lane.

Conceptual Design

Photograph of the Butternut Feeder Sluice Gate

Develop Wayfinding and Interpretive Signage Program for Historical Erie Canal Corridor

Project Description

The Town of DeWitt will develop and implement a comprehensive wayfinding and interpretive signage program for the historical Erie Canal Corridor. The improvement of wayfinding for bicyclists and pedestrians, both on and off the Erie Canal corridor, is a high priority for the town of DeWitt. Current gaps along local bicycle and pedestrian routes and a lack of wayfinding signs make it difficult to navigate routes. The installation of consistent and visible signage or pavement markings along routes can promote the use and safety of walking and biking. Signs can guide users along the main Erie Canalway Trail and heavily-utilized spurs, and provide distance measures, travel estimates to key destinations, and impediments to avoid.

Project Location and Map

The wayfinding and interpretive signage program will help to enhance the historical Erie Canal Corridor within the Town.

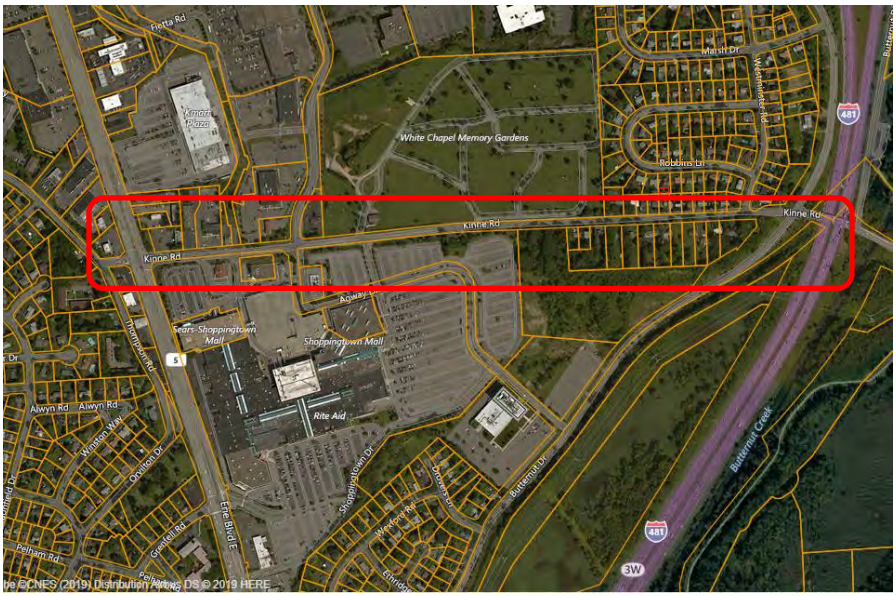
Design and Install Protective Bike/Pedestrian Infrastructure along Kinne Road

Project Description

As the westbound alignment of Kinne Road approaches the bridge, a six-foot shoulder necks down to a four-foot shoulder to cross Butternut Creek, and finally down to less than three feet at I-481. The eastbound alignment, originating at the intersection with Erie Boulevard East, has varying constraints associated with the width of the shoulder and conflicts with commercial driveways. Although a wide and striped shoulder may be appropriate for accommodating light bicycle and pedestrian traffic elsewhere on Kinne Road, the gradually decreased size of the shoulder strains bicyclists' comfort on the bridge, where motorists are less likely to grant wide berth in passing. Some degree of narrowing the driving lanes to gain bicycle protection or highly-visible bicycle sharrow markings can be accommodated within the existing design, while future replacement or substantial renovations are negotiated. A more comprehensive treatment is necessary between Erie Boulevard East and the Kinne Road Bride to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety.

Project Location and Map

Improvements would take place between the intersection between Erie Boulevard East and Butternut Drive along Kinne Road.



Conduct Feasibility Analysis to Determine Potential Future Use of the DeWitt Municipal Landfill site

Project Description

The redevelopment of this site is complicated by several factors including steep slopes, a lack of public utility service, and adjacency to NYSDEC wetlands and the 100-year floodplain. While there are many factors to consider in reusing the site for additional renewable energy development, key considerations include the total anticipated production of the site and weighing the benefits of the solar energy production with the installation costs. The town is also interested in exploring the possibility of developing an amphitheater on the eastern side of the landfill which could include a sound stage, covered seating area, lighting, restrooms, and concessions. Considerations for uses such as a public art installation may include installation constraints (e.g., maximum sculpture weight), visitor circulation, and the potential for visitor exposure to subsurface contaminants. To proceed with the reuse of this site, Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments should be conducted to analyze the following:

- cap and liner system integrity;
- leachate and landfill gas management objectives and requirements;
- monitoring requirements for groundwater and surface water protection;
- stormwater management and erosion control requirements;
- structural settlement potential;
- maintenance schedules and requirements; and
- protocols for corrective action in the event of system malfunctions.

Project Location and Map

The DeWitt Municipal Landfill site is located directly adjacent to the Old Erie Canal State Historic Park.

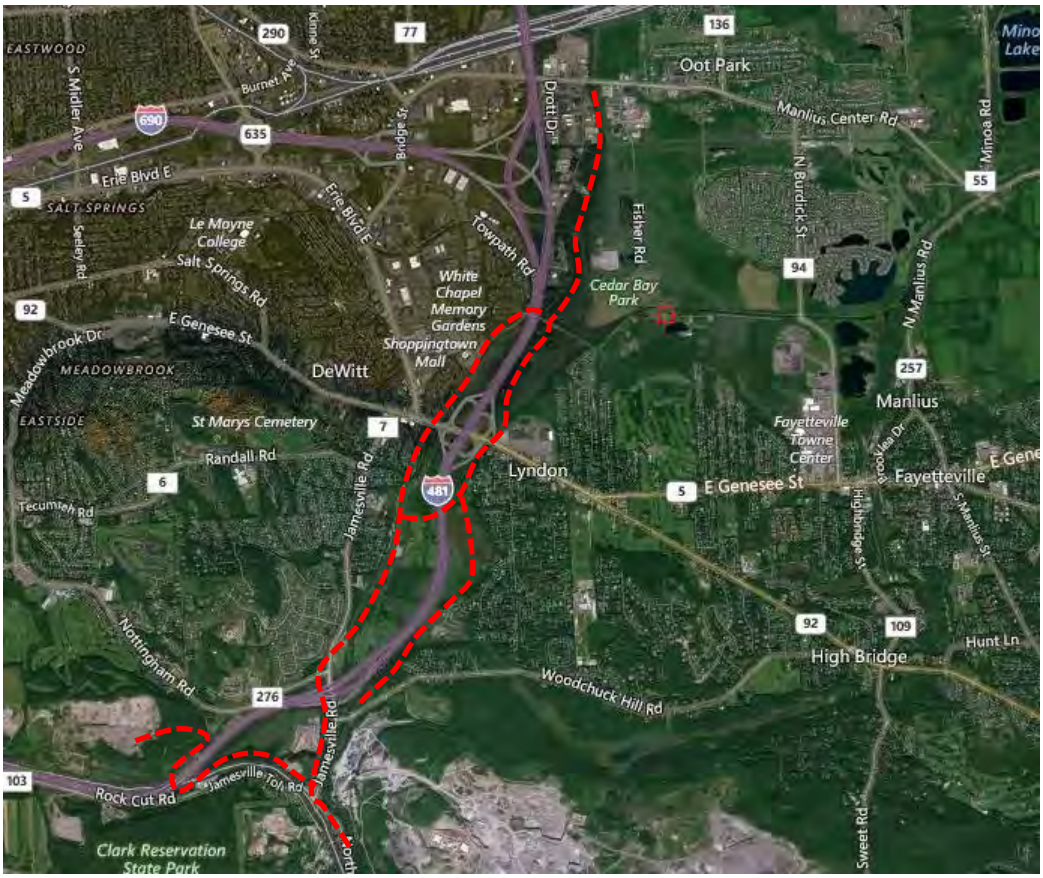
Butternut Creek Trail System Master Plan

Project Description

The Town of DeWitt will develop a master plan for the construction of the Butternut Creek Trail System. The extension of the Butternut Creek trail to the south along the feeder canal would take advantage of an informal trail that commences at the municipally-owned "Richard's Green Space", south of State Route 5/92. That trail extends south until the Butternut Creek Golf Course, along the transmission line corridor, adjacent to a moderately-dense residential area and local elementary schools. There may also be an opportunity to connect the Orville Feeder Canal area with the Maple Drive neighborhood, through the creation of a pedestrian walkway along the Butternut Creek corridor that flows under Interstate 481. Additional opportunities for expansion exist further south by taking advantage of existing or future recreational amenities at the abandoned quarry, Clark Reservation State Park, Fiddlers' Green, and the Grist Mill park. There are other possibilities to the east toward White Lake wilderness area and Woodchuck Hill Field and Forest Preserve. These trails may vary in development, for example paved trails for heavily trafficked areas or unpaved trail blazes similar to the trails of the Woodchuck Hill Field and Forest Preserve.

Project Location and Map

The Butternut Creek Trail System has the potential to link many of the residential areas of DeWitt with the Erie Canalway Trail system/Empire State Trail, and other amenities of Central DeWitt.



Butternut Creek Trail System Development and Implementation

Project Description

The Town of DeWitt Butternut Creek Trail master plan will guide the phased construction of the Butternut Creek Trail System.

Project Location and Map

The Butternut Creek Trail System has the potential to link many of the residential areas of DeWitt with the Erie Canalway Trail system/Empire State Trail, and other amenities of Central DeWitt.

Cedar Bay Park Improvements

Project Description

The Town of DeWitt will work in partnership with New York State Parks and the Town of Manlius to develop a plan to incorporate the following expanded facilities at Cedar Bay Park:
• an interpretive center, to educate visitors about local canal history and direct them to other significant canal sites (e.g., the Erie Canal Museum in Syracuse, or the Limestone Creek aqueduct);
• a concession stand, which could provide a source of revenue for facility maintenance;
• a bike rental facility, which could expand opportunities for visitors to access the Erie Canalway Trail and other attractions that are connected by trails (e.g., the village of Fayetteville, Green Lakes State Park),
• repair station for bikes, along with bike racks;
• overnight primitive/low-impact camping for cyclists passing through along the Canalway trail.

Project Location and Map

Cedar Bay Park is located directly adjacent to the Old Erie Canal State Historic Park.

Land Use Analysis at Kinne Rd./Lyndon Rd./Cedar Bay Road

Project Description

Though recognized as a recreational asset, Cedar Bay may be underutilized as a waterfront amenity that could attract development opportunities in adjacent properties. The extent to which adjacent properties could support such development, however, has not been analyzed. The town of DeWitt proposes a land use study of this area, particularly those areas to the south of Cedar Bay that could accommodate land development and benefit from proximity to the water and the Canalway Trail.

The land use analysis should involve stakeholder input from property owners and neighbors, and a market analysis to examine the potential support of additional development within this area. Potential constraints (e.g., wetlands, traffic controls) should be identified, and strategies should be developed to guide well-connected, context-sensitive development.

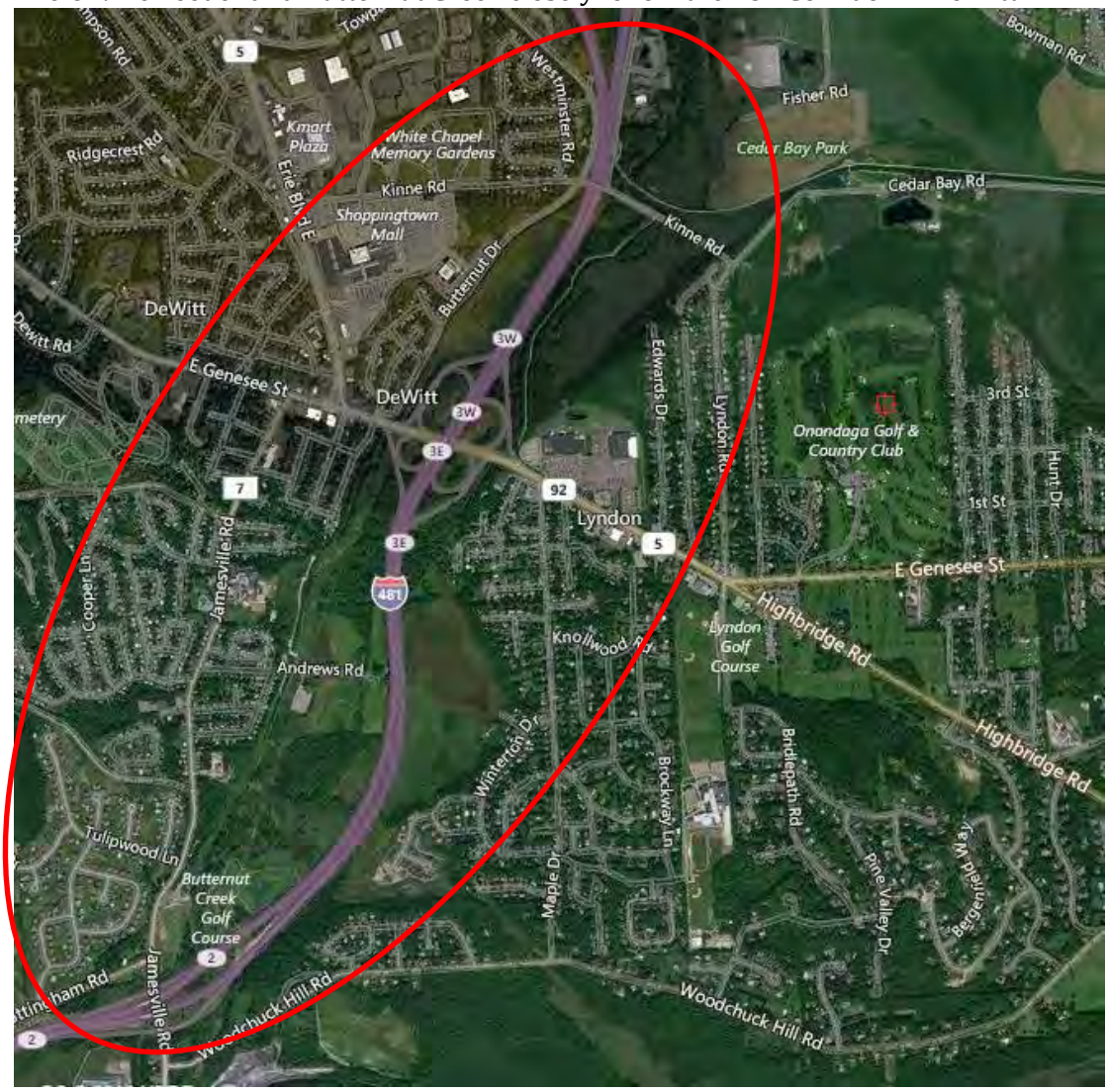
Orville Feeder and Butternut Creek Water Quality Improvement Initiative

Project Description

Orville Feeder Canal and Butternut Creek: Both of these waterbodies are listed on the NYSDEC Waterbody Inventory/Priority Waterbodies List, however both entries have several missing data points regarding turbidity, pollutants, and sources of contamination. In addition to the assessment of water quality, the town of DeWitt seeks to examine opportunities to reconnect water flows between these waterbodies and Cedar Bay, as described in Section 4.3.4.

Project Location and Map

The Orville Feeder and Butternut Creek closely follow the 481 Corridor in DeWitt.



Ley Creek Watershed Management Plan

Project Description

The Town of DeWitt will development a comprehensive Ley Creek Watershed Management Plan. Ley Creek is a listed Impaired Waterbody due to combined sewer overflow, stormwater runoff, and industrial waste contamination. Projects to improve water quality in and along Ley Creek could include continued remediation efforts, implementation of best management practices for stormwater runoff, and stormwater mitigation and protection for new development. In addition, as discussed in Section II, the hydrology and habitat within the lower and minor tributaries of Limestone Creek are stressed by streambed sedimentation and water column siltation issues caused from streambank erosion. Projects to improve the water quality of Limestone Creek may include streambank stabilization and silt collection areas and activities. The Plan might also identify specific guidelines for new development within the Town that would help to guide town practices as well as new construction projects in the use of green infrastructure.

Project Location and Map

Ley Creek in DeWitt encompasses the north and south branches as well as Sanders Creek.

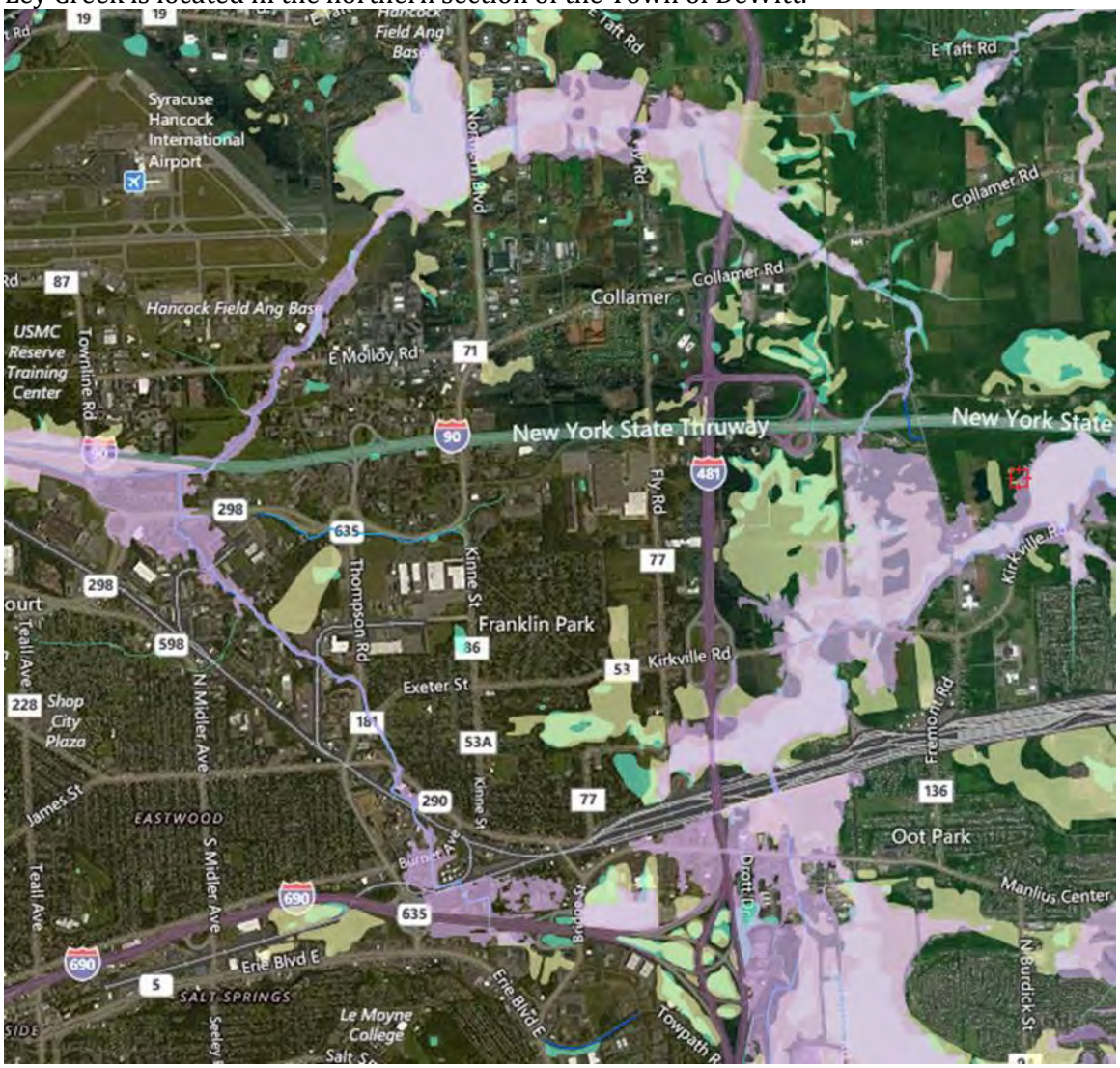
Green and Grey Infrastructure Stormwater Management Projects

Project Description

The Town of DeWitt comprehensive Ley Creek Watershed Management Plan will identify specifc projects that the Town can undertake to improve stormwater management throughout the Ley Creek Watershed.

Project Location and Map

Ley Creek is located in the northern section of the Town of DeWitt.



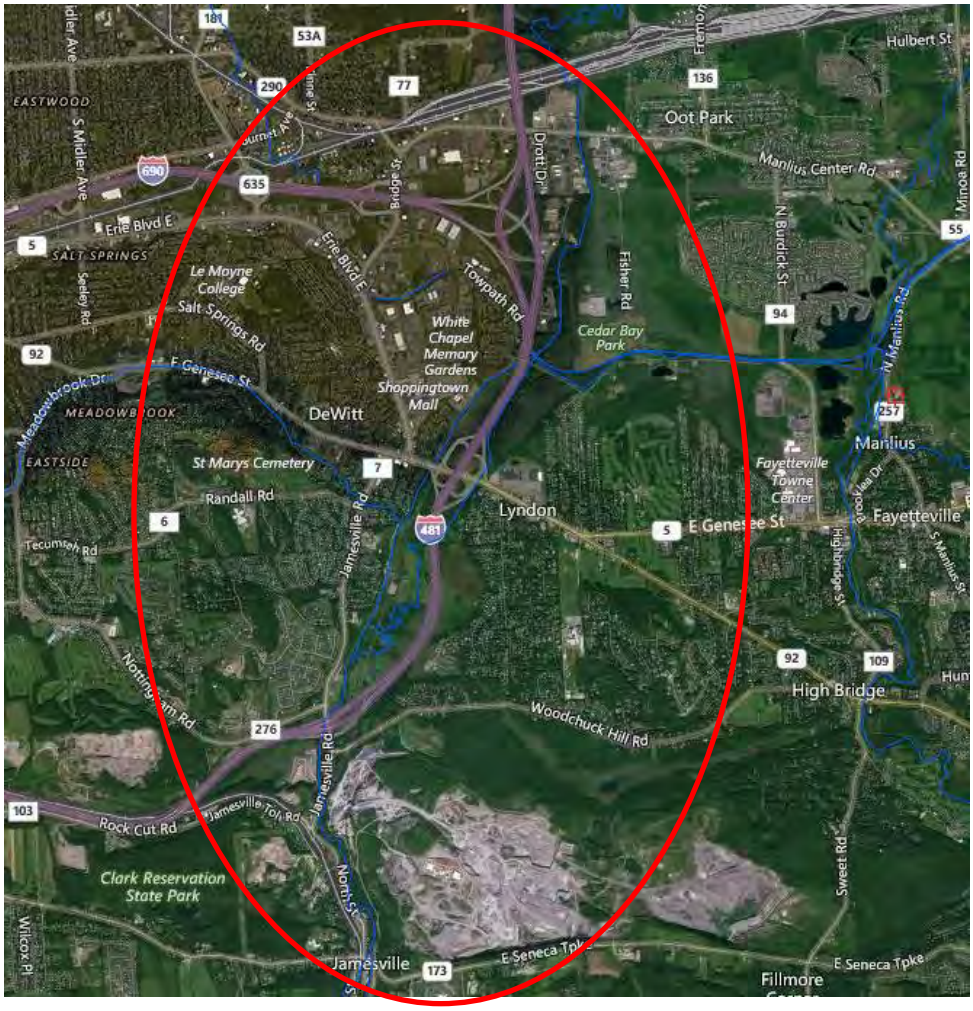
Blueway Navigability Improvement Strategy Development and Implementation

Project Description

The Town of DeWitt will identify and implement improvements create the headwaters of a blueway trail system connected to the Old Erie Canal State Historic Park waterway. The town of DeWitt's waterways could provide greater recreational opportunities for nonmotorized watercraft along the Erie Canal and Butternut Creek. A fundamental step in improving these opportunities is to create a Blueway system that draws attention to these waterbodies and their connections to each other, and in doing so, increases the public awareness and sense of waterway connectivity throughout the town and beyond. This assessment should include an overview of existing conditions, a needs analysis, maps of existing and proposed access sites, suggested paddle routes, signage, and a brand identity. Basic improvements to existing infrastructure would increase public awareness of, and connections to, DeWitt's waterways. Currently, non-motorized boat launches are located at Cedar Bay Park along the Erie Canal and at Ryder Park along Butternut Creek, two heavily visited areas. These access points can be improved with consistent branding, signage, alterations to boat launches, and publicity. Additional launch areas can be implemented to provide access points on Butternut Creek south of I- 481, which is known to host recreational kayakers. Kayak or canoe rental venues would facilitate the use of these access points where appropriate (e.g., Cedar Bay), and could include storage systems, boathouses, cleaning stations, gear rental, and bathrooms. This may also include an exploration of the potential for developing winter ice-skating facilities.

Project Location and Map

Old Erie Canal and Butternut Creek in DeWitt



I-81 SEQR Review Comments from DeWitt Town Engineer & DeWitt Highway Superintendent

From Town Engineer, Doug Miller:

Urban forestation in and around the DeWitt interchanges starting at Jamesville Rd past the Lyndon interchange to the connection points of I 690

- Sound barriers required for the areas in and around the DeWitt interchanges starting at Jamesville Rd past the Lyndon interchange to the connection points of I 690
- Incorporation of direct access to the East Syracuse Rail Yards at the Kirkville Road interchange per attached sketches which the Town has initiated for funding purposes
- Incorporation of trail systems currently proposed with local comprehensive planning and local waterfront revitalization along interstate access areas in and around the DeWitt interchanges starting at Jamesville Rd past the Lyndon interchange to the connection points of I 690
- Calming effects, urban forestation, and improvements for Route 5 corridor from Orvilton hamlet to Lyndon Corners
- Urban forestation and plantings for clover leaf area at Route 5 interchange. Plantings by Town Volunteers have been decimated by NYSDOT activities over the years. Development of a dedicated planting scheme is requested
- Funding for increased use of NYS Bike Trail for Town including modifications to the feeder canal pond at Erie and Celi Drive
- Traffic impacts to roads such as Woodchuck Hill, Jamesville Road, Old Quarry, Maple Drive Nottingham need to be addressed in emergency situations. Roads do not have carrying capacities
- Noise barriers required in and around the DeWitt interchanges starting at Jamesville Rd past the Lyndon interchange to the connection points of I 690
- Increased emergency responder activity. Funding and resources required for increased activity
- Increased truck traffic on local Roads require upgrades to several local and county Roads such as Kirkville, Fly, Jamesville, Nottingham
- Air monitoring stations throughout the residential areas in and around the DeWitt interchanges starting at Jamesville Rd past the Lyndon interchange to the connection points of I 690
- Protection of natural trout streams adjacent to the modified interstate along Butternut Creek
- Increased education for natural habitat in the fragile Butternut Creek stream drainage area including increased salt use

- No anticipation for direct ramp access to the rail yard or increased truck traffic from such in the design report
- Increased traffic means increased accidents. Town of Dewitt has limited number of emergency responders. Potentially a new station and staff may be needed.
- Where are the massive numbers of workers going to stay.
- Where are the large equipment and material staging areas going to be located.

- MPT will be complex and lead to
- Will there be winter shutdowns or will bridge reconstruction continue without interruption.
- New spurs for the Empire Trail heading north to Route 298 and south to Jamesville Road from the current 481 bridge crossing should be incorporated along the new I-81 Route
- All utilities should be replaced from under the pavement in Lyndon Corners widening area.
- Addition of new traffic signal at Genesee Street will add to travel times and congestion.
- Noise mitigation
- No significant fueling stations along the current Route 481 corridor. Need for fuel will increase.
- No rest/texting area planned along the current new I-81 Route
- Need for mechanical service stations along the new I-81 Route will increase.
- Noise mitigation should be incorporated
- Pollution mitigation should be incorporated
- Cost estimates are low based upon recent bidding of public work projects.

From DeWitt Highway Superintendent Rocco Conte:

- A bypass that was talked about for the Eastern Suburbs years ago, this would help elevate the increased traffic for Lyndon Corners
- Traffic increasing for Orvilton Drive & Thompson Roads
- Shoulder improvements, Bike Lanes & or Sidewalks (Maintenance) to allow for Pedestrian Safety
- Sound Barrier maintenance after being built, cost to the Town?
- Sound Monitoring due to increased traffic
- Road Conditions will increase by the wear & tear of increased traffic

From:	Frechette, Mark (DOT)
To:	Bjorness, Joan E (DOT)
Subject:	FW: Response to I-81 Viaduct Project
Date:	Thursday, October 14, 2021 3:12:43 PM
Attachments:	D.Carnie_I-81_Viaduct_Project_DEIS_comments---10.14.2021.pdf I-81_comments.xlsx 81 Comments that speak for themselves.pdf

Fyi.

From: dav carni <davcarni@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 14, 2021 3:06 PM
To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>; Frechette, Mark (DOT) <Mark.Frechette@dot.ny.gov>; rick.marquis@dot.gov
Cc: councilorcarnie@gmail.com
Subject: Response to I-81 Viaduct Project

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

Good Afternoon,

The attached letter is my response to the I-81 Viaduct Project DEIS dated 7/16/2021. I have also attached a spreadsheet of comments and a pdf of additional comments from social media.

I appreciate your consideration of this matter and look forward to my concerns being addressed.

Thank You,

--

David M. Carnie, CCIM

Town of Salina 4th Ward Councilor

Town of Salina
"The Crossroads of New York"
201 School Road
Liverpool, NY 13088
Telephone: (315) 679-7279
Fax: (315) 457-4476

Website: www.salina.ny.us FaceBook Twitter

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Town of Salina
OFFICE OF THE TOWN SUPERVISOR

David M. Carnie

4th Ward Councilor

Nancy A. O'Neil
Secretary to the Supervisor

October 14, 2021

Dear Mr. Frechette:

I am writing this letter to address Appendix D-2 of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement otherwise known as the Economic Considerations. The market information which has been used to this point in the decision-making process has numerous pitfalls and shortcoming inherent in the data.

1. Out of Date Information

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement released 7/16/2021 does not contain data to provide the most accurate timely analysis possible. Labor Force Data were obtained from the U.S. Census 2000. The Existing Employment and Labor Conditions reads, "The metropolitan area lost 10,161 residents or 1.5 percent of its population from 2010 to 2019." That is false. The U.S. Census 2020 data shows a growth of 2 percent in Onondaga County. Current and forecasted employment conditions are out of date and irrelevant. Examples include the Amazon opening two new facilities in Onondaga County, a 3.8 million sf Distribution Center on Morgan Road in Clay and a 112,000-sf facility on Kirkville Road in Dewitt, which, in addition to generating major job growth, will obviously also generate major growth in highway now.

2. Contradictory Data

Multiple sources will develop different estimations even though the estimates are for the same market. Projections can differ on how conservative or liberal the estimators are in their interpretation of the raw data. The section addressing Potential Indirect Business Displacement reads, "there is not a substantial difference in average travel time between the No Build, Community Grid, and Viaduct Alternatives." That is false. Outside of peak hours travelling Northbound I-81 arriving at 7th North Street (Exit 25) the average drive time is 6 minutes from the existing northern I-481 interchange (Interchange 29). Outside of peak hours travelling Northbound I-481 arriving at 7th North Street (Exit 25) from the existing northern I-481 Interchange (Interchange 29) the average drive time is 20 minutes. During the AM and PM peak hours the travel times will significantly increase. The travel times will not decrease by simply widening the highway from four to six lanes around the eastern side of Syracuse. The substantial increase in travel time is a result of the substantial increase in driving distance attributed to the removal and lack of roadways, interstate interchanges, and traffic patterns disrupting the safe and free flow of vehicular traffic.

I will also reference, “The projected 1.3 percent decrease in consumer trips represents a very small portion of total (hotel) bookings…suggesting that a slight decrease in bookings would not jeopardize their (hotels) viability.” In a Spectrum News Article dated August 17, 2021, the director of the I-81 Project for the DOT and Mark Frechette, is quoted saying, “Our analysis showed that the percentages were far less impactful to the hotels” this is also false. The 2019 AADT is estimated at 74,430 vehicles. Currently one hotel will typically sell 30 rooms to same day travelers. Multiply 30 rooms by 11 hotels and there is a decrease of 330 rooms sold a day to same day travelers due to traffic being rerouted to I-481. In this case, the DOT has made no effort to ascertain the facts. The have made no direct outreach to the affected shareholders.

3. Lack of Applicability

According to the 7/16/2021 Local Study Area Data gathered and analyzed to assess locations to an overall metro and study areas were established to focus on potential induced growth. However, these study areas were totally inadequate they do not cover suburban, and areas negatively impacted by the Community Grid option. Economic Considerations in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement are based on false information. The NYS DOT is on record erroneously stating, “The traffic volumes aren’t dropping that much in those areas”, and their study shows only a 1% decrease in business along the 7th North Street corridor.

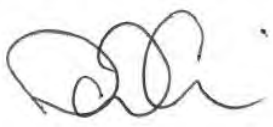
CONCLUSION:

There are serious concerns and questions regarding the data sources and information obtained by NYS DOT for the Draft Environmental Impact Statement that bears on the decision at hand. Data sources requires the use of both primary and secondary data. Primary data is data gathered specifically for the task at hand. It is the data obtained from a site inspection. It is evident that the NYS DOT did not gather primary data by direct observation or by explicit questioning of people and businesses that represent the areas impacted. The Economic Considerations in Appendix D-2 of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement must be re-evaluated and updated to include, among other things, 2020 U.S. Census Data.

The entire Draft Environmental Impact Statement must be completely redone. Onondaga County and New York State deserve better from the New York State Department of Transportation and the elected officials that swore an oath to represent the interests of the people they represent. A new study must be commissioned, and oversight provided by qualified, skilled individuals. It is critical accurate data is obtained for the task at hand through primary data sources. Simply reviewing massive amounts of online data and printed government reports is not sufficient to develop, and accurately interpret, the meaningful data essential to make an informed decision.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone (315) 679-7279, or by email councilorcarnie@gmail.com.

Sincerely,



David M. Carnie, CCIM
Town of Salina 4th Ward Councilor

201 School Road – Liverpool, NY 13088 - (315) 457-6661 - Fax: (315) 457-4476
www.salina.ny.us - supervisor@salina.ny.us - Twitter: @TownofSalina - FB: townofsalina

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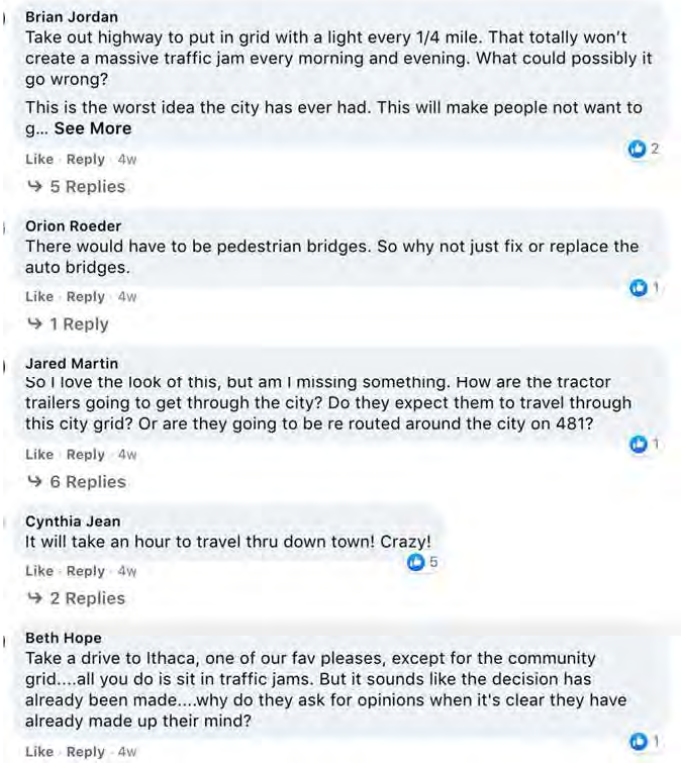
July 16th, 2021
LINK

COMMENTS:



David B Stepkovitch
Who's the dopehead who designed this? Seriously? Talk about accidents waiting to happen and bad ones at that.

Like · Reply · 4w 3

Nick Moltion
They didn't show any of the drug addicted,filthy, pan handlers begging at every intersection. They must be getting rid of those.

Like · Reply · 4w 18

↳ 7 Replies

Top Fan
Daughn Rivenburg Canfield
Why is the answer always a roundabout? People can't drive straight lines and you wanna throw a circle in there?! Come to Bridgeport for a day and see how well people do with roundabouts!

Like · Reply · 4w 2

↳ 1 Reply

Tim Hanna
That's a good start. Now just add an elevated highway over top of it all and you'll have something!

Like · Reply · 4w 1

Top Fan
Melinda Kneer
So the roundabout that's shows MLK school they just taking out that whole neighborhood area out wasn't that what they did with building 81

Like · Reply · 4w 1

↳ 6 Replies

Raymond Lowe
I was going to comment but after seeing this, I already know 90% of the others thst see this will say it for me

Like · Reply · 4w 2

Jason Pantke
First of all we just crashed through a few cars in this video plus the one car just kept going. Second if we kept going around in circles counterclockwise in roundabout, does that mean we can go back in time.

Like · Reply · 4w

↳ 2 Replies

Jerome Lindy
Where are the CGI homeless people?
Like · Reply · 4w 2

Leona Cronk
Won't the truckers just love this!
Like · Reply · 4w 3
↳ 2 Replies

Tom Kuryla
Thank the voters for electing the ones making this call ..
Like · Reply · 4w 1

Sandy Swetman Fillingham
Can you imagine the roundabout in the middle of all that. I'm not sure who's drinking the Kool-Aid but count me out
Like · Reply · 4w 17
↳ 18 Replies

Michael Maestri
Most ridiculous thing ever ! If 81 " divides "the city on the south side, (Oakwood cemetery, hospitals, and SU to the east of 81 , city on the west), then they had better do something where 81 divides the north side from downtown . And that is alr... **See More**
Like · Reply · 4w 6
↳ 3 Replies

Paul Musil
Remember the DOT that conclude this was a good idea are same that concluded new signs saying no commercial traffic would stop trucks from hitting the railroad bridge.
Like · Reply · 4w 1
↳ 7 Replies

Jennifer Kio
Did the person or people that designed this, ever go thru the area, I think that an extra lane might be a better option than a nice grass median (that someone has to mow) it some of the areas.

Top Fan
Thomas Meaney
The whole country is watch how we fail our city with this project.
Like · Reply · 4w 1

Andy Vant
Don't worry the same people who built the Binghamton exit are building this .....should be complete in 75-95 yrs.....
Like · Reply · 4w 8
↳ 3 Replies

Justin Cote
Good luck with big trucks
Like · Reply · 4w
↳ 1 Reply

Derrick Scott
This has to be the most ridiculous concept I've ever seen
Like · Reply · 4w 1

Renee Rein-McNeil
Please tell me this is not the new commute!!!!
Like · Reply · 4w

Nia Taylor
No thanks I'm not getting hit by a stray bullet driving past Central Village
Like · Reply · 4w 1

Devan Woodworth
I'll believe it when I see it!! Less talk more action
Like · Reply · 4w

Frank Gerling
Whatbis the plan to keep the gun violence that continues to permeate the south side from now.spilling into su area? Plus for anyone.who has to come into the city from the south this will add significant amount of time to commute. And thru traffic wil... **See More**
Like · Reply · 4w 6
↳ 1 Reply

Paul Condon
So, let's see if this makes sense: The NYS DOT puts out a simulation video promoting the Grid Alternative, that takes you on a 'visual tour' from SOUTH of the City to the 690 interchange, rather than NORTH of the City to Downtown, where arguably 70-75%... **See More**

Like · Reply · 2w · Edited

↳ 1 Reply

Jim Rogers
All those trees will magically appear and traffic will always be that light. What about the neighborhood that will be destroyed for the roundabout? It appears that the big beneficiary of all these billions of taxpayer dollars will be the University ,... **See More**

Like · Reply · 4w · 1

↳ 1 Reply

Jessie Lynn
Can't wait for the nightmare of driving to work near where all the hospitals all from north Syracuse

Like · Reply · 2w

Christopher Williams
Absolutely not.

Like · Reply · 4w

Dave Clute
Welp, with only two lanes and all the traffic, many people will die in route to the hospital via ambulance.

Traffic will be backed up for miles, emergency service vehicles won't get through fast enough. ... **See More**

Like · Reply · 4w · 1

↳ 3 Replies

Michael Thomas
Better do something about the current panhandlers who always 'need $2' to get out of the city!

Like · Reply · 4w

Tom Becker
Cuts the city in half, unlike now where people can walk safely UNDER the highway.

Like · Reply · 4w · 6

↳ 4 Replies

Timothy Harrison
So walls are good if Ny builds them.

Like · Reply · 4w · 1

↳ 1 Reply

Greg Goldthwait
Oh look a roundabout and stop lights/Intersections on an interstate!! What idiot designed this... I'll just take 481 N and avoid this mess!!!!

Like · Reply · 4w · 1

George Thoryk
The video looks like make believe.
That round a bout at morning drive and ride home will be a joke. Ambulances coming from the north having to go around the city. Do the designers of this know that the hospitals serve a bigger community than just the ... **See More**

Like · Reply · 4w · 2

↳ 4 Replies

Trevor Michael Rogers
This is going to be a clusterf**k of epic proportions. A tunnel would have been the way to go.

Like · Reply · 4w · 4

↳ 5 Replies

JeffnPeggy VanTassell
Someone had spent too much time on Sim City.

Like · Reply · 4w · 3

Billy Yankee
Good luck with that!

July 16th, 2021

LINK

CNYCentral.com
180K like this · Movie/Television Studio

Jul 16 · · JUST IN: The detailed report for the I-81 project in Syracuse has been released. The DOT lays out its reasoning for recommending the Community Grid over the Viaduct...

cnycentral.com
NYSDOT releases report on I-81 project in Syracuse

16 18 Comments

COMMENTS:

Char Maine
I want to know why our tax dollars are still going to be used to maintain this community grid for them, when the majority of us didn't want to lose our highway. It's your road now. You want it to be your own, then YOU pay to maintain it on your own.

Section 4, Transportation- of this appendix regarding traffic considerations. NYSDOT would own and be responsible for maintenance of BL 81, while local City streets would continue to be maintained by the City,

Like · Reply · 4w 3

Bryan Richardson
This will cause a build up of hotels, gas stations and restaurants along the stretch of 481 as it becomes the new I81.
Local business that may have relied on thru traffic for those services will suffer.

Like · Reply · 4w 4

Trevor Michael Rogers
A tunnel would have been the best option.

Like · Reply · 4w 2

↪ 1 Reply

Keith Miller
Aspiring politicos show the people the plan they have designated as "best" for you...

You, the citizens, get nothing and have no say. ... **See More**

Like · Reply · 4w 6

↪ 2 Replies

Pat Giocondo Sr.
this will kill syracuse business as everyone bypasses the city ...look into who owns property around 481...you might find out why they are really doing this

Like · Reply · 4w 3

Estherjane Grice
They don't care and never did. This stupid plan will ruin Syracuse and outlying town like Salina. But what does Cuomo care.

Like · Reply · 4w

Chris James Bex
Invest in a tunnel system!

Like · Reply · 4w 3

Rhonda Reichert Contri
Gridlock...
Like · Reply · 4w 1

Stacey Dejesus
It goes over the R&R yard on James Street.
Like · Reply · 3w

Stacey Dejesus
What I wonder is, how is it the gas and time were considered for the 690 and 81. Yet Townsend, Mcbride (turning into Almond), Lodi, Teal and the street after that that have bridge's. Us tax payer had just repaired are going to be at ground level. Are t... **See More**
Like · Reply · 3w · Edited

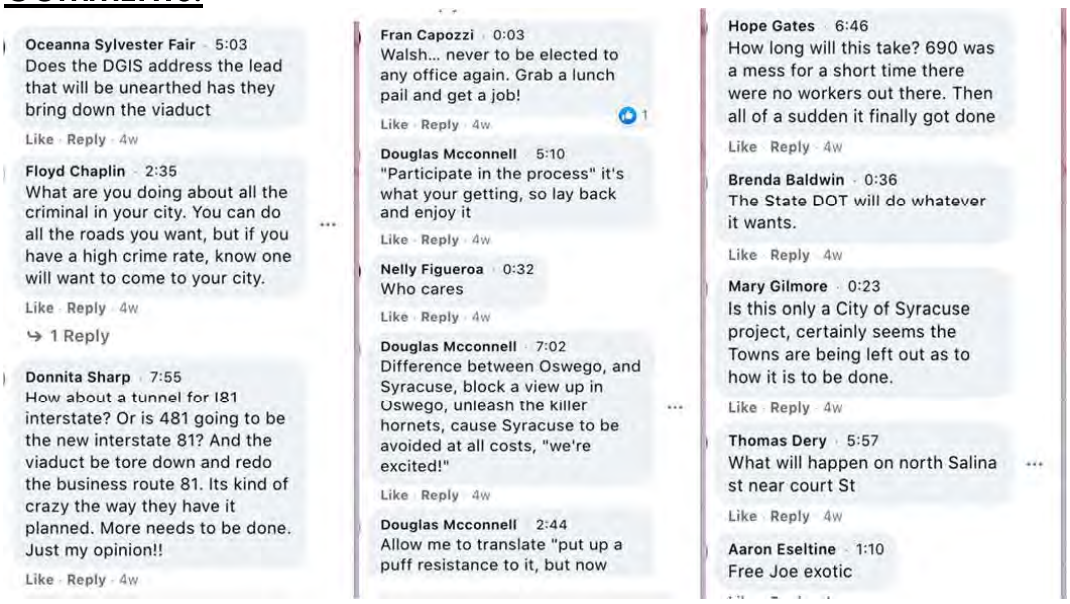
Stacey Dejesus
Look at the bottom. Hmm!!?

Like · Reply · 3w

Frank Gerling
As anyone taken into account the increased time to hospitals especialy to the south?
Like · Reply · 4w 1

July 16th, 2021
LINK

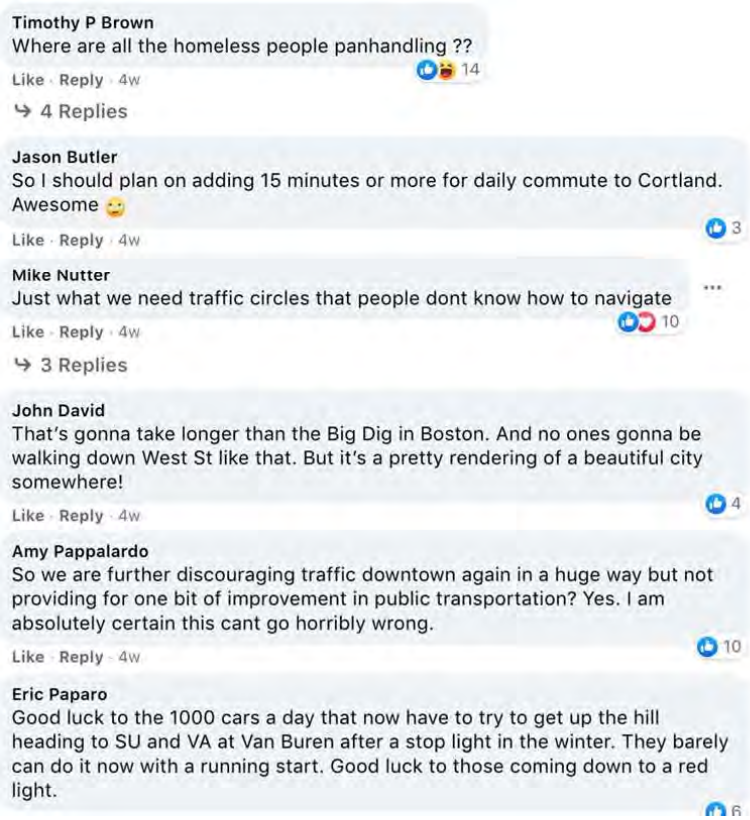
COMMENTS:



July 17th, 2021

LINK

COMMENTS:



Jess Haskins
How is this useful in any way shape or form? This is going to wipe out businesses and homes to be built, cause massive delays, and add on to our commute times. Just fix the road!
Like · Reply · 4w 10

Kay Watkins
If only it will look like that "perfect picture". Funny they didn't include the tractor trailer imagine (which looks like this design will be a nightmare for them), no panhandlers on the corners to avoid, and homeless people camped out in the overlook... **See More**
Like · Reply · 4w 3

Lis Taylor-Woodin
A roundabout...great idea! Said no one ever. Way too much traffic.
Like · Reply · 4w 8
↳ 2 Replies

Jason Dyer
PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE A ROUNDABOUT. Or ANY of this design. Just watching this animation nearly gave me a panic attack!
Like · Reply · 4w 8

Gord Noved
OHHHH looks so pretty, like propaganda, some stupid sales pitch, etc. Nothing about ANY of this does a thing for the suburbs. What about EMS, anyone coming from the north or south to go to work in that area. It is a pathetic excuse to say we not racist. smh
Like · Reply · 4w 3

Goldy May Massett
I can only imagine the traffic jams every morning and a 5pm!!!
Like · Reply · 4w 17
↳ 1 Reply

Carolyne Yonta
So glad I'll be getting out of this city / state before this construction starts. Maybe in 30 years if I'm back to visit I'll see the finished mess.
Like · Reply · 4w 6

Dale Burl Hawker
If only it did look like that. Syracuse is NO good at landscaping or keeping things looking good. I always love how u see these and it never ever looks like that. Shame
Like · Reply · 4w 15
↳ 4 Replies

Top Fan
Chris Daniszewski
I'm sure all the grass and landscaping will be always well manicured. Much like all the other interstate medians up here.
Like · Reply · 4w 19
↳ 1 Reply

Scott Mahaffy
no concept of THROUGH TRAFFIC, if I am trying to get from one place to another...I just want a clear unincumbered way not city streets. (so basically route 481 / 81 or city streets)
Like · Reply · 4w · Edited 14
↳ 6 Replies

Chris Goettel
🧐🧐 well done and thought out plan. Roundabouts work great in European nations..... Not here! Swear brilliant idea throwing money at this situation 😂
Like · Reply · 4w 2
↳ 2 Replies

Gary Dixon Jr
Built like that here in Baltimore on Hartford rd. Completely jacked up the traffic, and just because you make an area nice, doesn't mean it will dry that way....
Like · Reply · 4w 1

JoAnne Kozloski
A beautiful show but not reality. What about taking tolls off the thruway from 36 to 34a- that would help the northern suburbs
Like · Reply · 4w 1
↳ 1 Reply

LeAndrea Andrea
Oh yes I'd much rather go through 10 traffic lights instead of zero. We already have this option. Next!
Like · Reply · 4w · Edited 9
↳ 2 Replies

Jesse Lee Smith
Well the mall's dying. That's Syracuse's largest tax revenue right? How can we finish the city off for good?
Get rid of the viaduct and put in a roundabout. ... **See More**
Like · Reply · 4w

Amanda Sprague
This is a joke! You will see businesses leave the area! I drive to work at the hospital everyday and cannot imagine the backups this will cause.
Like · Reply · 4w 1

Donna Santiago
Has anyone thought of the problems that heavy traffic will cause? Doesn't look like it!!
Like · Reply · 4w 7

Diane Burton
Fix the roundabout, u have a vehicle that has to cross over one lane into the roundabout lane to continue, accident nightmares
11

Carl DeVer Avery
So it appears that this proposal will do more of exactly what it is supposed to be fighting, looks like a much larger geographic foot print. And while it is being sold as a remedy for economically challenged neighborhoods, all I see is gentrification,... **See More**
Like · Reply · 4w 4
↳ 1 Reply

Mary Banac
I counted at least 5 traffic lights coming north bound between where the business loop starts and Adams street. Gonna be real fun for those ambulances to get through! And "connecting the neighborhoods",, what neighborhood - they'll be tearing down p... **See More**
Like · Reply · 4w

Top Fan
Damian Bartowski
Lol, what a joke, good luck with this plan. Glad I avoid the city of Sewercuse like the plague. Do me a favor, before you do this, make all of 481 3 lanes each direction.
Like · Reply · 4w · Edited 6
↳ 1 Reply

Louis Rose
You can tell this project has been in the works too long. The rendering i closes cars from its inception, pretty sure there was a Dodge Magnum in there
Like · Reply · 4w

Ashley Barilla Devaney
So basically its like driving an expanded rt 11 through the city, with pedestrians!!
Like · Reply · 4w 4
↳ 1 Reply

Robbie Auborn
Glad I'm almost retired! Looks like it's going to be a clogged up mess! And that round about! Where are we ..... in Europe!

Like · Reply · 4w

Debbie Rorick Simms
That roundabout is going to be a nightmare.

11

Like · Reply · 4w

Eric Paparo
Funny how there is no " development" that all these politicians are talking about after the bridge is gone seeing how almost every square inch of property is already developed with 501c3 businesses that don't pay property taxes already.

Like · Reply · 4w

Nora May
You certainly will hurt many businesses and hotels!!!

1

Like · Reply · 4w

Elisabeth Smith
Just look at carrier circle and consider that as a round about - they don't have that right yet - this is a disaster about to happen. I can't believe progressives have been able to push this thru despite the objections of the emergency services.

9

Like · Reply · 4w

↳ 2 Replies

Brian Garrett
Terrible. Business will suffer. Commuters are the backbone and they have tossed them aside..

1

Like · Reply · 4w

Mickey Viscome
I81 turned into a roundabout?. I see what you did there. Call it MLK so whoever opposes it is racist.

2

Like · Reply · 4w

Dexter Dausman
There's nothing wrong with how 81 is now besides minor fixes and new pavement and the exception of a couple on and off ramps that should be re drafted and altered

1

Like · Reply · 4w

Janet Higgins
Bottom line, no matter how many people want 81 to remain, our elected politicians are going to find a way to accomplish the Community Grid. They couldn't care less what their constituents want.

11

Like · Reply · 4w

Matthew Brown
Actually really hate all the roundabouts. Creates a lot of unnecessary confusion and congestion of traffic. Definitely not needed.

2

Like · Reply · 4w

Jeremiah Stevens
So they're going to make it slower to make traffic worse? It's the middle of the city, you need more lanes, not less.

2

Like · Reply · 4w · Edited

Matt Hale
How does anyone believe this is the route to go ? First clean up the areas you want to make look like a good place for new and exciting businesses to open up shop then maintain them , then worry about separate blvd to direct traffic there...we need someo... **See More**

1

Like · Reply · 4w

Top Fan
Kyle Jordan
I don't see any tractor trailers in the demo. Im sure they will add to much more congestion. Oh Forgot to add the beggars at every stop light. And the crack head laying in the walk way.

5

Like · Reply · 4w

Jon Curry
A roundabout, rush hour traffic through Downtown Syracuse, and only 2 lanes of traffic each way. Yep this was totally thought out.

Lisa Adams Fitzgerald
So let me understand this, you are planning RT 81 to have a round about ? Drivers heading into a traffic circle ? OMG there are going to be so many accidents/fatalities ! Horrible Idea.....
Like · Reply · 4w 2

Top Fan
Jeffrey Lubbe
Trees and walls to cover up the problems on the Southside 😂
Like · Reply · 4w 5

Cito Gonzalez
😂inaccurate where's all the pot holes ?
Like · Reply · 4w 6

Andrea Louise-Merideth
Wouldn't it take longer in emergencies to get to the hospitals?
Like · Reply · 4w

Glenn Korec
Well they screwed up Erie Blvd with the empire trail. What did you expect for this? Really a circle??
Like · Reply · 4w 2

Joe Pearl
Fix the old one and leave it alone. Next they will want to put a bridge in the center of Onondaga Lake.
Like · Reply · 4w · Edited 2

Renee Rein-McNeil
There are enough red lights in this city
Like · Reply · 4w 3

Ruth Dixon
Its not the southern tier. Snow will come and we know the rest.
Like · Reply · 4w

George Scheftic
Looks like will More car's Will go threw red light cause More car accident

Mike Dishaw
Ridiculous,what a fantasy if I ever saw one promise to make the Cuse look that good to get the grid. You can still make it look just like that with off ramps. Do not let them fool you, nonsense they have to build the bridge back and keep the City and B... **See More**
Like · Reply · 4w

Chris Brayton
Is this supposed to be realistic? None of the pedestrians seemed to be armed and dangerous.
Like · Reply · 4w

Ruth Dixon
Complicated stop and go but the creek part looks interesting.
Like · Reply · 4w

Wendy White
Looks like something you would find in Europe 🤣
Like · Reply · 4w

Kelsey Dykeman
Except it looks nothing like that 🤣🤣🤣
Like · Reply · 4w

Dexter Dausman
Why don't you show a REAL OR ACCURATE depiction with all the tractor trailers I didn't see one single trailer in this pipe dream, let's see how well they flow through this waist of time and money especially through that city / state money making scheme aka Roundabout
Like · Reply · 4w

Chris Sawicki
Just like the election...what no one wants everyone will get anyways. And anyone who does want it will figure out afterwards what a disaster it really is! 😂
Like · Reply · 4w 1

Top Fan
Danielle Garzone
like we need another carrier circle 😂
Like · Reply · 4w 4

Joe Bielowicz
This once again illustrates government does nothing well.
Like · Reply · 4w 5

Sandra Lawrence-Solimini
They forgot the homeless on every corner....
Like · Reply · 4w

Melissa Didericksen
That would be horrendous on traffic. With it like it is now it is busy on top and under it...
Like · Reply · 4w

Melissa Didericksen
Will be horrible for getting through there. And will take a lot more time. I saw that 30 mph before the circle... really?
Like · Reply · 4w

Kim Kenyon
All I see here is headaches & lots of accidents
Like · Reply · 4w 2

Samantha Gallio
Wait did they put up a wall to hide the south side.... 🤣
Like · Reply · 4w
↳ 1 Reply

Michael Smith
Almost as if the planners don't drive in cars or on 81. Sheesh.
Like · Reply · 4w 8

Noelle Troller Laurita
Worst idea ever. What on earth are they thinking?
Like · Reply · 4w
↳ 1 Reply

Lucas Burnette
This looks bad and expensive
Like · Reply · 4w 2

Gauge KC
NO! Not a roundabout! Those are accidents waiting to happen!
Like · Reply · 4w 6

Teresa L. Burke
Will be a traffic nightmare! Will be car accidents & car pedestrian accidents!
Like · Reply · 4w
↳ 1 Reply

Chrys Reith
A waste of $2 billion, but, it's NY, and King Cuomo 😳 what do yah expect
Like · Reply · 4w 3
↳ 2 Replies

Top Fan
Sharon Bonney
That's a heck of a lot of traffic lights
Like · Reply · 4w

Meri-Beth Nielsen
Oh god, a roundabout?? Hate navigating those, especially in heavy traffic areas.
Like · Reply · 4w

Sue Jennis
Not fond of the roundabout!!!!

Linda OConnor
Epic Fail!!! Roundabout Really??!! Traffic lights on it really!!?? Rolling my eyes!!

Like · Reply · 4w

Jess Haskins
Go here and give them all your scathing comments. Maybe then they will understand how no one who actually lives here wants this
https://webapps.dot.ny.gov/i-81-viaduct-project...

WEBAPPS.DOT.NY.GOV
I-81 Viaduct Project

Like · Reply · 4w

Daniel Frost
Just glad I'm retired and dont work in Syracuse anymore....

Like · Reply · 4w

Top Fan
Cassandra Lynn
I can already see all the accidents happening and the traffic confusion. Just like carrier circle smh.

Like · Reply · 4w

Andrea Dre Sardo
Traffic loops are terrible....

Like · Reply · 4w

Matt Bell
More ways to ticket ppl I see

Like · Reply · 4w · Edited

Top Fan
Paul Knierman
Not going to work

Like · Reply · 4w

July 17th, 2021
LINK

COMMENTS:

July 18th, 2021

LINK

LINK

COMMENTS:

July 22nd, 2021
LINK

COMMENTS:

August 1st, 2021
LINK

COMMENTS:

Rich Beardsley
Might as well call it community gridlock. A stop light every 10 feet and the state can never get lights timed correctly. It will look like the dump to the south known as ithaca. Causing gridlock should work well for the green deal.
Like · Reply · 2w · 10
↳ 9 Replies

John Dykes
Instead of putting all that money into messing with I 81 put it into more affordable housing build up other areas of city that don't get any attention build this city up not just s u and down town areas. I 81 is fine leave it alone. Upgrade it from ... **See More**
Like · Reply · 2w · 3

Dennis Buckingham
Lmao there gonna spend there budget before they get started
Like · Reply · 2w · 4

Joe Aschiero
That's just idiotic, and going to cause a major increase in traffic incidents
Like · Reply · 2w · 2

Brian Garrett
There could not be a worse choice. Stick a fork in Syracuse
Like · Reply · 2w · 3

Vicki Paventi
Hmmm. Bike paths. Who are these people riding their bikes in the middle of the highway? Haven't seen anyone on 690 East riding their bike yet.
Like · Reply · 2w · 1

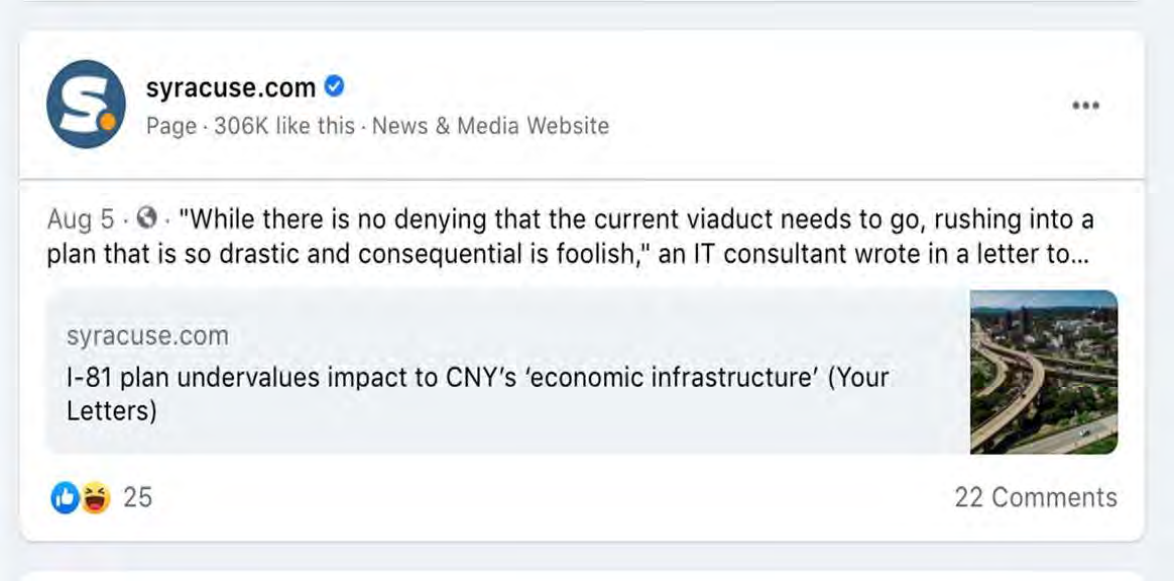
Jaleesa Marie
I'm just wondering f people's family houses are going to be bulldozed again 🤔
Like · Reply · 2w · 1

Marc J Martin

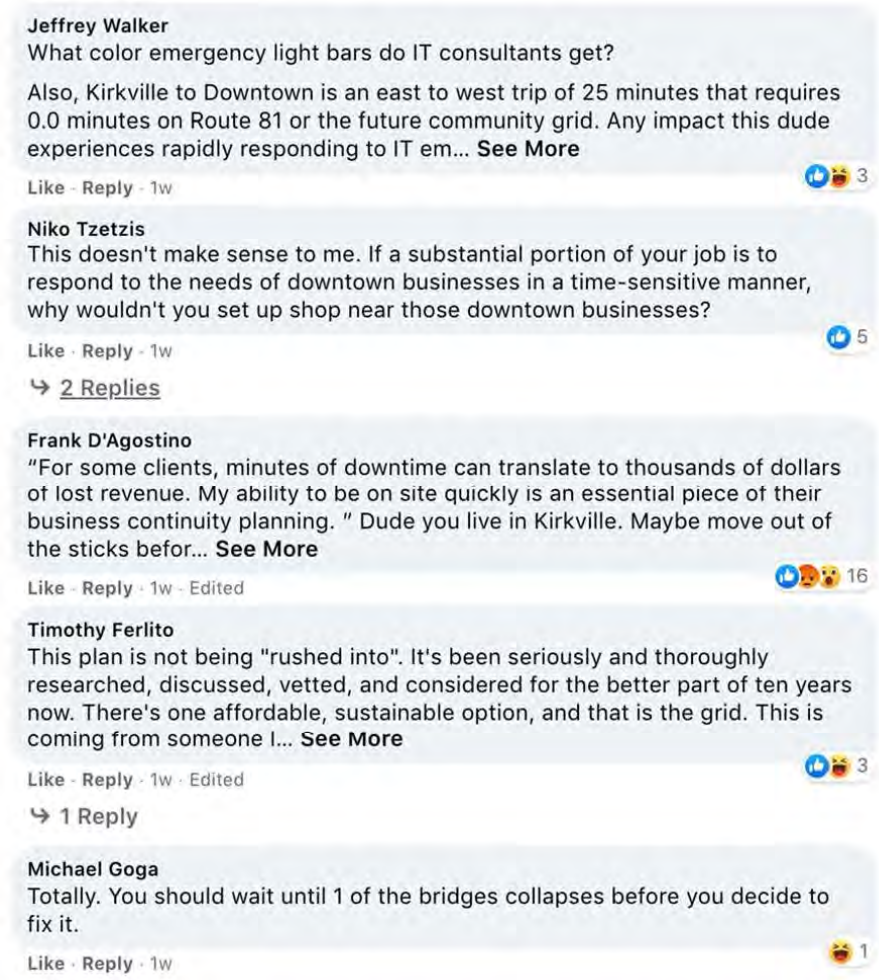
Like · Reply · 2w

Michelle Manos
DON'T FORGET TO GET AHOLD OF THE ONONDAGAS 1ST LADY'S INPUT ON HER STOLEN LAND..JS I WANT SAY.. MY VOICE HEARD HAPPENING ..TAKEN LAND BACK IS IN SEASON. MR.MAYOR N WHATEVER ONES NEED TO HEAR THIS MESSAGE!. DON'T HAVE ME COME TAKE THE MIC..THEN IM COMIN... **See More**
Like · Reply · 2w

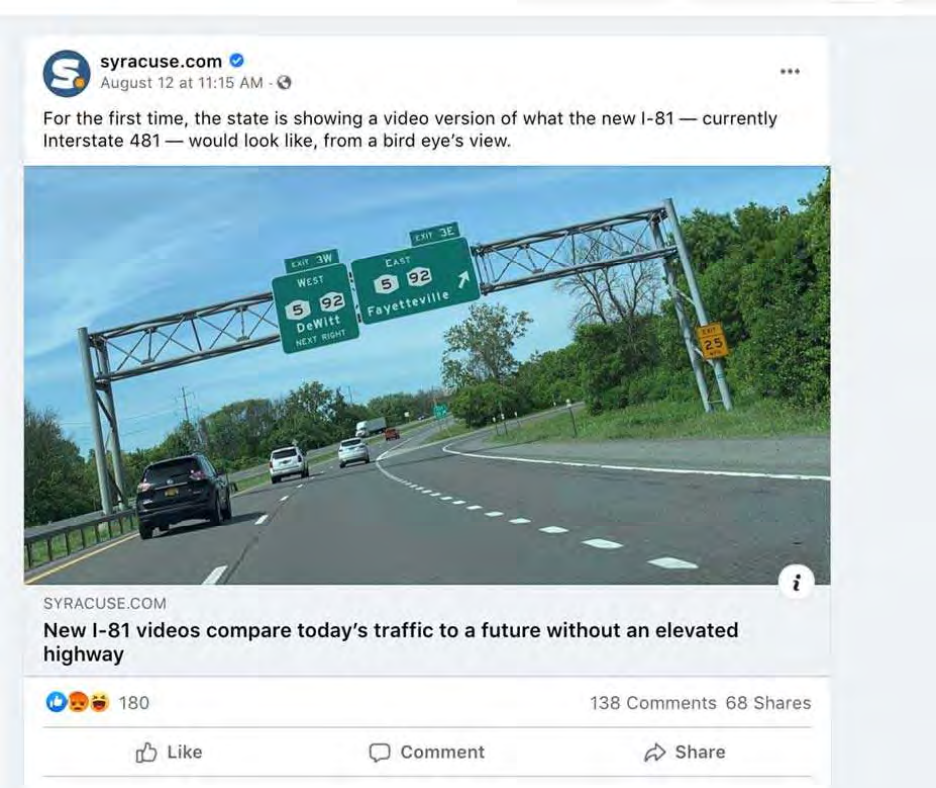
August 5th, 2021
LINK



COMMENTS:



August 5th, 2021
LINK



COMMENTS:

Albert Clos
So, the same politicians that are worried about humanity's destruction from carbon emissions are going to add an extra 5 miles of driving to take the highway from the south side to north Syracuse? And can someone please explain how an elevated roadway,... **See More**

Like · Reply · 4d · 13

↳ 2 Replies

Rich Flora
So.....basically if I want to drive from my house in Lafayette to visit my parents in fairmount I have to take back roads or loop all the way around 481 to avoid that city congestion that's going to happen?.....

Like · Reply · 4d · 8

↳ 2 Replies

Nicholas Paro
Make your comments heard by the NYS DOT, this is the official form:
https://forms.office.com/pages/responsepage.aspx...

FORMS.OFFICE.CO
Microsoft Forms

Like · Reply · 3d · Edited · 1

↳ 1 Reply

Tim Harris
It's going to be a disaster! 481 can't handle all the traffic going through the city!!

Like · Reply · 4d · 15

↳ 1 Reply

TZ Crane
Hmmm, no snow, sleet, rain in this video No panhandlers. Theory vs. reality. I am not optimistic.

Like · Reply · 3d · 3

Richard P Parsons
That so called video did nothing for me .

16

Joanne Marino
I have no idea how I'm getting to work now. This is so stupid .

Like · Reply · 4d · 16

Karen Munson
What a joke. Supposed to slow down near the roundabout....good luck on that. Video shows nice smooth traffic flow. 🤣 What happens at rush hours or games at the Dome...oh that's right THEY got a new ramp, what a surprise. This is a nightmare waitin... **See More**

Like · Reply · 4d · 14

↳ 1 Reply

David Bowerman
And with this change my commute to down town becomes a nightmare of even more stoplights.

Like · Reply · 4d · 4

Jesse Lane
Oh yes, I remember the vision of Destiny USA they tried to sell us on too... let's just hope this time the fine print doesn't say they don't have to do anymore after the first stage is complete

Like · Reply · 4d · 1

Paul Roe
That's what this thread reads as...

14

Timmy Gray
Yup! Better make the New I-81 (481) 8 Lanes to take all the rerouted traffic.
Like · Reply · 4d 15
↳ 2 Replies

Kellianne Tayler
That is supposed to be an example of "peak am" traffic?
Like · Reply · 4d 5

Eamonn Petty
This is the stupidest idea I've ever seen. Honestly a new low for the city
Like · Reply · 4d 7

Michael Rubino
Yall can't even keep smooth roads dt. You think ppl gone Wan deal with that. Good luck
Like · Reply · 4d 3

Penny Fox
Think the roundabout is stupid to be on a major highway and is going just cause more accidents.
Like · Reply · 4d 5
↳ 5 Replies

Ari Spinoza
Aren't city centers supposed to be walkable? Is this really the smartest idea we could use $2 billion on
Like · Reply · 3d 1

Leslie Helmer
as a Uber driver, this is terrible. Going to make su games even harder to work. how about su students? or the hospital staff getting to and from work!!??? Already to expensive to park so many uber in and out.
Like · Reply · 4d 2

Mike Kelley
wow that's GREAT lol... forgot to show EMS and fire trucks
Like · Reply · 4d 2

Top Fan
Cameron Faulter
Now I'm going to need to use 481 and travel twice as long to get to work
Like · Reply · 4d 3

Linda D'Eredita Martin
one can only hope its that easy
Like · Reply · 4d 1

Sanel Bajraktarevic
they need to add 2 more lanes on 481
Like · Reply · 4d 12

Russ Wuest
Good luck with that. Utica has this on a smaller scale with the north south Rt 8-12 arterial.
Like · Reply · 3d

Michael Jones
Grid LOCK 1
Like · Reply · 4d

Top Fan
Keesha Doughty
Half hour just to get through
Like · Reply · 4d 11

Kyle Wilson
"Roundabout"

And I'm out. Swear to god the roundabout is the traffic version of Tupperware. No matter how much I say I don't want any more, still more somehow are forced into my life.
Like · Reply · 4d 33
↳ 10 Replies

Top Fan
Brian Michaletz-Morse
Not quit sure but the overpass in now a 4 lane road. How is this opening up the "community". ?

Jane Frijo
Would someone explain to me why rebuilding 81 is necessary? Why can't they just repair the bridges like what was done on 690???
Like · Reply · 4d 14
↳ 10 Replies

Allan Louise
Hmmm. Driving in Boston sucks compared to what we have here now.
Like · Reply · 4d 4
↳ 1 Reply

John Jackson
Ad if they have a clue of what they are doing. Next thing you know they will put in roundabouts.
Like · Reply · 4d
↳ 2 Replies

Stephanie Marie
This is by far the worst idea ever. Literally idiots came up with this. Add about a thousand more cars in that traffic and what about emergency vehicles. This is going to be hell to have people get out of the way for them. Now 481 is going to be packed
Like · Reply · 4d 2

Edward DOnofrio
Obviously thru traffic will have to take 481 to skirt a traffic light tour of the City of Syracuse.
Like · Reply · 4d 3

Michael Rubino
Psh yall better fix the roads first. And get ready for problems lmao
Like · Reply · 4d

Megan Imbesi Ramsey
4000 lights. Awesome.
Like · Reply · 3d 1

Nancy N Rob Yakush
Last year, there were several handmade signs along 481 with "You are my Sunshine" song written on them. Can anyone please tell me anything about them ?
Like · Reply · 4d

Rob Spencer
Finally going to clean this mess up?
Like · Reply · 4d

Top Fan
Bob Burwell
Funny the video hit every red light at street level just like future real life
Like · Reply · 4d 4

Mike Ross
No one's going to be driving in 2040
Like · Reply · 4d

Top Fan
Ed McCord
Nope...Roundabout's are terrible and make so many nervous. Just leave it the way it is and replace old parts.
Like · Reply · 4d · Edited 2
↳ 2 Replies

Alan Oliphant
Its a horrible design im a eit civil engineer
Like · Reply · 4d 2

Nancy Taylor DeCoursey
And why is this ironwork not over Onondaga Lake Parkway?
Like · Reply · 1d

Amy Sholes
This is like a horror movie with never ending little "carrier circles".
Like · Reply · 2d

Alex Lupole
This layout will probably be confusing at first then eventually get better I commute almost every day from Fayetteville to the city it's about 16 minutes I wonder with the new construction it will take me to commute

Like · Reply · 2d

Louis Schmunk
Why have meetings of they wont listen let's close more business

Like · Reply · 4d

Dave Harrington
Cue everyone whining
3

Like · Reply · 4d

Alan Oliphant
Future sucks

Like · Reply · 4d

Michael Bathgate
Terrible
5

Like · Reply · 4d

Tom Newton
Oh look politicians making decisions for the people they WORK for instead of putting it to a public vote.
8

Like · Reply · 4d

↳ 7 Replies

Top Fan
Patty Weston Jackson
What in the world.
5

Like · Reply · 4d

August 15th, 2021

LINK

COMMENTS:

syracuse.com

19SgtfSponshhhored ·

Under the latest plan for Interstate 81, traffic headed into Syracuse from the south would enter the street-level circle near Dr. King Elementary School.

SYRACUSE.COM

Would new I-81 traffic circle near Syracuse school be the next Carrier Circle?

Jason Pilgrim
I thought the whole idea of tearing down 81 and making the grid was to reunite the city? A traffic circle like Carrier Circle does not seem like a great idea for pedestrians.

Ronald Peterson
In Bridgeport we a very small it is very bad people do not know how to get around it

Heather Bright
Why would they replace 81 with a SMALL traffic circle? Why would it be put near an elementary school? This doesn't sound like a good idea.

Barbara Cassoni
Not good idea near the school, dangerous for the children!!

Christine Ferguson
Sounds safe.

Ronald Peterson
I hope not people do not know how to get around that one

First name	Last name	Comments on Syracuse.com "New I-81 videoss compare today's traffic to a futrure without an elevated highway. Dated August 12, 2021
Ari	Spinoza	Aren't city centers supposed to be walkable? Is this really the smartest idea we could use $2 Billion on?
Albert	Clos	So, the same politicians that are worried about humanity's destruction from carbon emissions are going to add an extra 5 miles of driving to take the highway from the south side to orth Syracuse? And can someone please explaing how an elevated roadway, with continous street path beneath it is dividing the city?
Emily	Anne	Not to mention all the emissions from long term use of the construction vehicles
Candace E	Parish	Where are they going to move all the people this time? Solvay??
Kyle	Wilson	"Roundabout" And I'm out. Swear to god the roundabout is the traffic version of Tupperware. Nomatter how much I say I don't want any more, still more somehow are forced into my life.
Tim	Harris	Its going to be a disaster 481 can't handle all the traffic going through the ciry!!
TZ	Crane	Hmmm, no sow, sleet, rain in this video No panhandlers. Theory vs reality. I am not optimistic.
Richard P	Parsons	That so called video di nothing for me.
Joanne	Marino	I have no idea how I'm getting to work now. This is so stupid.
David	Bowerman	And with this change my commute to down town becomes a nightmare of even more stoplights.
Jesse	Lane	Oh yes, I remember the vision of Destiny USA they trued to sell us on too…let's jut hope th fine print doesn't say the don't have to do anymore after the first stage is complete.
Timmy	Gray	Yup? Better make the new I-81 (481) 8 lanes to take all the rerouted traffic.
Jonathan	Lindhome	just wait until the state lowers the speed limit on 481 because of the increase in traffic density after these changes, smh
Kellianne	Tayler	That is suppose to be an example of "peak am" traffic (in response to the NYS DOT video
Eammon	Petty	This is the stupidest idea I've ever seen. Honestly a new low for the city.
Micahel	Rubino	Yall can't even keep smooth roads dt. You think ppl gone Wan deal with that. Good luck.
Penny	Fox	Think the roundabout is stupid to be on a major highway and is going just cause more accidents
Leslie	Helmer	as a Uber dirver, this is going to be terrible. Going to make su games even harder to work. How about students? Or the hospital staff getting to and from work? Already to expensive to park so many uber in and out.
Edward	Donofrio	Obviously thru traffic will have to take 481 to skirt a traffic light tour of the City of Syracuse
Mike	Kelly	wow that's GREAT lol… forgot to show EMS and fire trucks
Cameron	Faulter	Now I;m going to need to use 481 and travel twice as long to get to work :(
Linda	D'Eredita Martin	one can only hope its that easy
Sanel	Bajraktarevic	they need to add 2 more lanes on 481
Russ	West	Good luck with that. Utica has this on a smaller scale with the north sout Rt 8-2 arterial.
Michael	Jones	Grid LOCK
Keesha	Doughty	Hhalf hour just to het through
Rich	Flora	So….basically if I want to drive from my house in Lafyette to visit my parents in Fairmount I have to take back roads or loop all the way aroune 481 to avoid that city congestion that's going to happen?...
Brian	Michaletz-Morse	Not quite suire but the overpass is now a 4 lane road. How is this opening up the community?
Karnen	Munson	What a joke. Supposed to slow down near the roundabout…food luck on that. Video shows nice smooth trafic flow. What happens at rush hour or games at the Dome…oh that's right THEY got a new ramp, what a surprice. This is a nightmare waiting to happen. I've never liked going downtown and this will make me NEVER go down there!
Jane	Frijo	Would someone explain to me why rebuilding 81 is necessary? Why can't they just repair the bridges like what was done on 90?
Allan	Louise	Hmmmm. Driving in Boston sucks compared to what we have here now.
Stephanie	Marie	This is by far the worst idea ever. Literally idiots came up with this. Add about a thousand more cars in that traffic and what about emergency vehicles. This is going to be hell to have people get out of the way for them. Now 481 is gong to be packed.
Michael	Rubino	Psh. Yall better fix the roads first. And get ready for problems lmao
Megan	Imbesi Ramsey	4000 lights. Awesome.
Bob	Burwell	Funny the video hit every red light at street level just like future real life
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Alan	Oliphant	It's a horrible design I a site civil engineer
Amy	Sholes	This is like a horror movie with never ending little "carrier circles"
Louis	Schmuck	Why have meeting if they won't listen let's close more business
Alan	Oliphant	Future sucks
Michael	Bathgate	Terrible
Tom	Newton	Oh look politicians making decisions for the people they WORK fo instead of putting it public vote
Patty	Weston Jackson	What in the world

First name	Last name	Comments from CNYCentral.com: take a ride through the I-8 Community grid that's due to replace the aging viaduct dated July 16, 2021

Brian	Jordan	Take out a highway to put in a grid with a light every 1/4 mile. That totally won't create a massive traffic jam every morning and evening. What could possible it go wrong. This is the worst idea the city has ever hadl
Oriorn	Roeder	There sould have to be pedestrian bridges. So why not just fix or replace the auto bridges
Jared	Martin	So I love the look of this, but am I missing something. How are the tractor trailer going to get through the city? Do they expect them to travel through this city grid? Or ar they going to be rerouted around the cirty on 481?
Cynthia	Jean	It will take an hour to travel thru downtown! Crazy!
Beth	Hope	Take a drive to Ithaca , one of our fav pleases, except for the community grid….all you do is sit in traffic jams. But it sounds like the decision has already been made. Why do th ask for opinions when it's clear they have already made up their mind?
David B	Stepkovitch	Who's the dopehead who designed this? Seriously? Talk about accidents waiting to happen and bad ones at that.
Nick	Moition	They didn't show any of the drug addicted, filthy, pan handlers begging at every intersection.. They must be getting rid of those.
Daughn	Rivenburg Canfield	Why is the answer always a roundabout? Peple can't drive straight line and you wanna throw a circle in there? Come to Bridgeport for a day and see how well people do with roundabouts!
Tim	Hanna	That's a good start. Now just add an elevated highway over top of it all and you'll have something!
Melinda	Kneer	So the roundabout that's shows MLK school they just taking out that whold neighborhood area out wasn't that what they did with building 81
Raymond	Lowe	I was going to comment but after seeing this, I already know 90% of the ogher that see this will say it for me
Fason	Pantke	First we just crashed through a few caris in this video plus the one car just kept going. Second if we kept going around in circles counterclockwise in roundabout , does that mean we can go back in time
James	Lindy	Where are the CGI homeless people?
Leona	Cronk	Won't the truckers just lover this!
Tom	Kkuryla	Thank the voters for electing the ones making this call..
Sandy	Swetman Fillingham	Can you imagine the roundabout in the middle of all that. I'm not sre who's drinking the Kool-Aid but count me out
Michael	Maestri	Most ridiculous thing ever! If 81 "divides" the city on the south side, (Oakwood cemetary, hospitals, and SU to the eas tof 81, city on the west) then they had better do something where 81 divides the north side from downtown.
Paul	Musil	Remember the DOT that conclude this was a good idea are same that concluded new sighs saying no commercial traffic would stop trucks from hitting the railroad bridge.
Jennifer	Kio	Did the person or peope that designed this, ever go thru the area, I think that an extra lane might be abetter option than a nice grass meian (that someone has to mow) it some of the areas
Thomas	Meaney	The whole county is watch how we fail our city with this projeect
Andy	Vant	Don't wprry the same people sho built th Binghamton exit are building this…should complete in 75-95 years…
Justin	Cote	Good luck with big trucks
Derrick	Scott	This has to be the most ridiculous concept I've ever seen
Renee	Rein-McNeil	Please tell me this is not the new commute
Nia	Taylor	No thanks I'm not getting hit by a stray bullet driving past Central Village
Devan	Woodworth	I'll believe it when I see it!! Less talk more action.
Frank	Gerling	What is the plan to keeep the gun violence that continues to permeate the south side from now spilling into su area? Plus for anyone who has to come into the city from the south this wll add significant amount of time to commune.
Paul	Condon	So, let's see if this makes sense: The NYS DOT puts out a simulation video promoting the Grid Alternatice, that takes you on a 'visual tour' from SOUTH of th City to the 90 interchange, rather than NORTH of the City ot Downtown, where arguably 70-75%
Jim	Rogers	All those trees will magically appear and traffic will always be that light. What about the neighborhood that will be destroyed for the rounabout? It appears that the big beneficiaary of all these billions of taxpayer dollars will be the University
Jessie	Lynn	Can't wait for the nightmare of driving to work near where all the hospitals all from north Syracuse
Christopher	Williams	Absolutely not.
Dave	Clute	Welp, with only two lanes and all the traffic, many people will die in route to the hospital via ambulance. Traffic will be backed up for miles, emergency service vehicles won't get there fast enough.
Michael	Thomas	Better do something about the current panhandlers who always "need $2" to get out fo the city
Tom	Becker	Cuts the city in half, unlike now were people can walk safely UNDER the highway
Timothy	Harrison	So walls are good if NY builds them
Greg	Goldthwait	Oh look a roundabout and stop lights/intersections on an interstate! What idiot designed this…I'll just take 481 N and avoid this mess
George	Thoryk	The video looks like make believe. That round a bout at morning drive and ride home will be a joke. Ambulances coming from the north having to go around the city. Do the designers of this know that the hospitals serve a bigger community than just the city
Trevor	Michael Rogers	This is going to be a clusterf**k of epic proportions. A tunnel would have been the way to go
Jeff n Peggy	VanTassell	Somone had spent too much time on Sim City
Billy	Yankee	Good luck with that!
Char	Maine	I want to know why our tax dollars are still going to be used to maintain this community grid for them,m when the majority of us didn't want to lose our highway. It's your road now. You want it to be your own, then YOU pay to maintain it on your own. Section 4, Transportation- of this appendix regarding traffic considerations NYSDOT woudl own and be a responsible for maintenance of BL 81, while local City street woud continue to be maintained by the City
Bryan	Richardson	This will cause a build up of hotels, gas stations and restarurants along the stretch o f 481 as it becomes the new I81. Local business that may have relied on thru traffic for those service will suffer.

Trevor	Michael Rogers	A tunnel would have been the best option
Keith	Miller	Aspiring politicos show the people the planthe have designated as "best" for you… You, the citizens, get nothing and hve no say
Pat	Giocondo Sr.	this will kill Syacuse business as everone bypasses the city…look into who owns property around 481 … you might find out why they are really doing this
Estherjane	Grice	They don't care and never did. This stupid plan will ruin Syracuse and outlying town like Salina. But what does Cuomo care
Chris	James Bex	Invest in a tunnel system
Rhonda	Reichert Contri	Gridlock….
Stacey	Dejesus	It goies over the R&R yard on James Street
Stacey	Dejesus	What I wonder is, how is it the gas and time were considered for the 690 and 81. Yet Townsend, McBride (turning into Almond), Lodi, Teall and the street after that that have bridge's. Us tax payer had just repaired are going to be at ground level
Frank	Gerling	Has anyone taken into account the increased time to hospitals especially to the south?
Oceanna	Sylvester Fair	Does the DEIS address the lead that will be unearthed as they bring down the viaduct?
Floyd	Chaplain	What are you doing about all the criminial in your city. You can do all the roads you want, but if you have high crime rate, no one will want to come to your city.
Donita	Sharp	How about a tunnel for I81 Interstate? Or is 481 going to be the new Interstate 81? And the viaduct be tore down and redo the business rout 81. It's kind of crazy the way they have it planned. More needs to be done. Just my opinon!!
Fran	Capozzi	Walsh…never to be elected to any office again. Grab a lunch pail and get a job.
Douglas	Mcconnell	"Participate in the process" it's what your getting, so lay back and enjoy it
Hope	Gates	How long will this take? 690 was a mess for a short time there were no workers out there. Then all of a sudden it finally got done
Brenda	Baldwin	The State DOT will do whatever it wants
Mary	Gilmore	Is this only a City of Syracuse project, certainly seems the Towns are being left out as to how it is to be done.
Thomas	Dery	What will happen on north Salina St near Court St
Timothy P	Brown	Where are all the homeless people panhandling?
Jason	Butler	So I should plan on adding 15 minutes or more for daily commute to Cortland. Awesome
Mike	Nutter	Just what we need traffic circles that people don’t know how to navigate
John	David	That's gonna take longer than the Big Dig in Boston. And no ones gonna be walking down West St. like that. But it's a pretty rendering of a beautiful city somewere!
Amy	Pappalardo	So are we further discouraging traffic downtown again in a ahure way but not providing for one but of improvemen in public transportation? Yes. I am absolutely certain this can't go horribly wrong.
Eric	Papparo	Good luck to the 1000 cars a day that now have to try to get up the hill heading to SU and VA at Van Burenafter a stop light in the winter. They barlely can do it now with a running start. Good luck to those coming down to a red light.
Jess	Haskins	How is this useful in any way shape or form? This is going to wipe out businesses and homes to be built, cause massive delays, and addon to our commute times. Just fix the road.
Kay	Watkins	If only it will look like that "perfect picture". Funny they didn’t include the tractor trailer imagine (which looks like this design will be a nightmare for them), no panhandlers on the corners to avoid, and homeless pople campoed out in the overlook
Lis	Taylor-Woodin	A roundabout…great idea! Said no one ever. Way too much traffic.
Jason	Dyer	PLEASE DO NOT INCLUDE A ROUNDABOUT. Or ANY of this design. Just watching this animation nearly gave me a panic attack!
Gord	Noved	OHHHH looks so pretty, like propaganda, some stupid sales pitch, etc. Nothing about ANY of this does a thing for the suburbss. What about EMS, anyone coming from the north or south to go to work in that area. It is a pathetic excuse to say we not racist. smh
Goldy	May Massett	I can only imagine the traffic jams every morning and at 5pm
Carolyne	Yonta	So glad I'll be getting out of this city / state before this construction starts. Maybe in 30 years if I'm nack to visiti I'll see the finished mess.
Dale	Burl Hawker	If only it did look like that. Syracuse is NO good at landscaping or keeping thinks looking good. I always love how u see these and it never ever looks like that. Shame.
Chris	Daniszewski	I'm sure all the grass and landscaping will be always well manicured. Much like all the other interstate medians up here.
Scott	Mahaffy	no concept of THROUGH TRAFFIC, if I am trying to get from one place to another…I just want a clear unimcumbered way not city streets. (so basically route 481 / 81 or city streeets)
Chris	Goettel	well done and thought out plan. Roundabouts work great in European nations…Not here! Swear brilliant idea throwing money at this situation
Gary	Dixon Jr	Built like that here in Baltimore aon Hartford Rd. Completely jacked up the traffic, and just because you make an area nice, doesn't mean it will dry that way…
JoAnne	Kozlowski	A beautiful show but not reality. What about taking tolls off the thruwa yfrom 36 - 34a that woud help the northern suburbs
LeAndrea	Andrea	Oh yes I'd much rather go through 10 traffic lights instead of zero. We already have this option. Next!
Jesse	Lee Smith	Well the malls dying. That's Syracuse largest tax reveue right? How can we finish the city off for good? Get rid o fthe viaduct and put in a a roundabout
Amanda	Sprague	This is a joke. You will see businesses leave the area! I ddrive to work at the hospital everyday and cannot imagine the backups this will cause.
Donna	Santiago	Has anyone though of the problems that heavy traffic will cause? Doesn't look like it.
Diane	Burton	Fix the roundabout, u have a vehicle that has to cross over one lane into the roundabout land to continue, accident nightmares.
Carl	DeVer Avery	So it appears that this proposal will do more of exactly what it is supposed to be fighting, looks like a much larger geographic footprint. And while it is being sold as a remedy for economically challenged neighborhoods, all I see is gentrification.
Mary	Banac	I counted at least 5 traffic lights comingnorth bound between weher the business loop starts and Adams street. Gonna be real fun for those ambualnces to get through. And "connecting the neighborhoods", what neighborhood - they'll be tearing down
Damian	Bartowski	Lol, what a joke, good luch this plan. Glad I avoided the city of Sewwercuse like the plague. Do me a favor, before you do this, make all of 481 3 lanes each direction.

Louis	Rose	You can tell this project has been in the works too long. He rendering I closes cars from it's inception, pretty sure there was a Dodge Magnum in there
Ashley	Barilla Devaney	So basically its like driving an expanded rt 11 through the city, with pedestirans
Robbie	Auborn	Glad I'm almost retired! Looks like it's going to be clogged up mess? And that round about! Where are we…in Europe?
Debbie	Rorick Simms	That roundabout is going to be a nightmare
Eric	Paparo	Funny how there is "development" that all these politicians are talking about after the bridge is gone seeing how almost every square inch of property is already developed with 501c3 businesses that don't pay property taxes already
Nora	May	You certainly will hurt many businesses and hotels!!
Elisabeth	Smith	Just look at Carrier Circle and consider that as a rounda bout - they don't have that right yet - this is a disaster about to happen. I can't believe progressives have been able to pus this thru despite the objections of the emergency services
Brian	Garrett	Terrible. Business will suffer. Communters are the backbone and the tossed them aside.
Mickey	Viscome	I81 turned into a roundabout? I see what you did there. Call it MLK so whoever opposes it is racist.
Dexter	Dausman	There's noting wrong with how 81 is now besidesminor fixes and new pavement and the exception of a couple on and off ramps that should be re drafted and altered.
Janet	Higgins	Bottom line, no matter how many people want 81 to remain, our elected politicians, are going to find a way to accomplish the Community Grid. They could care less what their constituents want.
Matthew	Brown	Actually really hate all the roundabouts. Creates a lot of unnecessary confusion and congestion of traffic. Definitely not needed.
Jeremiah	Stevens	So they're going to make it slower to make traffic worse? It's the middle of the city, you need more lanes, not less.
Matt	Hale	How does anyone believe this is the route to go? First clean up the areas you want to make look like a goodplace new and exciting businesses to open up shop then maintain them, then worry about separate blvd to direct traffic there, we need some
Kyle	Jordan	I don't see any tractor trailer in the demo. Im sure they will add to much more congestion. Oh Forgot to add the beggars at every stop light. And the crach head laying in the walk way.
Jon	Curry	A roundabout, rush hour traffic through Downtown Syracsuse, and only 2 lanes of traffic each way. Yep this was totally thought out.
Lisa	Adams Fitzgerald	So let me understand this, you are planning RT 81 to have a round about? Drivers heading into traffic circle? OMG there are going to be so many accidents/fatalities, 1 horrible idea…
Jeffrey	Lubbe	Trees and walls to cover up the problems on the Southside
Cito	Gonzalez	inaccurate where's all the pot holes
Andrea	Louise-Meredith	Wouldn't it take longer in emergencies to get to the hospitals
Glenn	Korec	Well they screwed up Erie Blvd with the empire trial. What did you expect for this? Relly a circle?
Joe	Pearl	Fix the old one and leave it alone. Next they will want to put a bridge in the center of Onondaga Lake
Renee	Rein-McNeil	There are enough red lights in the city
Ruth	Dixon	Its not the southern tier. Sno will come and know the rest.
George	Scheftic	Looks like will More car's will go threw red light cause more car accident
Mike	Dishaw	Ridiculous, what a fantasy if I ever saw on promies to make the Cuse look that good to get the grid. You can still make it look just like that with off ramps. Do not let them fool you, nonsense they have to build the bridge back and keep the City and Bridge
Chris	Brayton	Is this supposed to be realistic? None of the pedestrians seemed to be armed and dangerous
Ruth	Dixon	Complicated stop and go but the creek part looks interesting
Wendy	White	Looks like something you would find in Europe
Kelsey	Dykeman	Except it looks nothing like that
Dexter	Dausman	Why don't you show a REAL OR ACCURAE depiction with all the tractor trailers I ddin't see one single trailer in this pipe dream, let's see how well they flow through this waste of time and money especially through that city / state money making scheme aka Roundabout
Chris	Sawicki	Just like the election…what no one wants everyone will get anyways. And anyone who does want it will figure out afterwards what a disaster it really is.
Danielle	Garzone	like we need another Carrier Circle
Joe	Bielowicz	This is once again illustrates government does nothing well
Sandra	Lawrence-Solimini	They forgot the homeless on every corner
Melissa	Didericksen	That would be horrendous on traffic. With it like it is now it is busy on top and under it..
Melissa	Didericksen	Will be horrible for getting through there. And will take a lot more time. I say that 30 mph before the circle…really?
Kim	Kenyon	All I see here is headaches & lots of accidents
Samantha	Gallio	Wait did they put up a wall to hide the south side…
Michael	Smith	Almost as if the planners don't drive in cars or on 81. Sheesh
Noelle	Troller Laurita	Worst idea ever. What on earth are they thinking
Lucas	Burnette	This looks bad and expensive
Gauge	KC	No! Not a roundabout! Those are accidents waiting to happen!
Teresa L.	Burke	Will be a traffic nightmare! Will be car accidents & car pedestrian accidents!
Chris	Reith	A waste of $2 billion, nbut, its NY, and King Cuomo what do yah expect
Sharon	Bonney	That's a heck of a lot of traffic lights
Meri-Beth	Nielsen	Oh god, a roundabout??? Hate navigating those, especially in heavy traffic areas.

Sue	Jennis	Not fond of the roundabout
Linda	Oconnor	Epic Fail!! Roundabout Really??? Traffic lights on it really?? Rolling my eyes!!
Jess	Haskins	Go and give them all your scathing comments. Maybe then they will understand how no one who actually lives here wants this
Daniel	Frost	Just glad I'm retired and don't work in Syracuse anymore
Cassandra	Lynn	I can already see all the accidents happening and the traffic confusion. Just like Carrier Circle
Andrea	Dre Sardo	Traffic loops are terrible…
Matt	Bell	More ways to ticket ppl I see
Paul	Knierman	Not going to work
Phillip	Clinton	Let's see who's pockets get lined with this crappy project
Shirley	Brooks Goodrich	What a circle???
John	David Lindsley	It going to connect neighborhood that are not neighborhoods anymore. How quaint
Rich	Beardsley	Might as well call it community gridlock. A stoplight every 10 feet and the state can never get llights timed correctly. It will look like the dumo to the south known as Ithaca. Causing gridlock should work well for the green deal.
John	Dykes	Instead of putting all that money into messing with I 81 put it into more affordable housing build up other areas of city that don't get any attention build this city up not juse SU and down town areas. I 81 is fine leave it alone
Dennis	Buckingham	Upgrade it
Joe	Aschiero	Lmao there gonna spend there budget before they get started
Brian	Garrett	That's just idiotic, and going to cause a major increase in traffic incidents
Vicki	Paventi	There could not be a worse choice. Stick a fork in Syracuse
Jaleesa	Marie	Hmmm. Bike paths. Who are these people riding their bikes in the middle of the highway? Haven't seen anyone on 690 East riding their bike yet.
Michelle	Manos	I'm just wondering if people's family houses are going to be bulldozed again.
Jeffrey	Walker	Don't forget to get ahold of the Onondagas 1st Lady's input on her stold land…js I want to say…my voice heard happening…taken land back is in season.. Mr. Mayor in whatever ones need to hear this message! Don't have me come take the mic…then iim coming
Niko	Tzetzis	What color emergency light bars do IT consultants get? Also, Kirkville to Downtown is an east to wet trip of 25 minues that requires 0.0 minutes on Route 81 or the future community grid. Any impact this dude experiences rapidly responding to IT emergency
		This doesn't make sense to me. If a substantial portion of your job is to respond to the needs of downtown businesses in a time-sensitive manner, why wouldn't you set up shop near those downtown businesses?

Town of Salina
OFFICE OF THE TOWN SUPERVISOR

Colleen A. Gunnip

Town Supervisor

Douglas R. Wickman, P.E.
Staff Engineer

Nancy A. O'Neil
Secretary to the Supervisor

July 22, 2021

Mark Frechette, P.E.
Project Director
New York State Department of Transportation, Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Rick Marquis
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Federal Building
11A Clinton Avenue, Suite 719
Albany, NY 12207

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Statement - Need For Additional Time For Review and Comment

Dear Mark and Rick:

As a Participating Agency and adjacent municipality, the Town of Salina is prepared to review and provide comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement ("DEIS") that was released on Friday July 16, 2021.

The purpose of this communication is to formally request that the public comment period be extended through the end of the year to allow sufficient time for a complete review of the 28,000+ page document. Given COVID, summer schedules, and most importantly the amount of data just made available, it is not feasible to have complete responses available by September 14th.

The future of Interstate 81 is an important decision that will impact our residents, neighborhoods and businesses for decades. It is critical that everyone be provided sufficient time to have their comments submitted and considered.

Thanks in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Colleen A. Gunnip

Colleen Gunnip, Supervisor
Town of Salina

201 School Road – Liverpool, NY 13088 - (315) 457-6661 - Fax: (315) 457-4476
www.salina.ny.us - supervisor@salina.ny.us - Twitter: @TownofSalina - FB: townofsalina

From:	Frechette, Mark (DOT)
To:	Bjorness, Joan E (DOT)
Subject:	FW: I-81 DEIS Official Comment Letter from the Town of Salina, Resolution and GAR Assoc. Impact Study Email 1 of 3
Date:	Thursday, October 14, 2021 2:51:34 PM
Attachments:	I-81 DEIS Official Comment Letter and Resolution 10-2021.pdf Appraisal Report 1 of 3.pdf

More comments.

From: Colleen Gunnip <cgunnip@salina.ny.us>
Sent: Thursday, October 14, 2021 2:36 PM
To: Frechette, Mark (DOT) <Mark.Frechette@dot.ny.gov>; Rick.marquis@dot.gov
Subject: I-81 DEIS Official Comment Letter from the Town of Salina, Resolution and GAR Assoc. Impact Study Email 1 of 3

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

Mark & Rick,

Attached is the official comment letter from the Town of Salina along with a resolution adopted by the Town Board and the Impact Study.
There are 3 selection to the study and due to the size of the file they are being sent separately.
I will also submit to the I81opportunities website.

Thank you

Colleen A. Gunnip
Salina Town Supervisor

Town of Salina
"The Crossroads of New York"
201 School Road
Liverpool, NY 13088
Telephone: (315) 457-6661
Fax: (315) 457-4476
Email: cgunnip@salina.ny.us

Website: www.salina.ny.us FaceBook Twitter

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BALDWIN, SUTPHEN & FRATESCHI, PLLC

ATTORNEYS AT LAW

126 North Salina Street, Suite 400
Syracuse, New York 13202-1050

Robert F. Baldwin, Jr. *
Timothy A. Frateschi
Charles M. Sprock, Jr.
Jamie Lynn Sutphen **

Joseph V. Frateschi

Of Counsel
John J. Brunetti ***
William F. Drexler

*Admitted in FL; **Admitted in PA & NJ
*** Retired Judge of the Court of Claims

October 14, 2021

Via Scan Email

Mark Frechette, P.E.
Project Director
New York State Department of Transportation
Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, New York 13202
mefrechette@dot.state.ny.us

Rick Marquis
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Federal Building
11A Clinton Avenue
Suite 719
Albany, New York 12207
Rick.marquis@dot.gov

RE: Draft Environmental Impact Study ("DEIS")
I-81 Project Viaduct Project

Dear Mr. Frechette and Mr. Marquis:

We represent the Town of Salina.

The New York State Department of Transportation's proposal to eliminate the elevated portions of Interstate 81 ("I-81") through the City of Syracuse and use the existing I-481 eastern loop as the "new" I-81 to bring traffic north of the Cicero I-81 exit (the "Community Grid Option") will have a significant negative impact to the Town of Salina. It is our belief that the New York State Department of Transportation has failed, through the State Environmental Review Process ("SEQRA") and the DEIS, to adequately identify and consider the negative impacts to our client, the Town of Salina, and offer any mitigation measures to rectify these impacts.

As you may be aware, SEQRA requires a "hard look" at all the potential negative environmental impacts a project could have on a community. These impacts should include the potential environmental impacts from economic damage a project, like the Community Grid Option, will have. By forcing the traffic around the eastern side of Onondaga County and by-passing the traffic that now travels through the Town of Salina, there is a serious risk to the tax base of the Town. It should be noted that since I-81 was constructed through the City of Syracuse decades ago, the Town of Salina has become a natural "stopping off point" for traffic. Businesses and commercial areas have been developed and constructed in Salina based on the existing configuration of I-81. To take this away without any consideration of its impact is contrary to the environmental review process required under SEQRA.

To buttress this argument, enclosed please find the GAR Associates LLC, *Limited Scope, Preliminary Review Properties Surrounding NYS DOT Proposed I-81 Viaduct Project*, (the "GAR Report") that more particularly identifies the economic impact of the Community Grid Option on the Town. The risk of business failures because the traffic will be re-routed around the Town of Salina is significant. Closed businesses result in empty stores. Empty stores result in vacant parcels. Vacant parcels become an environmental blight in a community. Vacant parcels also reduce property values. Reduced property values result in less tax revenue to the Town of Salina. Less tax revenue impacts the ability of the Town government to provide the vital services that the residents expect and deserve.

This impact is obvious, but the DEIS is woefully lacking in any analysis of this environmental impact, which is not only foreseeable, but documented in the GAR Report.

Also enclosed is a Resolution, adopted by the Town of Salina Town Board on October 12, 2021, which further sets forth the Town's position relative to the DEIS and should be viewed as the Town's comments during the public comment period.

It is vitally important to the residents of the Town of Salina that their views about the impacts of the Community Grid Option are heard, considered, and acted upon. It is the project sponsor's responsibility not only to identify the impacts (which my client does not believe was done relative to the Town of Salina) but to propose mitigation efforts that will ameliorate those impacts. That has not been done.

My client is willing to meet with the New York State Department of Transportation to ensure that the residents of the Town of Salina are treated fairly during the evaluation process of the changes that are proposed to be made relative to the Community Grid Option.

Please include this letter and enclosures as the official comments from the Town of Salina relative to the DEIS.

Very truly yours,

BALDWIN, SUTPHEN & FRATESCHI, PLLC

Timothy A. Frateschi

Enclosures
Cc: Salina Town Board

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF SALINA, COUNTY OF ONONDAGA, REGARDING THE PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION IN THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR INTERSTATE 81 THROUGH SYRACUSE

WHEREAS, when Interstate 81 was constructed, it went right through the Town of Salina Borders and as a result the Town was transformed into a commercial crossroads that grew in prosperity and economic development; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Salina has three (3) on/off ramps from Interstate 81 and each of these corridors were designed for commercial uses such as restaurants, fueling stations, hotels and truck stops that would prosper from interstate traffic that would flow past; and

WHEREAS, for the last 50 years, Interstate 81 has served as a vital backbone for the economy of the Town of Salina and Central New York, connecting commuters, businesses, tourists, visitors, inter-state commerce and through-travelers alike; 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 proposed action expressed in the DEIS would result in approximately thirty (30) percent potential loss of revenue for the forty-one (41) restaurants, fifteen (15) hotels, and the nine (9) fueling stations in the Town along with significant ancillary loss of business to other local vendors used by those businesses to service their customers; and

WHEREAS, if Interstate 81 traffic were diverted from these businesses the estimated loss of Onondaga County Room Occupancy Tax is $440,000, the loss of New York State Sales Tax is $3,381,248, and the loss of Federal and New York State Fuel Tax is $2,242,810; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Salina had a Prospective Impact on Market Value Study conducted, which shows the diversion of traffic from the Interstate 81 will result in a decrease of up to sixty (60) percent in the assessed value of the properties in the area of the three (3) Interstate 81 corridors, including a moderate negative impact of 5% to 15% on Lodging, Restaurants and Warehouse/Industrial and a minimal negative impact of 1% to 5% for Retail, Office and Apartments,

WHEREAS, any decrease in value of property in the Town of Salina will result in the loss of tax revenue in the amount of $350,000, to Onondaga County in the amount of $1,250,249 and to the school districts in the amount of $3,182,452 per year; and

WHEREAS, due to the proposed diversion of traffic from Interstate 81 to Route 481 approximately 2,500 jobs (50% of employees living in the City of Syracuse) within these corridors will be negatively affected by loss of sales; and

WHEREAS, the population in the Town of Salina has decreased by 4.20%, while the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County have increase. (City of Syracuse 2.38% and Onondaga County 2.03%), and the per capita income for the Town of Salina for 2015-2019 is $33,023, which is already below the

GAR Associates LLC
EST. 1961

LIMITED SCOPE, PRELIMINARY REVIEW
PROSPECTIVE IMPACT ON MARKET VALUE
PROPERTIES SURROUNDING NYS DOT PROPOSED I-81 VIADUCT PROJECT
TOWN OF SALINA, ONONDAGA COUNTY, NY
ZIP CODE: 13088

CLIENT:	Colleen A. Gunnip Supervisor Town of Salina 201 School Road Liverpool, NY 13088 supervisor@salina.ny.us
PREPARED BY:	GAR ASSOCIATES LLC 5500 Main Street Suite 347 Williamsville, New York 14221 David M. Barnett, MAI,SRA Senior Appraiser President, Government Division Ronald J. Rubino, MAI President, Commercial Division
DATE OF INSPECTION:	September 21, 2021
DATE OF VALUATION:	September 21, 2021
GAR FILE NO.:	2021293

GAR Associates LLC
EST. 1961

Real Estate Appraisers and Consultants

Ronald J. Rubino, MAI
President, Commercial Division

October 11, 2021

Mrs. Colleen A. Gunnip
Supervisor
Town of Salina
201 School Road
Liverpool, NY 13088
supervisor@salina.ny.us

Re: Limited Scope, Preliminary Review
Prospective Impact on Market Value
Properties Surrounding NYS DOT Proposed I-81 Viaduct Project
Salina, Onondaga County, NY
GAR File No.: 2021293

Dear Supervisor Gunnip:

In accordance with the terms of our engagement, we present a ***"Limited Scope Review"*** for the areas immediately surrounding the I-81 corridor that would potentially be impacted by the I-81 Viaduct project. This document is intended to comply with the reporting requirements set forth under the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP). The Scope of Work is defined in this report and is consistent with our engagement of services. The depth of discussion contained in this report is specific to the needs of the client and for the intended use and user(s) stated below. The appraisers are not responsible for unauthorized use of this report.

Extraordinary Assumption:

1) It is assumed that the scope of the I-81 Viaduct Project will be consistent with documentation made publicly available by NYS DOT, particularly the July 2021 Draft Design Report/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and appendices.

There are no other *"extraordinary assumptions", and no "hypothetical conditions"* being made in this report. If this "extraordinary assumption" is found not to be true, the conclusions may be impacted.

Client, Intended Used, and Intended Users

The client is the Town of Salina. The *"intended use"* of this ***"Limited Scope Review"*** is to determine the impact, negative, neutral, or positive, the above mentioned I-81 Viaduct project would have on surrounding properties in the Town of Salina. The *"intended users"* of the appraisal are the client, the Town of Salina and it's Town Board.

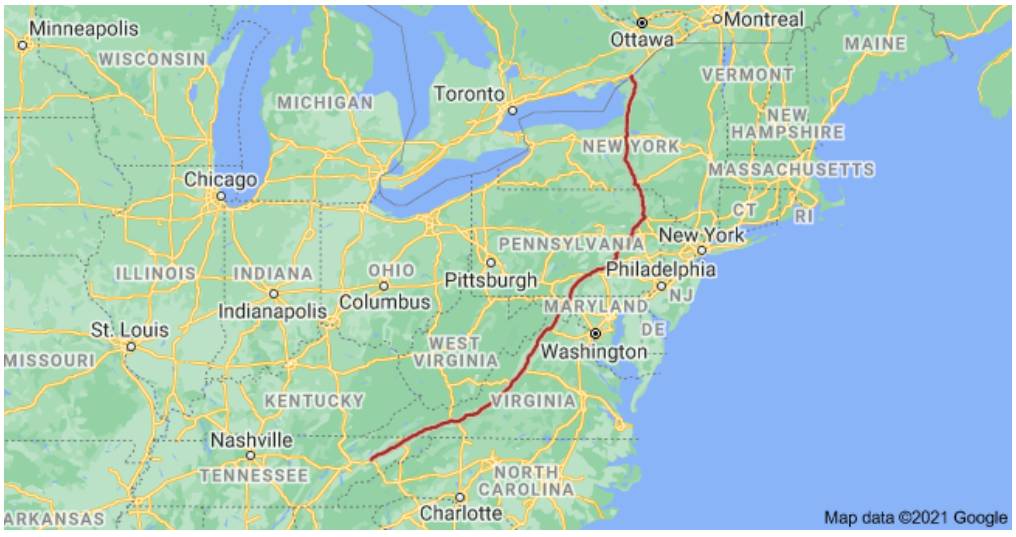
Scope of Work

The Town of Salina is in Onondaga County, just north of the City of Syracuse. The I-81 Viaduct Project proposes to reroute a portion of I-81 east of the city of Syracuse, bypassing the Town of Salina and the Downtown Syracuse areas. This report will focus on the project and its impact to certain property types within the Town of Salina. To determine these impacts, the scope of work will include:

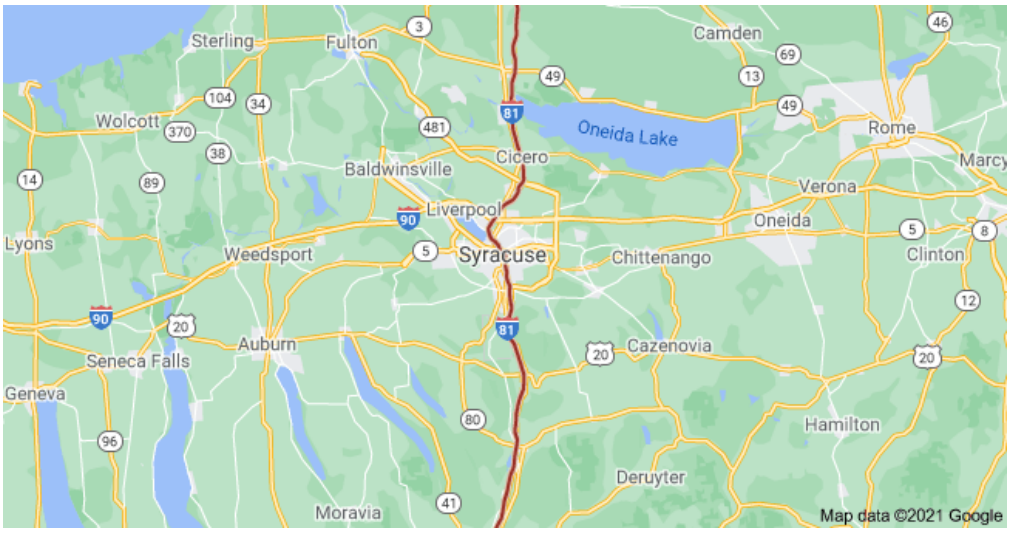
- Identifying potentially impacted areas/neighborhoods
- Inspect the area/neighborhood for potentially impacted properties
- Identify potentially impacted property classes and industries
- Review documentation
- Review occupancies, rental rates, and sales data, both pre and post Covid-19 influence
- Review traffic volumes
- Review demographics including population, household incomes, building permits, etc.
- Interview Town Assessor, Building/Planning office(s),
- Make preliminary conclusions as to potential impacts on property values and overall demand

I-81 History and Route

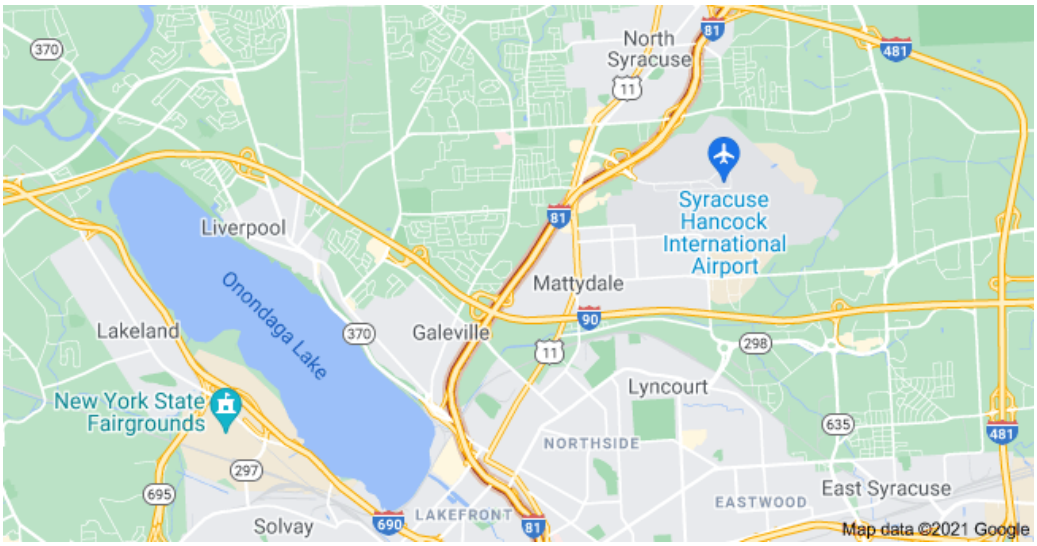
I-81 is a north and south interstate that begins at the Canadian border, north of Syracuse in Wellesley Island, NY where it continues into Canada as Highway 401 in Ontario. I-81 continues south through the City of Syracuse then to the City of Binghamton where it crosses into Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, before terminating in Dandridge, Tennessee, northeast of Knoxville. Below is a map of I-81 in its entirety. I-81 in the Syracuse area was constructed in three stages, opening between 1959 and 1969.



In the Syracuse area, I-81 runs through the heart of the Downtown area and has several exits along the way, connecting towns north of Syracuse to the Downtown area as well as a passthrough to towns south of Syracuse. Below is a map of I-81 as it runs through Onondaga County.



In the Town of Salina, I-81 runs north and south and junctions with the New York State Thruway (I-90). Exit 25 of I-81 serves as the local exit for traffic coming from both I-90 and I-81. Below is a map of I-81 as it runs through the Town of Salina.



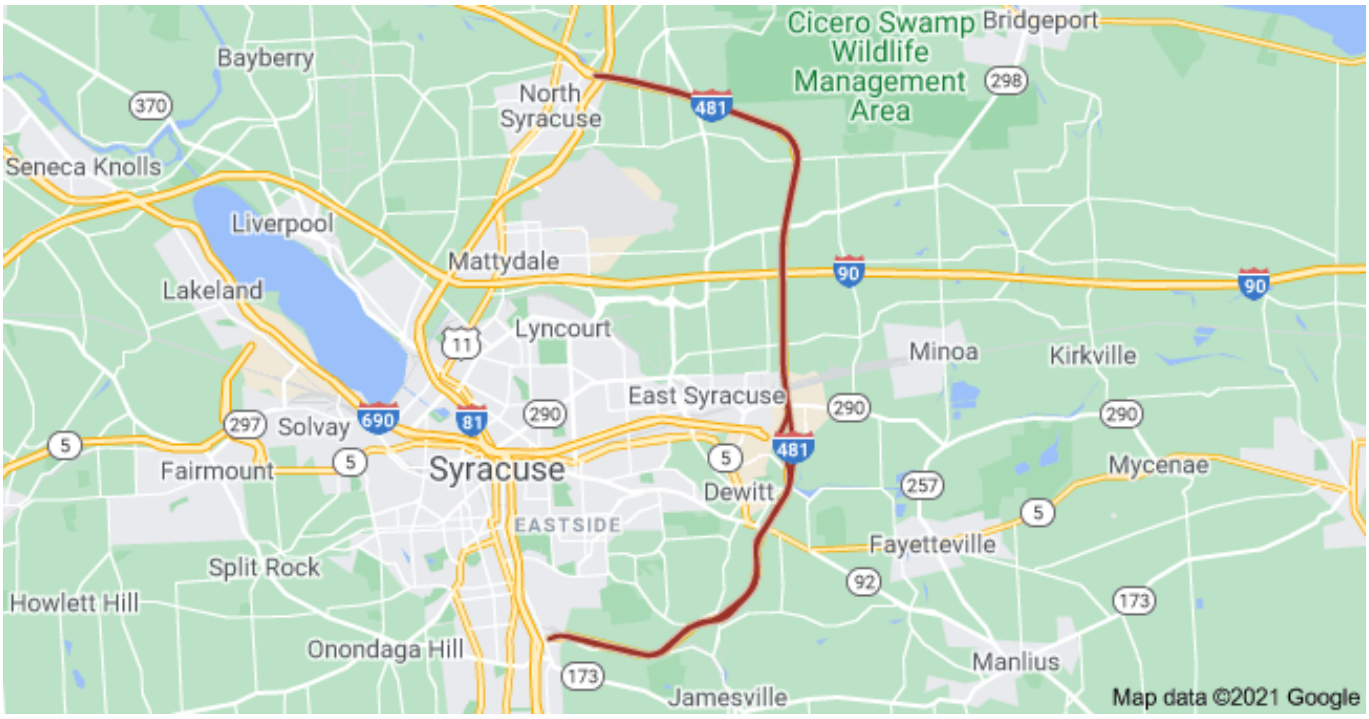
The following map, provided in the NYS DEIS report, shows the overall highway system in the Syracuse area.

I-81 Viaduct Project

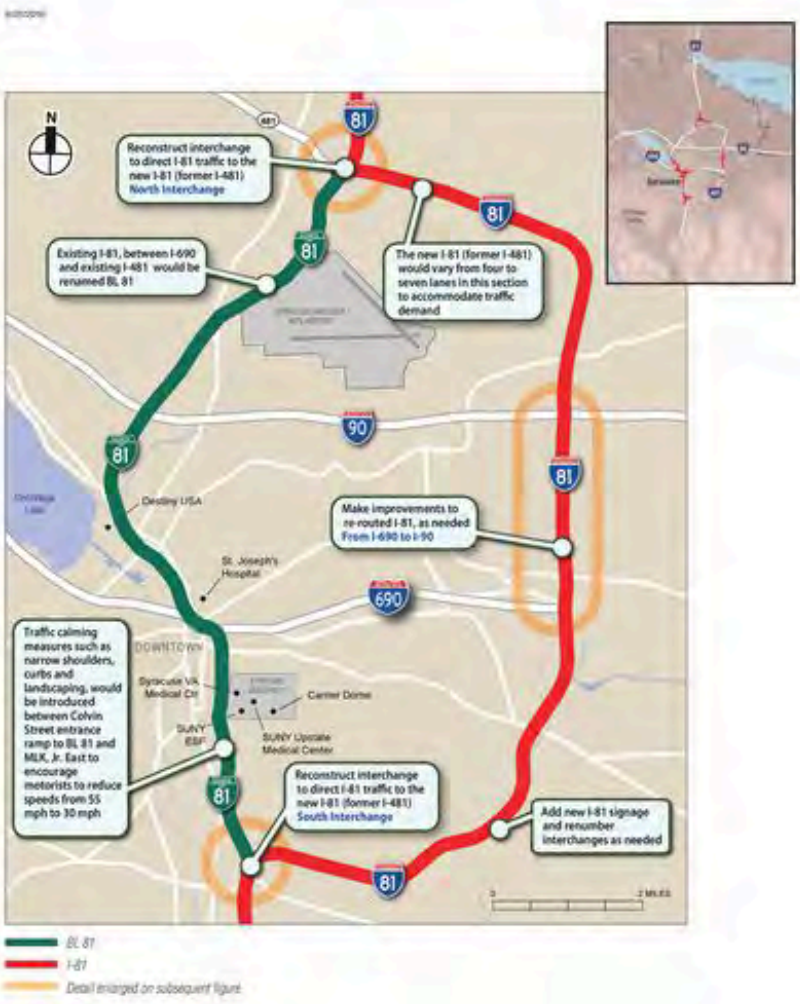
Regional Highway Network
Figure 1-1

I-81 Viaduct Project Overview

The I-81 Viaduct Project (referred to as “Project” throughout this report) involves rerouting I-81 east of the Downtown Syracuse area along what is currently I-481. The change in I-81 would being at the northern junction of present I-81 and I-481, currently Exit 29 on I-81. I-481 runs east in the Town of Cicero before running south through the Town of De Witt and turning back west and reconnecting with I-81 in the southern tip of the Syracuse City limits. The current route of I-481 is on the following map.



With I-481 becoming the newly routed I-81, the existing segment of I-81 between north and south I-481 junctions will become Business Loop (BL) 81. North and south pass-through traffic will be diverted east, around the Downtown Syracuse area.



I-81 Viaduct Project

Community Grid Alternative
Figure S-3e

Per the NYS DOT DEIS report dated July 2021, the goals and objectives of the I-81 Viaduct project are as follows:

- Improve safety and create an efficient regional and local transportation system within and through greater Syracuse
- Provide transportation solutions that enhance the desirability, visual quality, sustainability, and economic vitality of greater Syracuse
- Address the transportation network structural deficiencies, particularly associated with aging bridge structures and non-standard/non-conforming design features within the project limits along I-81 and I-690
- Address vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle geometric and operational deficiencies within the project limits
- Maintain or enhance vehicle access to the interstate highway network and key destinations (i.e., business districts, hospitals, and institutions) within neighborhoods within and near Downtown Syracuse
- Maintain or enhance the vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle connections in the local street network within the project limits in and near Downtown Syracuse to allow for connectivity between neighborhoods, business districts, and other key destinations
- Maintain access to existing local bus service and enhance transportation amenities within the project limits in and near Downtown Syracuse

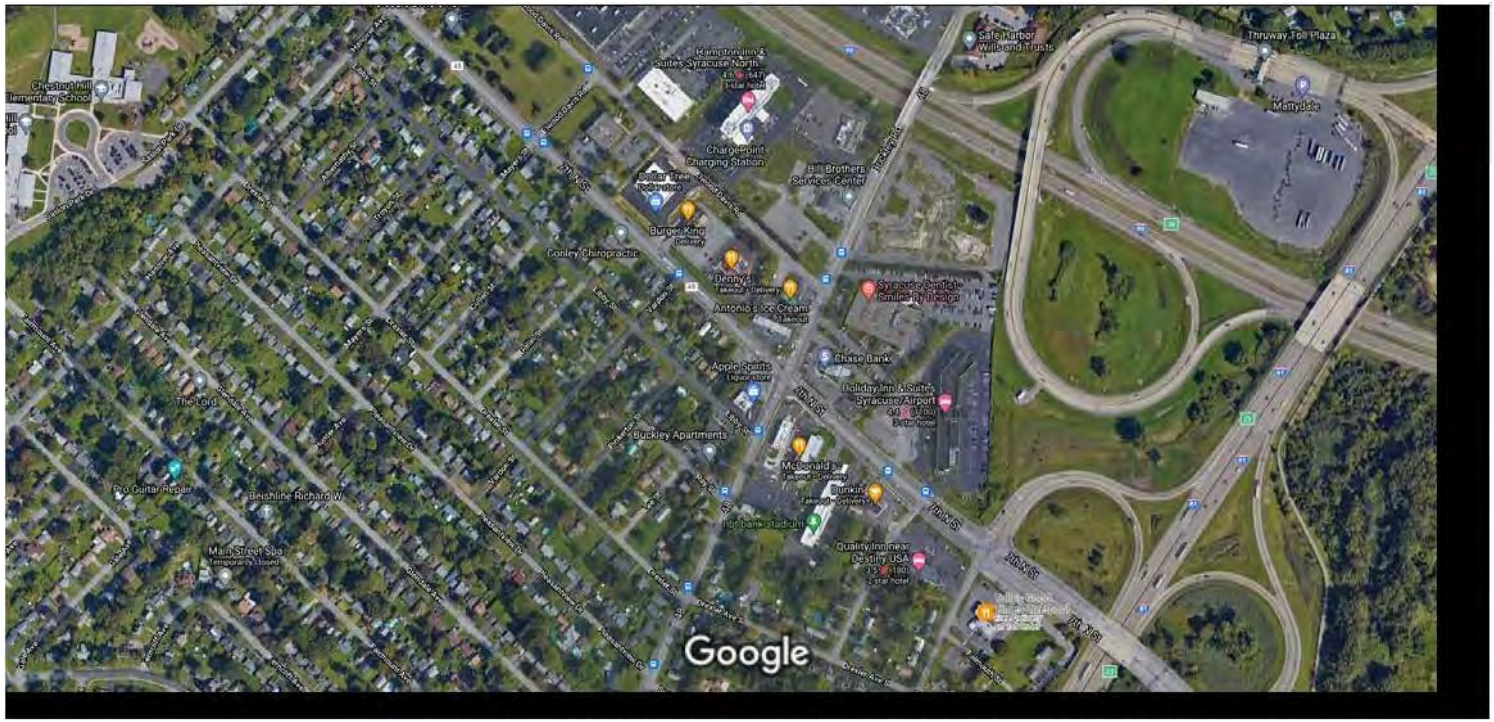
Based on the listed goals and objectives along with the details of the DEIS report, the primary areas in need of improvement are in the Downtown Syracuse area where I-81 intersects with I-690. These improvements require both interstate infrastructure improvements, as well as improved access and pedestrian safety measures in this area.

To achieve these goals, rerouting the north/south traffic east to present day I-481 will reduce the vehicle capacity requirements along present day I-81 and allow for lower traffic speeds along the new Business Loop 81.

Town of Salina Area of Impact

The primary area of impact in the Town of Salina is the 7th North Street corridor which is right off I-81 exit 25, this is right where I-81 and I-90 intersect at exit 25A of I-81. Exit 25A serves as the junction between I-90 and I-81, while exit 25 serves as the first non-interstate exit off I-90. The area is shown on the map below.

West of I-81, the 7th North Street corridor is densely developed with commercial properties including hotels, restaurants, retail, office, with a mix of residential properties west of Buckley Road. South or southwest of 7th North St are predominately residential properties.



I-81 serves as a significant boundary along 7th N Street. East of the I-81 underpass, the development changes to industrial properties. There is the first industrial area along Luther Ave and Terminal Road, with additional significant development as you move further west the intersection with Wolf Street to the north. South of 7th N Street beyond E Terminal Road is in the City of Syracuse.

Up and down the 7th N Street corridor there are six main property types, five of which are commercial:

- Lodging (Hotels/Motels)
- Food (Fast food and traditional restaurant)
- Industrial (warehouse, manufacturing, etc.)
- Retail
- Office (including branch bank)
- Residential

The following table identifies some of the significant commercial properties in the area effected by the I-81 Viaduct project, broken out by their property type.

Significant Properties in the Town of Salina Along the 7th N St Corridor			
Lodging		Industrial	
	Tru by Hilton Syracuse North Airport		Pilot Travel Center
	Holliday Inn Express Syracuse Airport		Ma & Pa's Kettle and Popcorn Factory
	Hampton Inn & Suites Syracuse North Airport		Generation Electural supply & Lighting
	Homewood Suites by Hilton Syracuse/Liverpool		BUSH Electronics
	Ramada by Wyndham Liverpool/Syracuse		Syracuse Dry Ice
	Holiday Inn & Suites Syracuse/Airport		Gil's Poultry Sales
	Quality Inn - Destiny USA		UniFirst Uniform Services
	Super 8 by Wyndham Liverpool/Syracuse		JJ Lance Construction
	Rodeway Inn & Suites		Ideallease of Central NY
			Stadium Internationl Truck Dealer
Food		Retail	
	Tully's Restaurant		Dollar Tree
	Dunkin Donuts		
	McDonald's	Office	
	Subway		Chase Bank
	Little Caesars Pizza		1304 Buckley Ave Medical Office Building
	Denny's		OCMBoces
	Burger King		100 Elwood Davis Rd Office Building
	Taco Bell		125 Elwood Davis Rd Office Building
			Thruway Office Building (290 Elwood Davis Rd)
			Hospice of Central NY

The following pages include photos of the 7th North Street corridor.

Exit to I-90

North 7th Street Facing East

North 7th Street Exit Intersection

Existing Ramp Entrance from North 7th Street

North 7th Street Facing South

Existing Comfort Inn

I-81 Facing South from North 7th Street

Existing Bank, Hotel and McDonald's

Existing Little Cesar's

Existing Tully's Restaurant

Existing Industrial Building

Existing Medical Office Building

Traffic Impact – I-81 Exit 25/25A

Per the NYSDOT DEIS report there will be projected changes in traffic flow in the areas of the exits 25 and 25A of I-81 which are in the Town of Salina. Exit 25A serves as the connection between I-81 and I-90 and does not see traffic exiting onto a local road. Traffic from Exit 25 flows on to 7th North Street in the Town of Salina, the main area of impact from the I-81 Viaduct project within the Town. Below are the NYSDOT DEIS report projected changes for these exits, based on the proposed Community Grid project design.

Table 6-3-2-10
Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADTs) Volumes at I-81 Interchanges 23, 23A, and 25 in the Existing Condition, No Build Alternative, and Community Grid Alternative

Interchange and Movement		Existing AADT	No Build AADT (2026)	Change in AADT Existing to No Build	Community Grid AADT (2026)	Change in AADT from No Build to Community Grid
Northbound I-81						
23	Northbound exit to Hiawatha Blvd/Harborside Dr	16,035	15,755	(280)	15,068	(686)
	Northbound entrance from Hiawatha Blvd	7,050	7,371	321	8,718	1,347
25	Northbound exit to 7th North St.	6,156	6,571	415	5,522	(1,048)
	Northbound entrance from 7th North St	5,962	6,026	64	6,425	399
25A	Northbound exit to I-90	4,315	4,725	410	4,308	(417)
	Northbound entrance from I-90	5,972	6,203	231	6,686	484
Southbound I-81						
25A	Southbound exit to I-90	4,815	4,945	130	5,061	115
	Southbound entrance from I-90	3,609	3,818	209	2,500	(1,317)
25	Southbound exit to 7th North St	6,106	6,339	233	6,669	330
	Southbound entrance from 7th North St	4,510	4,924	414	4,369	(555)
23A	Southbound exit to Hiawatha Blvd	11,053	11,785	732	11,603	(182)
	Southbound entrance from Old Liverpool Road	3,916	3,900	(16)	7,773	(4,533)
	Southbound entrance from NY 370	8,465	8,406	(59)		

Due to the existing Exit (23) located in the City of Syracuse, there will be a loss of vehicle traffic exiting I-81; Thus, there could be some impact on the Town of Salina as Hiawatha Blvd travels north to 7th North Street. However, the loss of traffic impact might be offset somewhat as there are several viable options for traffic to exit in the City of Syracuse before ever reaching the Town of Salina.

Exit 25 northbound will see a decrease of 1,048 AADT exiting the highway onto 7th North Street, marking an approximately 17% decrease off existing AADT figures. Conversely, the study shows that an increase of 399 AADT is expected at the same exit, entering the newly minted BL-81. While these changes don't completely offset each other, the aggregate loss of traffic is 649 AADT. Exit 25 southbound will see a projected increase of 330 AADT exiting BL 81 onto 7th North Street while an expected loss of 555 AADT entering BL 81 from this exit. The aggregate loss of AADT at exit 25 is expected to be 225 vehicles.

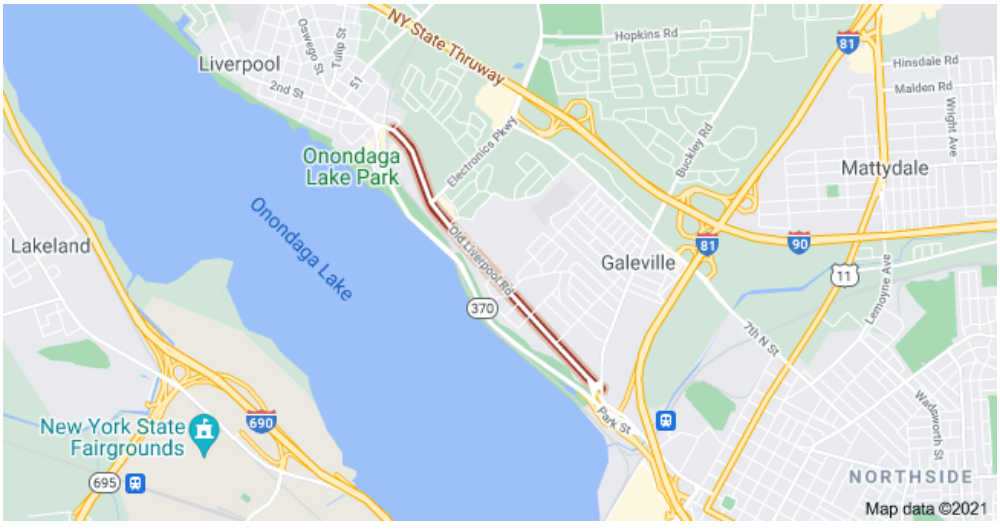
While exit 25A exists within the Town of Salina, it serves as the current I-81 and I-90 interchange with no local exit. There will be an expected decrease of 833 vehicles entering this exit from I-90. This loss is all predicated on southbound traffic now being diverted around the City of Syracuse, the study indicates an increase of 484 AADT exiting I-90 to BL-81 northbound. Traffic on BL-81 north, exiting onto I-90 is expected to decrease by 417 vehicles daily. Southbound traffic on BL-81 exiting ono I-90 is expected to increase by 115 AADT.

While the NYSDOT DEIS study provides the traffic figures relied for developing conclusions in this report. There is some question from community members as the projected 2026 No Build AADT numbers and if the DEIS traffic counts are underestimated and not properly reflecting the impact the Community Grid project will have on local traffic in the Town of Salina.

Town of Salina – Outside of 7th North Street Corridor

While the 7th North Street Corridor is a significant commercial area given its proximity to the I-90/I-81 interchange, there are other major commercial influences in the Town of Salina that influence commercial development, sustainability, and growth. Other significant commercial corridors are detailed below:

- **Old Liverpool Rd:** Starting right off I-81 Exit 24A it moves northwest parallel to the north shore of Onondaga Lake. Along this corridor there are multiple commercial properties that are supported by the surrounding residential neighborhoods. Examples of the properties are Endzone Bar& Grill, G&V Auto Care, The Hearth at Greenpoint Assisted Living Facility, Lakeview Apartments, Ichiban Japanese Steakhouse, Byrne Dairy Gas and Deli, Gulf Gas Station, a strip plaza, Dollar General, Pacific Health Club Plaza, Subway, Gardenview Diner, Valvoline Oil, Liverpool Plaza, Family Dollar, Lakeshore Plaza, Harborside Manor Apartments, Young and Franklin Office Building, Ponderosa Plaza, and many more. Old Liverpool Rd terminates at the intersection with Oswego Street which is another commercial area within the Village of Liverpool.



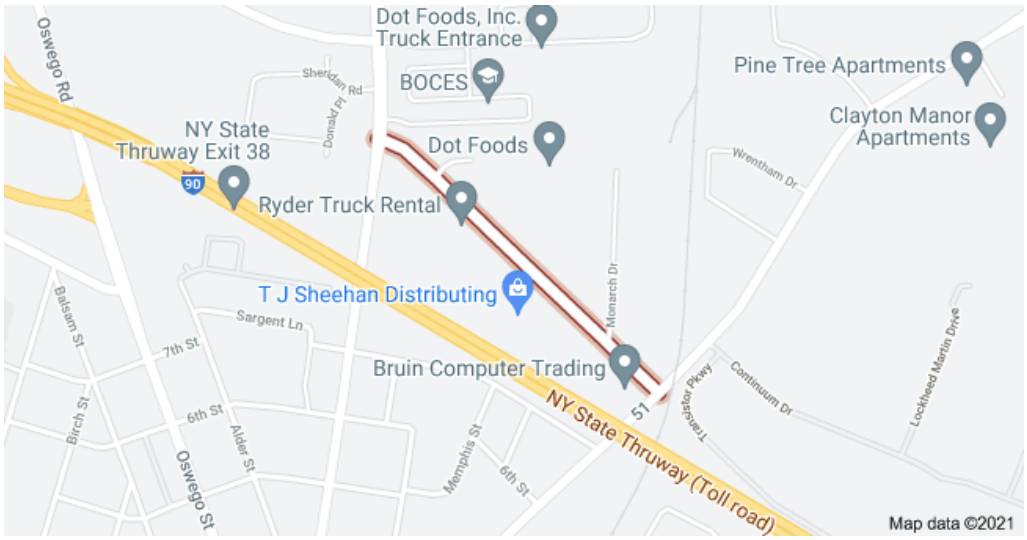
- **Village of Liverpool/Oswego & 2nd St:** The Village of Liverpool is wholly contained within the Town of Salina. There is significant commercial and residential development throughout the Village. The commercial development is primarily concentrated in the area of Oswego Street, 2nd Street and south to the shore of Onondaga Lake. Major commercial properties in the Village include: Mavis Discount Tire, Liverpool Lumber Co, Dunkin Donuts, M&T Bank, Sunoco Gas, Village Mall, Nichol's Supermarkets, Onondaga Yacht Club, Onondaga Lake Park Marina and Boat Launch, along with several smaller retail and restaurants.

- **Salina Commerce Park/Commerce Blvd:** This area is an industrial park on the northern edge of the Town of Salina, along the border with the Town of Clay. This area is just north of I-90 and is positioned between I-90 exits 37 and 38. Industrial/commercial properties in this area included: Stamcrete Decorative Concrete, Cleantec Services, Ryder Truck Rental, OnTECH Charter High School, IMS Inc, PuroClean of Syracuse, TJ Sheehan Liquor Distributors, Your Name in Lights Sign Shop, Comfort Windows Manufacturing, Syracuse Scenery & Stage Light, EAG Laboratories, Pyramid Roofing and Sheet Meatal, ASR Systems Group, Bruin Computer Trading, and Tri-County Flooring.

This industrial use in this area is complementary to major industrial use along Morgan Road, immediately north of Commerce Blvd in the Town of Clay. The largest industrial properties in the immediate area within the Town of Clay include: DOT Foods, BOCES, Raymour & Flanigan Distribution and Field Support Centers, Packaging Corporation of America, Syracuse Plastics, Dunk & Bright Distribution Center, Victory Packaging, among many others.

While the industrial properties in the Town of Clay may serve as competition to those in the Town of Salina, there is inherent benefit to their proximity. The continued use in the area leads to homogeneous development and will lead to attract future industrial development, both in the Town of Salina and in the Town of Clay. The major industrial properties also serve as complementary use to other property types, such as, lodging, food, retail, and office space.

Below is a map of Commerce Drive in Salina, then an aerial image of some of the major industrial properties just north of Salina in the Town of Clay.



Examples of industrial properties in Town of Clay, just north of boarder with Town of Salina:

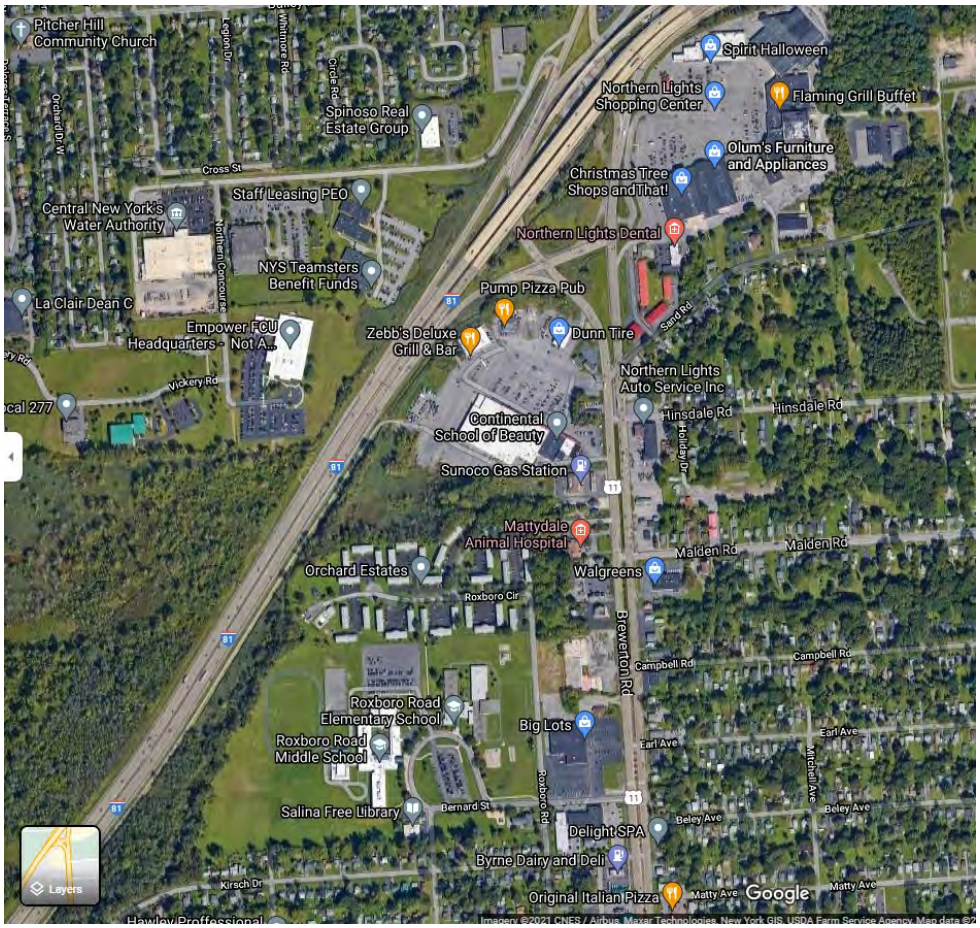
- **Greenfield Office Park:** Geographically small area, right of I-81 exit 24A, at the eastern junction with Old Liverpool Road, this office park has four major office buildings that are home to both medical and other professional services.

- **Electronics Parkway/NYS Thruway Exit 27:** This area is one of the most important commercial hubs in the entire Syracuse area because it is home to one of the largest employers in the region, Lockheed Martin, which is one of the largest aerospace and defense companies in the world. Lockheed's site in Salina is a one of its Rotary and Mission Systems (RMS) locations, a business segment which includes Integrated Warfare Systems & Sensors (IWSS), New Ventures (NV), Ship & Aviation Systems (SAS), Training and Logistics Solutions (TLS), and Undersea Systems (USS). Lockheed Martin employs approximately 2,250 people at its Syracuse (Salina) site. Major lodging properties in this area include a Best Western, Ramada by Wyndham, and Staybridge Suites.

- **Syracuse Hancock International Airport (South of):** A small portion in the southwest section of the Syracuse Hancock International Airport resides in the Town of Salina. Within that portion there are aircraft hangers and military parcels within the Town of Salina. Malden Road runs parallel to the southern edge of the airport property before turning south and becoming Townline Road. The west side of Townline Road is in the Town of Salina, while the east side is the Town of Dewitt. Along Townline Road, between Malden Rd to the north and E Molly Rd to the south are multiple US Military properties.

- **Brewerton Road/Northern Concourse:** West of the airport in the northwestern portion of Salina, Brewerton Road serves as a major commercial corridor, sitting between I-81 and the western portion of the Syracuse Hancock International Airport. This area is served by exit 26 of I-81. Major properties along Brewerton Road include North Lights Shopping Center, Mattydale Shopping Center, Goodyear Auto Service, Sunoco Gas, Orchard Estates Apartments, Walgreens, Big Lots, Byrne Dairy Gas and Deli, Dollar General, among others.

  West of Brewerton Road, on the west side of I-81, is Northern Concourse which has some significant office development. Major offices in this area include Spinoso Real Estate Group, NYS Teamsters Benefit Funds, NYS Office for People with Developmental Disabilities, Central NY Water Authority, Empower FCU Headquarters, Unimar Tower Lighting, and the Local Carpenters Union #277, among others.



- **Salina Meadows Office Park:** Off Buckley Road, Salina Meadows Office Park is home to large office buildings that host both medical and professional offices. Major tenants in the office park include: Upstate New York Laborers, Schneider Electric Square D, Walgreens District Office, JAS Recruiting, Medbest Medical Management, Frank Weiss Insurance, and several others. There is also a medical office building on Buckley Road backing up to the office park.

Summary of Town of Salina Major Commercial Areas

Summary of Commercial Districtst in the Town of Salina		
Area	**Property Types**	**Description**
Old Liverpool Road:	Retail Food Office	Area between I-81 exit 24A and the Village of Liverpool that is home to many neighborhood plaza, retail, and restaurant establishments. There is also a fair number of office use with mixed in residential. The closer to either the I-81 or Liverpool end of the road, the more concentrated the commercial development is.
Village of Liverpool - Oswego and 2nd Street:	Retail Food Office	As Old Liverpool Road turns into Oswego Street in the Village of Liverpool, there is significant commercial development. Oswego Street takes a turn to the northwest where it become more residential. Where that junction is and south, on 2nd Street, there is significant commercial development with Village Mall and surrounding office and retail space. There is also some specialty development along the shore of Onondaga Lake that attracts people to the area.
Salina Commerce Park/Commerce Blvd:	Industrial	Along the northern boarder of the Town of Salina, this area serves as a significant industrial area within the Town. This area is supported by the convenient access to I-90, both exits 37 and 38 as well as the significant commercial development north in the Town of Clay.
Greenfield Office Park:	Office/Med. Office	Office park at the south end of Buckley Road that is home to four significant office buildings with multiple medical and professional office tenants. This area is just off exit 24A of I-81, near the Old Liverpool Rd junction.
Electronics Parkway/NYS Thruway Exit 27:	Lodging Office Industrial	Area of major development anchored by the Lockheed Martin facility, which is one of the major employers in all of the Syracuse region. Other area development includes hotels, industrial and offices.
Syracuse Hancock Int. Airport (South of):	Industrial	A series of industrial properties and airport hangers on the southwest corner of the airport property sit in the Town of Salina. There is also multiple US Military properties in this area, including US Army Reserve.
Brewerton Road/Northern Concourse:	Retail Office Food	Right off exit 26 of I-81, this commercial area is supported by the airport. There are several major retail and plaza properties in this area along Brewerton Road, east of I-81. West of I-81 along Northern Concourse there are significant single and multi-tenant office properties.
Salina Meadows Office Park:	Office/Med. Office	Office park off of Buckley Road that contains four significant multi-tenant office building. These buildings are home to both medical and professional office users. There is also a multi-tenant medical office building right on Buckley Road that is contiguous to this park. There is room for expansion within this office park.

Town of Salina Demographics

Municipality	2010 Population	2019 Population	2010-2019 Change	2010-2019 % Change
Town of Salina	33,710	32,232	(1,478)	-4.38%
Village of Liverpool	2,347	2,242	(105)	-4.47%
City of Syracuse	145,170	148,620	3,450	2.38%
Onondaga County	467,026	476,516	9,490	2.03%

US CENSUS INFO FOR TOWN OF SALINA	
PEOPLE	
Population	
Population estimates, July 1, 2019, (V2019)	32,232
Population estimates base, April 1, 2010, (V2019)	33,649
Population, percent change - April 1, 2010 (estimates base) to July 1, 2019, (V2019)	-4.20%
Population, Census, April 1, 2020	33,223
Population, Census, April 1, 2010	33,710
Age and Sex	
Persons under 5 years, percent	5.70%
Persons under 18 years, percent	20.50%
Persons 65 years and over, percent	19.90%
Female persons, percent	53.00%
Housing	
Owner-occupied housing unit rate, 2015-2019	66.30%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2015-2019	$113,700
Median selected monthly owner costs -with a mortgage, 2015-2019	$1,178
Median selected monthly owner costs -without a mortgage, 2015-2019	$506
Median gross rent, 2015-2019	$924
Families and Living Arrangements	
Households, 2015-2019	14,486
Persons per household, 2015-2019	2.25
Living in same house 1 year ago, percent of persons age 1 year+, 2015-2019	90.10%
Language other than English spoken at home, percent of persons age 5 years+, 2015-2019	9.20%
Computer and Internet Use	
Households with a computer, percent, 2015-2019	88.90%
Households with a broadband Internet subscription, percent, 2015-2019	81.30%
Education	
High school graduate or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+, 2015-2019	91.30%
Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons age 25 years+, 2015-2019	27.50%
Health	
With a disability, under age 65 years, percent, 2015-2019	9.00%
Persons without health insurance, under age 65 years, percent	4.10%

US CENSUS INFO FOR TOWN OF SALINA	
Economy	
In civilian labor force, total, percent of population age 16 years+, 2015-2019	65.10%
In civilian labor force, female, percent of population age 16 years+, 2015-2019	62.10%
Total accommodation and food services sales, 2012 ($1,000) (c)	60,138
Total health care and social assistance receipts/revenue, 2012 ($1,000) (c)	157,188
Total manufacturers shipments, 2012 ($1,000) (c)	230,843
Total retail sales, 2012 ($1,000) (c)	250,620
Total retail sales per capita, 2012 (c)	$7,444
Transportation	
Mean travel time to work (minutes), workers age 16 years+, 2015-2019	17.4
Income and Poverty	
Median household income (in 2019 dollars), 2015-2019	$58,207
Minority-owned firms, 2012	153
Veteran-owned firms, 2012	157
Nonveteran-owned firms, 2012	1,628
GEOGRAPHY	
Geogrophy	
Population per square mile, 2010	2,451.60
FIPS Code	3606764815

Fact Notes
(a) Includes persons reporting only one race
(c) Economic Census - Puerto Rico data are not comparable to U.S. Economic Census data
(b) Hispanics may be of any race, so also are included in applicable race categories

Value Flags
- Either no or too few sample observations were available to compute an estimate, or a ratio of medians cannot be
F - Fewer than 25 firms
D - Suppressed to avoid disclosure of confidential information
N - Data for this geographic area cannot be displayed because the number of sample cases is too small.
FN - Footnote on this item in place of data
X - Not applicable
S - Suppressed; does not meet publication standards
NA - Not available
Z - Value greater than zero but less than half unit of measure shown

Town of Salina Demographic Observations

The US Census data listed on the previous two pages, combined with the historical population allows for some conclusions to be drawn. The Town of Salina and the Village of Liverpool have seen slight population decreases over the last decade, while the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County have seen upticks in population.

These trends show that even before the proposed I-81 Viaduct project, the Town of Salina has lacked growth, with a population loss of almost 1,500 residents in a nine-year window. This population loss, -4.38%, is consistent with the Village of Liverpool which is within the Town. Sustained negative population trends will make it less likely for a business to invest in a certain area as opposed to a growing community.

Town of Salina Proposed Development

Per a conversation with the Town of Salina planning and development department, the current active building permits and proposed plans are limited due to uncertainty surrounding the proposed I-81 Viaduct project. The current and proposed construction projects are as follows:

- A Mirabito gas station is currently under construction on the north side of 7th N St
- Discussions are underway regarding the building of a wholesale restaurant store on vacant land on the east side of Buckley Road
- An old candle manufacturing building is being converted into approximately 250 residential apartment units at 100 Buckley Road
- UniFirst is expanding its existing professional uniforms and workwear operation on the south side of 7th N St just east of the current I-81 exit
- The former Lemoyne Manor at 620 Old Liverpool Road is being redeveloped into a multi-building apartment complex with 66 units

Impact of the Viaduct Project on the Market Value and Demand for Commercial Real Estate

The scope of the I-81 Viaduct project, as it relates to the Town of Salina, has been defined, along with a description of the commercial real estate landscape within the Town. The primary area impacted by the project will be the 7th North Street Corridor, but it will also include the commercial area in the northern portion of town off I-81 exit 26 where the Brewerton Road commercial area is located.

The Brewerton Road area, in general, will see less of an impact on from I-81 Viaduct project due to the nature of the commercial properties in the area. Much of Brewerton's commercial development is retail, food, and gas. In most cases, the major retail development in this area is not a reason for through traffic along I-81 to stop off the highway; therefore, significant impact on these businesses should be little to none. While the gas and food uses do benefit from through traffic on I-81, the potential economic impact on these businesses in this area should be mitigated by their proximity to Syracuse Hancock International Airport.

While the I-81 Viaduct project presents a number of consequences, both positive and negative, there are a handful of key elements that will influence the market values along 7th North Street Corridor and the Town of Salina:

- Traffic Counts
    - Loss of pass-through traffic with I-81 rerouted
- Visibility
- Increased travel time, particularly on north/south transportation routes
- Potential increased DOT permitting requirements for trucks traveling off major interstate

These factors will impact different segments of markets in different ways. There are four main segments of customers that impact all property types, with each property type feeling a different impact from each market segment. The market segments include:

1. Locals:
   These are people who live in the area, travel through the area for work and play.

2. Through traffic:
   These are people passing through, in a hurry to get to their next destination. This includes truckers.

3. Curious:
   Retirees, tourists, or other travelers who want to explore an area and see everything. These travelers are in less of a hurry and generally like to have a more local experience when vesting an area.

4. Destination:
   Travelers that are looking for amenities or proximity to certain areas. Some may be in town to catch a flight the next day, others may be in the area due a sporting event in the area, etc.

	IMPACT ON					
PROPERTY TYPE	**LOCALS**	**THROUGH TRAFFIC**	**CURIOUS**	**DESTINATION**	**OVERALL**	**NOTES**
LODGING	**Minimal**	**Substaintial -will bypass**	**Minimal**	**None**	**Moderate Negative Impact**	
	Relatives, Friends, will still want convenience to locals's home. Hotel's Visability will suffer, minimally impacting referrals	They will stay at new inn locations developed at new interchanges; A few may stay at old hotels because of brand allegiance	could stay at old hotel locations. Time not a consideration for this group	Destination travlers will stay near their destination, given adequate amentaties (food, gas,etc.) in the area	moving any access from current locaion will be detrimental to some degree depending on type of traveller	Hotels are now booked on line with 2 principal considerations (1) brand rewared's programs and allegiance (2) general area where they need to stay for trip
RESTAURANT	**Minimal**	**Substantial**	**Minimal**	**None**	**Moderate Negative Impact**	
	Locals will continue to frequent resturants in the area	patrons stop on impuslse and visability - with main I-81 interstate rerouted, there will be less through trafic in the immediate area. This is somewhat mitigated by I-90 passing east/west in the area. The loss of lodging customers in the area will impact the resturant landscape as well.	They are using old route to center city and will be more likely to stop at local food establishments	Not an influencing factor	Impulse stops ae the norm for restaurants on interstate highways	Biggest impact is for through travellers as they stop on impulse and brand recognition
RETAIL	**Minimal**	**None**	**Minimal**	**None**	**Minimal Negative Impact**	
	They will still shop at favorite stores	Typically won't stop at any retail location	Might stop if easy access to store they know	Not an influencing factor		Retail is less impacted of all property types
OFFICE	**None**	**Minimal**	**None**	**None**	**Minimal Negative Impact**	
	Will still go to employment center	While the Viaduct project may lead less visability; longer commute times there is still great access to the City of Syracuse and significant interstate access in the area	Time not a problem for this group	Not a factor for destination travlers	As noted, increased commute times may have a slight impact, but the overall landscape for office will still remain strong	
APARTMENTS	**Minimal**	**None**	**None**	**None**	**Minimal Negative Impact**	
	Incrased commute times may impact demand for apartments in Salina, but it is still a strong market given its proximity to employment centers in Syracuse and in the surrounding area				Employment centers drive apartment rentals and existing apartmentss may suffer some occupancy lossess	Only locals live in apartments but ease of acces for visitors to residents will influence some
WAREHOUSE/INDUSTRIAL	**Moderate**	**Minimal**	**None**	**Minimal**	**Moderate Negative Impact**	
	Industrial use tenants will have to increase travel times on north/south routes and ease of access may suffer. Mitigated by I-90 running east/west through Salina and significant industrial develoment just north in the Town of Clay	Unless this is their final destination it probably will not impact	Time not a problem for this group	Travellers who stay at full service and needing to go to business locations could have travel times increased	Will be harder to sell or rent those properties located near existing I-81 if there is a by pass	

Defining Level of Impact

While it is impossible to know the precise value impact the proposed I-81 Viaduct project will have on commercial properties within the Town of Salina, general ranges can be reasonably opined from the data presented in this report combined with knowledge of trends and demands of users of the different property types effected.

Minimal Negative Impact – Property types that are expected to see a minimal negative impact can be expected to see a loss of market value in the range of **1% - 5%**. Again, there are many factors specific to each individual property that will affect where in that range it might land.

Moderate Negative Impact – Property types expected to see a moderate negative impact will be expected to see a loss in market value in the range of **5% - 15%**. Many factors specific to individual properties will determine which end of the impact spectrum will be most pertinent.

Significant Negative Impact – Any property that would be expected to see a negative impact on market value in the **15%-30%** range would be considered significant. While no overall property types fall within this range, there may be individual properties that do.

Severe Negative Impact – Any property that would see a negative impact of **30% or greater** of market value would be considered severe. A severe impact would likely jeopardize the financial feasibility of any existing property and limit the development potential in the future.

Conclusions

Based on the information available, it is evident that the Town of Salina will suffer an economic loss as a result of the I-81 Viaduct project. Different property types within the Town will suffer varying level of effects. These impacts, combined with an already slightly decreasing population may imply long-term negative effects as a result of this project. Below are the major property types and the level of impact summarized:

LODGING: Hotel and motel properties are concluded to suffer a **moderate negative impact** (5% - 15% value decline), primarily due to loss of through traffic on north/south travel through the City of Syracuse. The main impact area will be for the hotels along the 7th North Street Corridor as they rely on this north/south traffic. Hotels around the I-90 exits will see less of an impact due as there will be no pattern changes for their main clientele.

RESTAURANT: Restaurants will also suffer a **moderate negative impact** (5% - 15% value decline) from two primary sources. Loss of pass-through traffic will eliminate the person stopping off the interstate for a quick bite before continuing their travels, but also a loss in lodging will impact restaurant traffic. The impact is expected for this property group, particularly in the 7th North Street Corridor.

RETAIL: Retail will see a **minimal negative impact** (1% - 5%) as the loss of pass-through traffic does not affect their main customer base, locals. There will be some loss in and around the loss of hotel customers.

OFFICE: Office will suffer a **minimal negative impact** (1% - 5%). The primary source of concern will be expected increased commute times for those travelling from the City of Syracuse where the Community Grid portion of the I-81 Viaduct project will slow traffic.

APARTMENTS: Apartments will suffer a **minimal negative impact** (1% - 5%) as there is ample employment centers in the region, both in the Town of Salina and immediately adjacent. There will still be adequate interstate and Downtown Syracuse access from the area as well as other amenities, such as retail centers and restaurants.

WAREHOUSE/INDUSTRIAL: Warehouse and industrial properties will see a **moderate negative impact** (5% - 15%), primarily due to increased travel times on north/south routes. This impact is mitigated by the substantial I-90 access within the Town and the significant industrial development in the Town of Clay, which will attract other industrial development to the area. Although there are some industrial properties in its immediate vicinity, the Pilot Travel Center, which caters to high volume truck traffic, east I-81 on the 7th North Street corridor, would be one of the most negatively affected properties with much of the pass-through trucking traffic being routed east, along exiting I-481.

Impact on Town of Salina Assessed Values

Within each of the defined property types, each individual property will see a different effect of the proposed I-81 project. There are several influencing factors including age, quality, condition, etc. that will impact the value of each property. The scope of this ***Limited Scope Preliminary Review of the Impact on Market Value*** report was not to focus on individual properties, but the overall impact the project would have on the Town of Salina.

Based on information provided by the Town of Salina Assessor's Office, the aggregate assessed value for the 2021 roll year is detailed by property types. It would be assumed that there would be an impact on these aggregate numbers, within the property types as detailed on the previous page. The exact aggregate decrease in assessed value is unknown, as the higher value properties within each property type would have more impact than the lower valued properties.

Property Type	2021 Aggregate Assessed Value
Restaurant	$23,141,500
Mixed-Use	$23,948,200
Lodging	$46,503,900
Retail	$46,602,400
Industrial	$123,867,000
Office	$130,345,680
Apartments	$156,449,000

* The breakdown above utilized assessed values provided by the Town of Salina Assessment Department.

Only certain properties in these property types within the affected area will be impacted, with some properties not affected at all by the NYS DOT proposed I-81 Viaduct Project. A comprehensive property list outlining the specific properties, with detailed property information, would need to be provided to perform individual value analysis.

- **CERTIFICATION**
- **MARKET REPORTS**
- **QUALIFICATIONS OF THE APPRAISERS**

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned do hereby certify that, to the best of our knowledge and belief, except as otherwise stated in this consulting report:

1. The statements of fact contained in this report are true and correct.

2. The reported analyses, opinions and conclusions are limited only by the reported assumptions and limiting conditions, and are the personal, impartial, and unbiased professional analysis, opinions and conclusions of David M. Barnett, SRA and Ronald J. Rubino, MAI.

3. We have no current nor prospective bias with respect to the property that is the subject of this report or the parties involved with this assignment.

4. We have no present or prospective interest with respect to the property that is the subject of this report and no personal interest with respect to the parties involved.

5. Our engagement in this report was not contingent upon developing or reporting predetermined results.

6. Our compensation for completing this assignment is not contingent upon the reporting of a predetermined value or direction in value that favors the cause of the client, the amount of the value opinion, the attainment of a stipulated result, or the occurrence of a subsequent event directly related to the intended use of this report.

7. The reported analyses, opinions, and conclusions were developed, and this report has been prepared, in conformity with the requirements of the Code of Professional Ethics and Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice of the Appraisal Institute and conforms with the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP).

8. The use of this report is subject to the requirements of the Appraisal Institute, relating to review by its duly authorized representatives.

9. Neither all nor any part of the contents of this report (especially any conclusions as to value, the identity of the appraisers or the firm with which they are connected, or any reference to the Appraisal Institute or to the MAI, SRPA, SRA, designations), shall be disseminated to the public through advertising media, public relations media, news media, sales media or any other public means of communication without the prior written consent and approval of the undersigned.

10. David M. Barnett, SRA has made an exterior inspection of the subject neighborhood that is the subject of this report.

11. As of the date of this report, David M. Barnett, SRA and Ronald J. Rubino, MAI have completed the continuing education program for Designated members of the Appraisal Institute.

12. David M. Barnett, SRA and Ronald J. Rubino, MAI are State Certified General Appraisers in the State of New York.

13. No one provided significant assistance to the person(s) signing this Certification.

14. The assignment was not based on a requested minimum valuation, a specific valuation, or the approval of a loan.

15. A *"Limited Scope Report"* has been prepared, consistent with the scope of work. Some of the supporting documentation, together with the reasoning supporting the analysis, conclusion, and opinions has been retained in our file memoranda.

16. We have performed no services, as appraisers or in any other capacity, regarding the property that is the subject of this report within the three-year period immediately preceding acceptance of this assignment.

17. The appraisers are competent to provide valuation and consulting services for this assignment. They have the ability to properly identify the valuation problems associated with this type property and are compliant with the laws and regulations that apply to this assignment.

18. Based upon the inspection of the neighborhood and investigations and analysis undertaken, preliminary conclusions are made on page 33 of this report as of September 21, 2021.

David M. Barnett, SRA
Senior Appraiser
NYS Certificate No. 46-50315

Ronald J. Rubino, MAI
President, Commercial Division
NYS Certificate No. 46-4421

MARKET REPORTS

QUALIFICATIONS OF THE APPRAISERS

New York State average of $ 41,857 and approximately fifty (50) percent of the town neighborhoods are considered low income under the HUD Community Block Grant Program; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Salina is a participating agency responsible for identifying any issues of concern regarding the project's potential environmental or socioeconomic effects, yet impacts identified by the Town of Salina for the corridors adjacent to the I81 Interchange 25, 25A, 26 and 27 were not properly addressed in the DEIS; and

WHEREAS, the potential consequences to the Town of Salina have not been adequately addressed in the DEIS; and

WHEREAS, there may be a variety of ways to deal with I-81's aging infrastructure. Eleven (11) public opinion polls and surveys have been conducted since 2013 showing that between 52% to 83% of respondents favor retaining Interstate 81's function and alignment throughout the city, clearly establishing that there is no consensus for the Community Grid option; and

WHEREAS, it is the sense of the Town of Salina Town Board that any decision reached by the NYS DOT should enhance mobility and protect major existing economic functions in the Town of Salina and the region; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Town of Salina Town Board requests that the NYS DOT addresses all socioeconomic and environmental impacts in the DEIS that will affect the Town of Salina, including but not limited to, Environmental Justice and Local and Regional Economies for the corridors adjacent to the Interchanges 25, 25A, 26 and 27; and

RESOLVED, that the Town of 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 Town of Salina Town Board request the NYS DOT and Governor Hockul to choose the consensus solution, the hybrid solution, so our entire community benefits from this important decision, and/or enhances the safety and performance of the existing Interstate 81 and

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 members of Congress representing Central New York, the US FHWA, Members of the New York State Assembly and Senate representing the Town of Salina and to the Governor of State of New York.

Colleen A. Gunnip, Supervisor	Yes
Nicholas Paro, Councilor	Absent
V. James Magnarelli, Councilor	Yes
Daniel Ciciarelli, Councilor	Yes
David Carnie, Councilor	Yes

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and have hereunto affixed the seal of the Town of Salina this ___ day of October, 2021.

[SEAL]

Jeannie P. Ventre

Jeannie Ventre, Town Clerk

From:	Smith, David (DOT)
To:	Frechette, Mark (DOT); Doucette, George (DOT); Bjorness, Joan E (DOT); Parmley, Elizabeth (DOT)
Subject:	FW: Van Buren Town Board Resolution RE: Rt. 81
Date:	Friday, October 08, 2021 7:53:35 PM
Attachments:	DOC378.pdf

For the list of comments…a resolution to keep I-81, by the Town of Van Buren.

David P Smith, P.E.
Regional Director
New York State Department of Transportation, Central New York Region
333 East Washington St
(315) 428-4351 | david.smith@dot.ny.gov
www.dot.ny.gov

From: Claude Sykes <supervisor@townofvanburen.com>
Sent: Friday, October 08, 2021 9:12 AM
To: magnarw@nyassembly.gov; BarclaW@nyassembl.gov; mannion@nysenate.gov
Cc: Smith, David (DOT) <David.Smith@dot.ny.gov>; jdagostino@smtcmpo.org
Subject: FW: Van Buren Town Board Resolution RE: Rt. 81

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

From: Claude Sykes <supervisor@townofvanburen.com>
Sent: Friday, October 8, 2021 8:50 AM
To: 'Dist50@nysenate.gov' <Dist50@nysenate.gov>; 'May@nysenate.gov' <May@nysenate.gov>; 'MagnarW@nyassembl.gov' <MagnarW@nyassembl.gov>; 'StirpeA@nyassembly.gov' <StirpeA@nyassembly.gov>; 'HunterP@nyassembly.gov' <HunterP@nyassembly.gov>; 'BarclaW@nyassembl.gov' <BarclaW@nyassembl.gov>
Subject: Van Buren Town Board Resolution RE: Rt. 81

Honorable Senators and Assembly Representatives: Attached please find a town board resolution, which was adopted on October 6, 2021 memorializing the intent of the town board of the Town of Van Buren, regarding the need to maintain the existing alignment of I 81 through Syracuse. If you should have any questions please contact me at 315-635-3009.

Claude E. Sykes, Town Supervisor
Town of Van Buren

MEMORIALIZING THE INTENT OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF VAN BUREN, 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 Van Buren; 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 local neighborhoods and quality of life; 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 Van Buren 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, Van Buren Town Board supports a balanced, comprehensive approach, a regional transportation plan that ensures smart choices are made, a plan that can provide environmental, social and economic benefits to all of Central New York; and where the Grid only option does not achieve this end; now, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Van Buren 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 Van Buren 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.

TRU BY HILTON
SYRACUSE NORTH
AIRPORT AREA
417 7th North Street
Liverpool, NY 13088
+1 315 457 0101

RECEIVED
JUL 27 2021
BY:

tru by HILTON™

July 22, 2021

Mark Frechette, P.E.
Project Director
New York State Department of Transportation, Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Rick Marquis
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Federal Building
11A Clinton Avenue, Suite 719
Albany, NY 12207

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Statement - Need for Additional Time for Review and Comment

Dear Mark and Rick:

Like many stakeholders in Syracuse and Central New York, we are prepared to review and provide comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement ("DEIS") that was released on Friday July 16, 2021.

The purpose of this letter is to formally request that the public comment period be extended through the end of the year to allow sufficient time for a complete review of the 28,000+ page document. COVID has decimated our industry and summer leisure travel has been difficult to manage due to the labor shortage. Most importantly the amount of data just made available, it is not feasible to have complete responses available by September 14th.

The future of Interstate 81 is an important decision that will directly impact our businesses/industry and our team members. It is critical that everyone be provided sufficient time to have their comments submitted and considered.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jacqui Paikin
General Manager
Tru by Hilton Syracuse North – Airport Area

From:	Frechette, Mark (DOT)
To:	Bjorness, Joan E (DOT)
Subject:	FW: TANY Comments on the I-81 Viaduct Project DEIS
Date:	Thursday, October 14, 2021 4:56:47 PM
Attachments:	TANY Comments_DEIS_I81_Oct2021.pdf
Importance:	High

From: Kendra Hems <khems@nytrucks.org>
Sent: Thursday, October 14, 2021 4:56 PM
To: dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities <dot.sm.mo.I81Opportunities@dot.ny.gov>
Cc: Frechette, Mark (DOT) <Mark.Frechette@dot.ny.gov>; rick.marquis@dot.gov
Subject: TANY Comments on the I-81 Viaduct Project DEIS
Importance: High

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

Good Afternoon,
Please accept the attached document as the Trucking Association of New York's comments on the I-81 Draft Environmental Impact Statement.
Thank you,
Kendra Hems

Kendra Hems
President

Office (518) 458-9696 | Fax (518) 458-2525
7 Corporate Drive Clifton Park, NY 12065

TRUCKING ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK

Kendra Hems
President

7 Corporate Drive
Clifton Park, NY 12065
P 518.458.9696
nytrucks.org

October 14, 2021

Mark Frechette, P.E.
Project Director
New York State Department of Transportation,
Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Rick Marquis
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Federal Building
11A Clinton Avenue, Suite 719
Albany, NY 12207

RE: I-81Viaduct Project - Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation

Gentlemen:

The Trucking Association of New York (TANY) respectfully submits the following comments, as prepared by Quetica Consulting in response to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation for the I-81 Viaduct Project.

TANY has significant concerns about the preferred alternative for replacing the I-81 Viaduct through downtown Syracuse. Federal Regulations Title 23, Chapter 1, Part 658.11 requires that any request for deletion of an interstate highway ***must analyze the impact on interstate commerce.*** Upon review of the DEIS it is clear that a complete analysis on the impacts of this project on freight activity has not been conducted. Moving forward with the preferred alternative absent the required analysis would be irresponsible and has significant economic, environmental and safety implications that have not been considered.

TANY appreciates the opportunity to comment on the DEIS. Before moving forward with the preferred alternative of the Community Grid, TANY requests that a comprehensive review of the movement, routing and cost of freight/interstate commerce be evaluated.

Sincerely,

Kendra L. Hems

Commerce and Commercial Vehicle Analysis of the I-81 Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Trucking Association of New York

By Quetica, LLC

OCTOBER 2021

Point of Contact: Mark Berndt, Lead Consultant Quetica, LLC

Phone Number: 651-964-4646 x872

Email Address: mark.berndt@quetica.com

quèt•ica

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Executive Summary

The trucking industry is critical to the economic success of not only our nation and the State of New York but to the City of Syracuse and surrounding region as well. For that reason, the Trucking Association of New York (TANY) is deeply concerned about the preferred alternative for replacing the I-81 Viaduct through downtown Syracuse as presented in the ***Interstate 81 Viaduct Project – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)***. On behalf of our 580 members, TANY is especially disappointed in the near total exclusion of commercial trucking interests and commerce in the analysis conducted for the DEIS. With the short timeline provided to respond to the nearly 3,000 page I-81 Viaduct DEIS that resulted in the recommendation for the Community Grid Alternative, TANY would like to go on record with the analysis presented in the attached report. TANY is also submitting the following comments related to our concerns about the entirety of the I-81 Viaduct study process and the DEIS Community Grid Alternative:

- **The Community Grid Alternative will negatively impact the competitiveness of the nation and the Syracuse Region:** Our impact analysis using the latest Freight Analysis Framework (FAF-5) data from U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT), suggests that the majority (83 percent by volume) of the commerce on I-81 moving into, out of or through Syracuse supports domestic trade. In addition, 2.92 million tons of foreign trade valued at $8 billion moves across the Syracuse section of I-81 going to and from Canada.

  One of the primary motivations for creating the Interstate Highway System was to facilitate interstate commerce. Recently, in an interview with Bloomberg TV, USDOT Secretary Buttigieg reiterated the need to invest to be competitive:

  > *"People everywhere are very much mindful of how America has fallen behind and how America would be better off if we invested in our roads and bridges and our ports and airports… We're dealing with the consequences of about 40 years of disinvestment in the infrastructure that we count on to stay competitive."*

  The Syracuse Metropolitan Planning Council (SMTC) Freight Profile published in July 2017 notes: "*…the freight industry plays an integral role for our country and our region… Interstate 81 is the primary facility through this area with international connections with Canada to the north."* However, the I-81 DEIS fails to provide anything close to a thorough analysis of the impact on freight movements resulting from the Community Grid Alternative. In addition, the Community Grid Alternative proposes to delete the viaduct section of I-81 through Syracuse. Federal Regulations Title 23, Chapter 1, Part 658.11 states that any request for deletion must analyze the impact on interstate commerce.

- **The Community Grid Alternative will result in additional truck miles, more truck emissions and more negative externalities associated with freight movements on an annual basis, including:**
  - 1.76 million impacted truck trips
  - 19.8 million additional truck miles traveled
  - 3.04 million gallons of diesel fuel
  - $32 million in trucking costs
  - $500 thousand in monetized emission externalities from 20.5 million additional tons of hydrocarbons, NO_X and fine particulate matter

  These numbers correspond to three separate trip types: (1) Those utilizing the I-81 Corridor to traverse through the Syracuse region from south to north or north to south; (2) those utilizing the corridor to traverse the Syracuse region from west to south or south to west; and (3) those originating or terminating to the north and west of the I-81/I-690 interchange and travel along I-81 to the south of Syracuse. Results are based on a 15-day sample of GPS data from the American Transportation Research Institute (ATRI), average annual daily truck traffic (AADTT) estimates from New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) traffic count stations, stakeholder feedback as to rerouting impacts, ATRI's analysis of operational trucking costs, emission rates from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and benefit-cost analysis guidance from the U.S. Department of Transportation. The trucking costs estimate underscores the impact as it does not include the New York State Highway Use Tax.

- **Underlying analysis tools completely ignore commercial vehicle traffic demands**: The I-81 Challenge Website also provides numerous background reports including the travel demand model developed for SMTC. Our review of the SMTC Travel Demand Model documentation found **no mention of trucks or commercial vehicles**! While the model discusses non-motorized trips extensively, the model appears to completely ignore trips by large trucks. This same blind eye towards commercial interests is carried over to the DEIS.

- **Chapter 6 of the DEIS: *Social, Economic and Environmental Considerations* narrowly defines impacts on the regional economy to the retail sector.**

  - The Local and Regional Economies Analysis focused on (1) locations within the region where shippers and carriers would be marginally impacted or not impacted by the Viaduct Project and (2) locations which are adjacent to or in close proximity to the Viaduct Project Priority Area as outlined in the NYSDOT Scoping Report. In fact, less than 3 percent of the stops in the ATRI GPS dataset were located within a 1-mile buffer of the Viaduct Project Priority Area. Furthermore, the analysis ignored the impacts to the shippers and carriers located to the west of I-81 and north of I-690 which account for half of the stops in the ATRI GPS dataset.

- Tools and methods employed to assess the impacts and traffic operations did not consider the impacts on trucking companies or trucking dependent industries in the Syracuse area. Based on our data analysis and interviews with trucking firms operating in the Syracuse region, there are 17 trucking companies located west of the I-81/I-481 interchange that operate approximately 400 trucks on a daily basis in and through Syracuse. Also, half of the stops in the ATRI GPS dataset were located in these areas (see **Exhibit 8**). It is estimated that for trucks having to reroute via I-481 and/or I-690 to get to I-81, the additional mileage added to a one-way trip is approximately 14-18 miles longer than the current route (up to 36 miles round trip). In 2019, results from an annual industry survey by ATRI found that the average cost per mile of operating a truck in the Northeast Region of the U.S. was $1.844. Resulting in added costs of approximately $66.38 for each round trip per truck. **As a result, the Community Grid Alternative will impose a significant tax on the trucking industry.**
- The data source used for the Local and Regional Economies Analysis relied on StreetLight GPS data. All GPS data products are samples of the total vehicle/trip population. StreetLight's GPS truck trip data comes from location-based services (LBS) found on cell phone apps. The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) restricts the use of all hand-held mobile devices by commercial motor vehicle drivers:[1]
  - *Using a hand-held mobile phone while driving a CMV can result in driver disqualification. Penalties can be up to $2,750 for drivers and up to $11,000 for employers who allow or require drivers to use a hand-held communications device while driving.*
  - Disqualification - Multiple violations of the prohibition of using a hand-held mobile phone while driving a CMV can result in a driver disqualification by FMCSA. Multiple violations of State laws prohibiting use of a mobile phone while driving a CMV is a serious traffic violation that could result in a disqualification by a State of drivers required to have a Commercial Driver's License.
- Short-haul delivery drivers and package or parcel delivery services in or near major metropolitan areas are more likely to use cell phones due to the stop and start nature of their trip legs. Most long-haul carriers employ satellite communication devices in the cab of the truck, with many banning the use of cell phones while drivers are on the road. The analysis conducted by TANY uses GPS data sourced by ATRI. The ATRI truck GPS data sample comes from carriers who employ satellite tracking devices on their power units, which is an industry standard for most large interstate carriers. **As a result, the Local and Regional Economies analysis conducted for the I-81 DEIS Community Grid Alternative**

[1] https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/driver-safety/distracted-driving/mobile-phone-restrictions-fact-sheet

suffers from an inherent data bias that mostly excludes the interstate trucking sector.

- **The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), NYSDOT and SMTC ignored USDOT guidance on engaging the private sector in the planning process:** The NYSDOT I-81 Viaduct Project Website discusses the Corridor Study Report and refers readers to the I-81 Challenge website. That website discusses a public involvement process designed to be as "inclusive as possible" yet commercial interests, especially the trucking industry appear to have largely been ignored and overlooked in the final evaluation process. For example, early in the study process focus groups were used to identify key study activities and metrics going forward, when asked:
    - *What other community stakeholders should be engaged in the I-81 study process?* **Trucking companies** is prominently listed, however there is no indication that the study made any effort to explicitly include the trucking companies in its follow-up engagement efforts.
    - *What impacts should be evaluated*? **Freight Businesses** (e.g., mileage and travel time) is listed third, however the final DEIS does not adequately assess the overarching impacts to the freight industry, including trucking costs associated with additional travel times, truck parking and services such as the impacts to the Pilot Travel Center.

  Furthermore, detailed discussions with freight industry reps, who could enlighten the evaluation team as to the direct and indirect impacts to the industry were inadequate in that a clear understanding as to the fiscal and functional impacts to this mobile industry **WAS NOT** evaluated. The following excerpts are from the ***July 2021 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY*** *(*PIN 3501.60 S-1) ***S.2 PROJECT PURPOSE, NEEDS, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES***. Review of these key framework components of the study reveal little consideration for freight related impacts and affects:
    - *The need to improve traffic flow and safety*
    - *The need to address aging infrastructure*
    - *The need for transportation infrastructure to support long-range planning efforts*
    - *The need to improve pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure*
    - *The need for improved transit amenities*
    - *Improve safety and create an efficient regional and local transportation system within and through greater Syracuse*
    - *Provide transportation solutions that enhance the livability, visual quality, sustainability, and economic vitality of greater Syracuse*

  While the aforementioned purpose, needs, goals and objectives are consistent with sound project evaluation, it is important to note that **FREIGHT is not specifically included** in any of the I-81 DEIS project purpose, needs, goals or objectives. Given the level of freight volumes and the importance of both regional and long-distance freight activity, including international trade, addressing freight impacts specifically is an **oversight and shortcoming** of the DEIS.

- **The I-81 DEIS Completely ignores safety issues like truck parking:** Jason Rivenburg lived in Fultonham NY, about two hours east of Syracuse. Jason was killed in 2009, while sleeping in the cab of his truck at an abandoned gas station in South Carolina. Jason was early for a scheduled delivery to a facility that did not allow loads on-site more than an hour ahead of a scheduled drop time and had nowhere else to park. Following Jason's death, his widow, Hope Rivenburg worked to pass Jason's Law establishing truck parking safety and security as a national priority. Jason's Law was introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives by Congressman Paul Tonko, and in the Senate by Senators Charles Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand. The law requires the USDOT and states to regularly evaluate the provision of safe truck parking.

  Jason's death and tireless efforts of his widow Hope sparked a national response. TANY finds it unconscionable that despite years of study by SMTC and NYSDOT into the impacts of removing a segment of the Interstate Highway System in a metropolitan area, that no effort has been made to examine the issue of truck parking in the Syracuse Area. Currently, the only commercial truck stop in the area is the Pilot Travel Center located in Liverpool, north of downtown Syracuse just off the I-81 on Seventh Street North. It is anticipated and shown through our analysis that the Community Grid Alternative will add drive time for truck drivers making pick-ups or deliveries to the Syracuse downtown areas or area west of downtown. Interstate truck drivers are regulated by federal hours of service limits. The additional time required for making deliveries, staging for delivery windows in a less reliable drive time environment will increase the demand for truck parking in Syracuse under the Community Grid Alternative.

Project Overview

If you bought it, a truck brought it is more than just a catchy phrase: The U.S. economy runs on trucks; the trucking industry moves over 80 percent of the nation's goods by value, over 72 percent by weight. [2] In the State of New York, the trucking industry employs nearly 300,000 people – one in every 28 jobs in the state. There are 46,000 trucking companies in New York, mostly small locally owned businesses. In 2019, the New York trucking industry paid over $16.7 billion in wages, and approximately $1.3 billion in state and federal roadway taxes.[3]

The trucking industry is critical to the economic success of not only our nation and the State of New York but to the City of Syracuse as well. For that reason, TANY is deeply concerned about the preferred alternative for replacing the I-81 Viaduct through downtown Syracuse as presented in the I-81 Draft Environmental Impact Assessment (DEIS).

The purpose of this evaluation is to present a detailed review of the truck- based freight related activity levels and goods movement information as to origins, destinations, freight types and travel characteristics in the Syracuse Region. Specifically, this evaluation represents an official review and comment on the ***Interstate 81 Viaduct Project – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)*** report prepared by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT).

The Syracuse region is an important freight related area with regional, statewide, and international origins/destinations. The use of Interstate 81 (I-81) through the central business district by freight trucks, both long distance and regional deliveries is evident by the level of truck traffic levels. The I-81 corridor is a major north-south corridor carrying passengers and commerce between the US/Canadian border with Maritime Provinces down the east coast along the Appalachian Mountains to Dandridge Tennessee.

The purpose of this evaluation is to present specific freight related impacts related to the proposed I-81 viaduct decommissioning through Downtown Syracuse, as documented in the I-81 DEIS.

The evaluation sought to answer the following key evaluation questions:

1. ***What is the estimated share of truck trips using I-81 to access impacted businesses in the Syracuse region?*** The share of truck trips using I-81 to either originate a freight trip or arrive at a destination for deliveries is an important component of the overall freight truck levels. However, not all areas within the Syracuse region will be impacted equally by the I-81 Viaduct Project.
2. ***What percentage of truck trips utilizing the I-81 Corridor are the result of accessing parcels in close proximity to the I-81 Viaduct Project Priority Area?*** These local or

[2] American Trucking Associations, online industry data: https://www.trucking.org/
[3] New York Trucking Fast Facts at: https://nytrucks.org/

downtown and central business district related origins/destinations using I-81 have been the focus of previous analysis. Downtown interchanges and alternate routes will be required for these businesses to service their clients.

3. ***What is the estimated impact to local businesses using the I-81 Corridor in terms of additional mileage and fuel consumption on an annual basis?*** Rerouting deliveries and freight movements for businesses in the region will increase their number of truck miles traveled and costs to do so. It will also increase their consumption of diesel fuel and associated emissions.
4. ***What is the estimated impact to through traffic using the I-81 Corridor in terms of additional mileage and fuel consumption on an annual basis?*** Just like the impacts on local businesses, what will be the monetary impact to freight moving through the region?

Commodity Profile of Syracuse and Onondaga County, New York

To better understand the flow of commerce through the I-81 corridor, the analysis begins with an examination of USDOT Freight Analysis Framework-5 (FAF-5) commodity flow data. FAF-5 is produced by the FHWA and is derived from the Commodity Flow Survey (CFS) conducted every five years by the Census Bureau and Bureau of Transportation Statistics. The 43 commodities represented in FAF are categorized using the Standard Classification of Transported Goods (SCTG) at the two-digit level.

A weakness of FAF data is its lack of geographic detail. To address this weakness a linear regression approach was used to assign 43 commodity groups to the county-level, and specifically examine the goods moving into, out of and within Onondaga County. The FAF disaggregation process uses employment with other public data exhibiting strong correlations to either production or attraction functions for specific commodity groups. A goal of this analysis is to understand the importance of the I-81 corridor in moving goods in and out of the Syracuse region, and what products are most important from a transportation standpoint to the region.

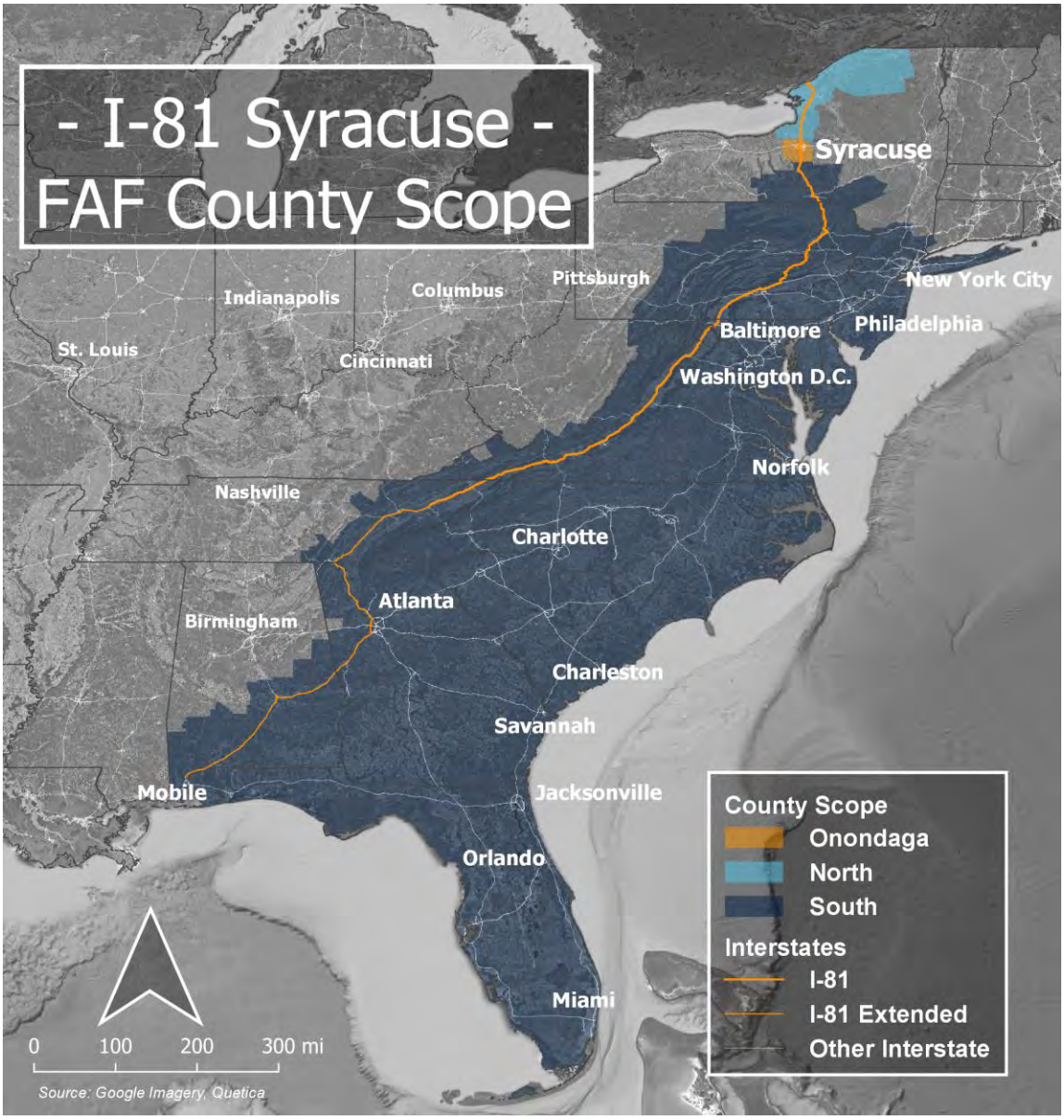
The scope of the freight flow analysis is depicted in **Exhibit 1**, and includes the following flow types:

1. Those originating and terminating in Onondaga County
2. Those originating in Onondaga County and terminating in a southern county
3. Those originating in Onondaga County and terminating in a northern county
4. Those originating in a southern county and terminating in a northern county
5. Those originating in a northern county and terminating in a southern county

The total estimated annual flow of freight utilizing the I-81 Corridor in and through Syracuse is 17.3 million tons of goods, with an estimated value exceeding $24.5 billion.

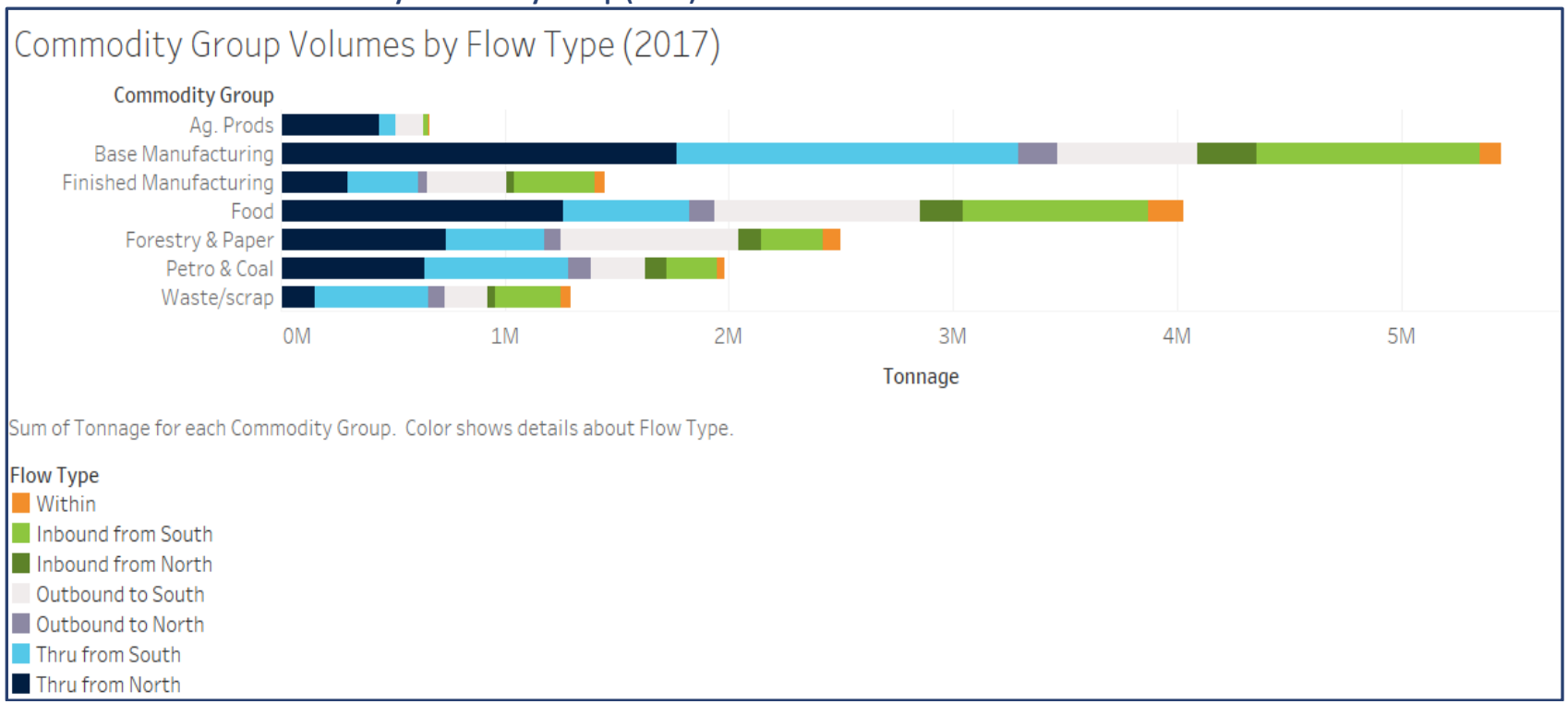
The majority (83 percent by volume) of the commerce on I-81 moving into, out of or through Syracuse supports domestic trade. Of the foreign trade using the I-81 corridor in Syracuse, imports (1.72 million tons) slightly outweigh exports to (1.2 million tons). Imports were valued at $4.2 billion and exports at $3.8 billion.

Exhibit 1 Freight Flow Scope



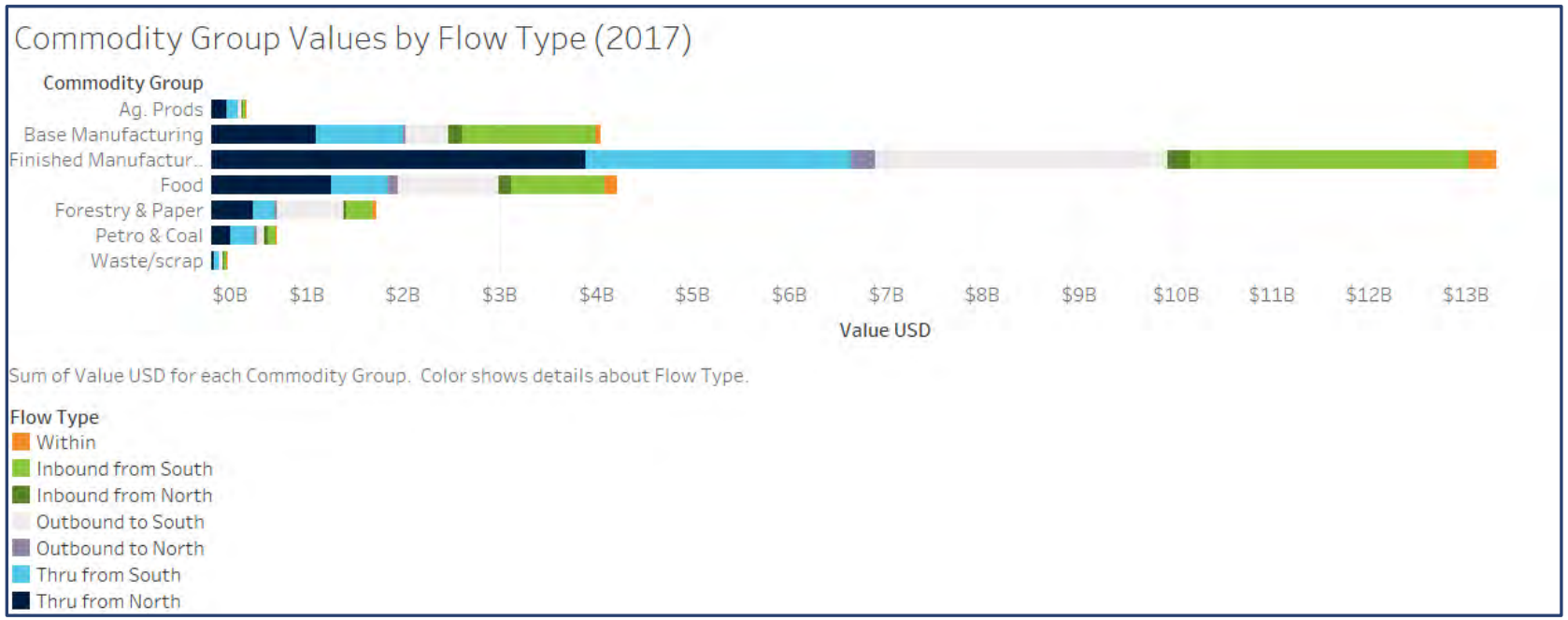
Commodities related to base manufacturing accounted for the largest share of corridor flows by volume with nearly 5.5 million tons (**Exhibit 2**). Just under 3.3 million tons was associated with through traffic. Food products totaled roughly 4 million tons. Forestry and paper products totaled almost 2.5 million tons while petroleum and coal products totaled nearly 1.98 million tons.

Exhibit 2 Corridor Flow Volumes by Commodity Group (2017)



In terms of commodity group flows by value, finished manufactured products account for roughly 54 percent of all corridor flow value worth $13.3 billion (**Exhibit 3**). Food products (17 percent) and base manufactured products (16 percent) represented the second and third most valued group of commodities.

Exhibit 3 Corridor Flow Values by Commodity Type (2017)



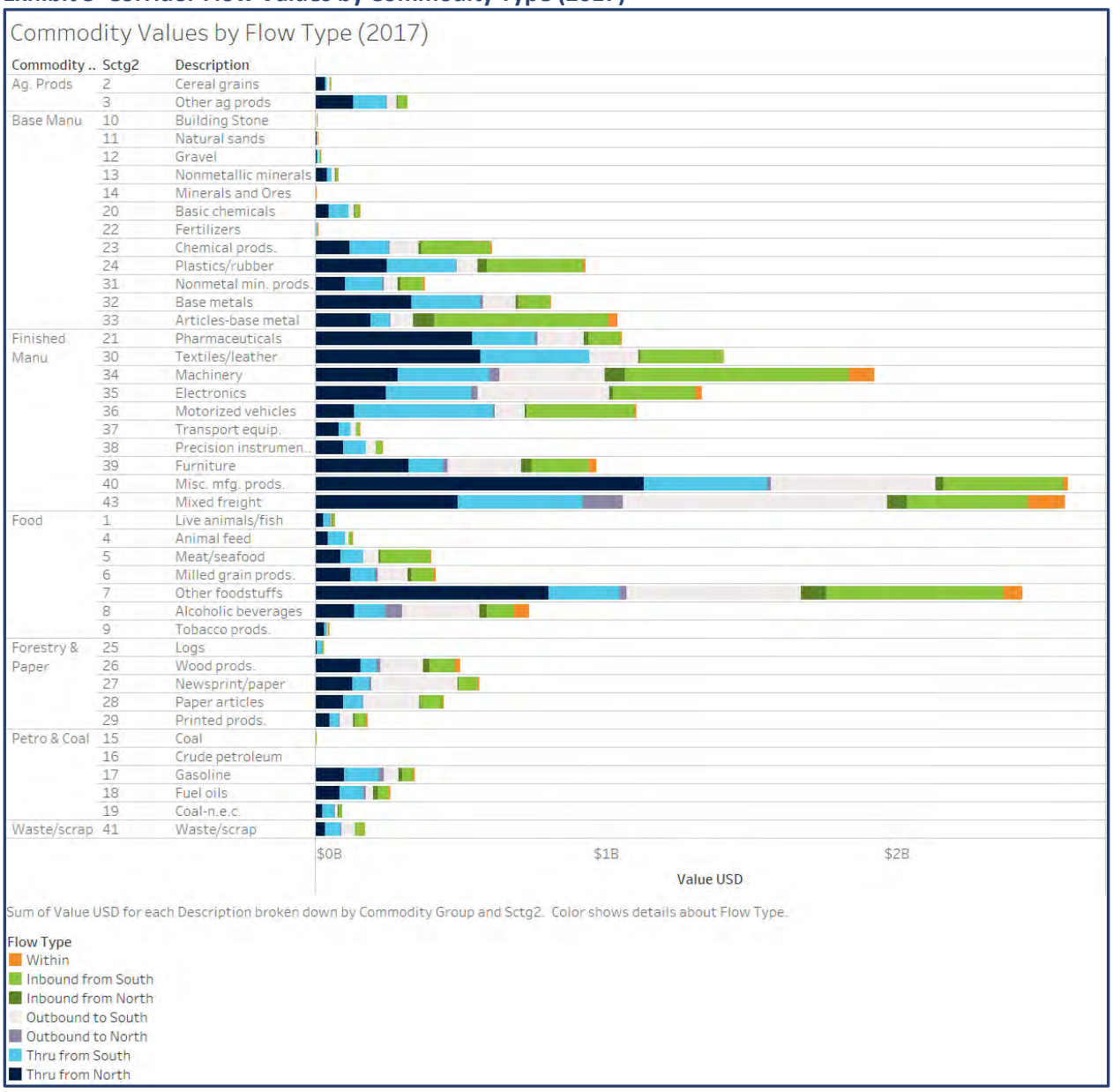
Flows of both Other Foodstuffs and Gravel totaled more than 2 million tons with the former surpassing 2.5 million tons and the latter 2.2 million tons (**Exhibit 4**). Flows of Waste/Scrap totaled nearly 1.3 million tons while non-metallic mineral products exceeded 1.18 million tons.

Exhibit 4 Corridor Flow Volumes by Commodity Type (2017)

In terms of value, both Miscellaneous Manufactured Products and Mixed Freight exceeded $2.5 billion while other foodstuffs totaled just under $2.5 billion (**Exhibit 5**). A number of commodity types exceeded $1 billion in value including Machinery ($1.9 billion), Textiles/Leather ($1.4

billion), Electronics ($1.3 billion), Motorized Vehicles ($1.1 billion), Pharmaceuticals ($1.05 billion), and Articles of Base Metal ($1.04 billion).

Exhibit 5 Corridor Flow Values by Commodity Type (2017)



Commodity Flow Conclusions

Commodity flow data is a commonly used data source by public planners for establishing baseline analyses about important commodity movements, total freight demands, modes used to move goods, and important trade markets to an urban area, region or state.

As was documented in the *Freight Transportation Profile* completed by SMTC in 2017:[4]

> *"Employment and the number of firms for the general freight dependent industries (i.e. construction, manufacturing, retail, transportation/warehousing, and wholesale) follow. The five industries account for 33% of all employees and the number of firms respectively, in Onondaga County,* ***which makes the freight sector an integral component of the economic condition of the SMTC planning area.*** (emphasis added).

Our updated analysis of freight movements in the Syracuse Region using the most current FAF-5 day continues to bear out the importance of freight and freight dependent industries, including transportation and warehousing to the regional economy. The total estimated annual flow of freight utilizing the I-81 Corridor in and through Syracuse is 17.3 million tons of goods, with an estimated value exceeding $24.5 billion.

The majority (83 percent by volume) of the commerce on I-81 moving into, out of or through Syracuse supports domestic trade. Of the foreign trade using the I-81 corridor in Syracuse imports (1.72 million tons) slightly outweigh exports to (1.2 million tons). Imports were valued at $4.2 billion and exports at $3.8 billion.

Inexplicably, the I-81 DEIS analysis chooses to ignore most of these important economic sectors and chooses to focus very narrowly on retail related activity.

Our review of the I-81 DEIS Section 6-3-2 found that the analysis seemingly avoids examining the impacts on the trucking industry and freight dependent industries such as manufacturing and construction:

- Page 6-142**: "***Indirect business displacement is the involuntary displacement of businesses that results from a change in economic conditions created by a project. Not all businesses are vulnerable to indirect displacement as a result of changes in traffic patterns; the potential effects on any individual business are dependent upon the specific characteristics of the business, as well as scale of change within a business' consumer trade area. Specific to the Community Grid Alternative, the types of business identified as warranting assessment are:*
  - *Businesses dependent upon specific types and/or volumes of consumer traffic, such as those dependent upon pass-by traffic;*
  - *Businesses sensitive to drive-time changes, changes in the volume of local consumer base within a business' trade areas; and*
  - *Businesses that are particularly sensitive to changes in workforce availability or changes in supply chain dynamics.*

[4] Freight Transportation Profile, Syracuse Metropolitan Planning Area. Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council. 2017.

The indirect displacement of an individual business due to market change is an economic issue, not environmental, and is not, in itself, the subject of this DDR/DEIS. However, the DDR/DEIS does consider the potential effects of displacement at a neighborhood level, i.e., whether a project could lead to indirect displacement that in turn leads to disinvestment in a neighborhood, which is an environmental concern. For business displacement assessments within this context, "anchor" business uses are typically of greatest concern. Anchor uses are prominent, unique, or well-visited uses that draw consumers who also support other local businesses (e.g., smaller retailers, service businesses, and restaurants).

Based on TANY's data analysis and interviews with trucking firms operating in the Syracuse Region, there are 17 trucking companies located west of the I-81/I-481 interchange that operate approximately 400 trucks on a daily basis. It is estimated that for these trucks to reroute going east via I-481 or I-690 to get to I-81 south, or the reverse, the additional mileage added to a one-way trip is between 14-18 miles longer than the current route (28-36 miles round trip). In 2019, results from an annual industry survey by ATRI found that the average cost per mile of operating a truck in the Northeast Region of the U.S. was $1.844. Resulting in added costs of approximately $51.63 to $66.38 for each round trip per truck. It is important to note this calculation does not include the NYS Highway Use Tax.

Truck Stop Analysis

ATRI truck GPS data was analyzed to identify trucks that utilized the I-81 corridor between May 1st and May 15th and made a stop within the Syracuse, NY region. Stop information includes a truck ID, the stop location in latitude and longitude, and the duration of the stop calculated from a start and end time. A stop includes instances where a truck was immobile for the entire duration, but it also includes instances where the starting location of a stop is less than 2,000 feet of its ending location. An example of this is when a truck is moving within a warehouse parking lot or has stopped to refuel and then park at a truck stop. After processing the ATRI data, a total number of 19,272 stops were identified for 3,541 trucks. 17,305 of these stops occurred within an Onondaga County parcel. The average stop duration was 5 hours.

An initial analysis shows that commercial parcels captured the largest number of stops with 9,680 while industrial parcels were second with 3,044 (**Exhibit 6**). Parcels coded as vacant captured 2,172 stops. To speed up processing at the parcel level, parcels coded in the 200 (Residential) and 900 (Wild, Forested, Conservation Lands, and Public Parks) ranges were removed from the dataset which is why those codes are not showing any stop counts.

Exhibit 6 Top Stop Locations, by Property Class

Code	Property Class Description	Count
100	Ag	9
200	Residential	-
300	Vacant	2,172
400	Commercial	9,680
500	Recreation and Entertainment	2
600	Community Services	944
700	Industrial	3,044
800	Public Services	529
900	Wild, Forested, Conservation lands, and Public Parks	-

The Onondaga County parcel dataset also contains information related to the associated land use. Parcels coded as distribution facilities accounted for the largest number of stops with 3,642, followed by Manufacturing with 2,927, and Trucking Terminal with 2,626 (**Exhibit 7**). Parcels classified as Vacant Industrial Land and Commercial Vacant with Minor Improvement captured nearly 1,900 stops combined. These include parcels that do not have buildings present and are adjacent to industrial parcels or commercial parcels such as the Pilot Travel Center located south of the I-81/I-90 interchange. As can be seen by the 942 stops for

Road/Street/Highway, some of these ROW facilities are captured within the parcel data, such as the State of New York Thruway Authority (also known as Interstate 90).

Exhibit 7 Top Stop Locations, by Land Use

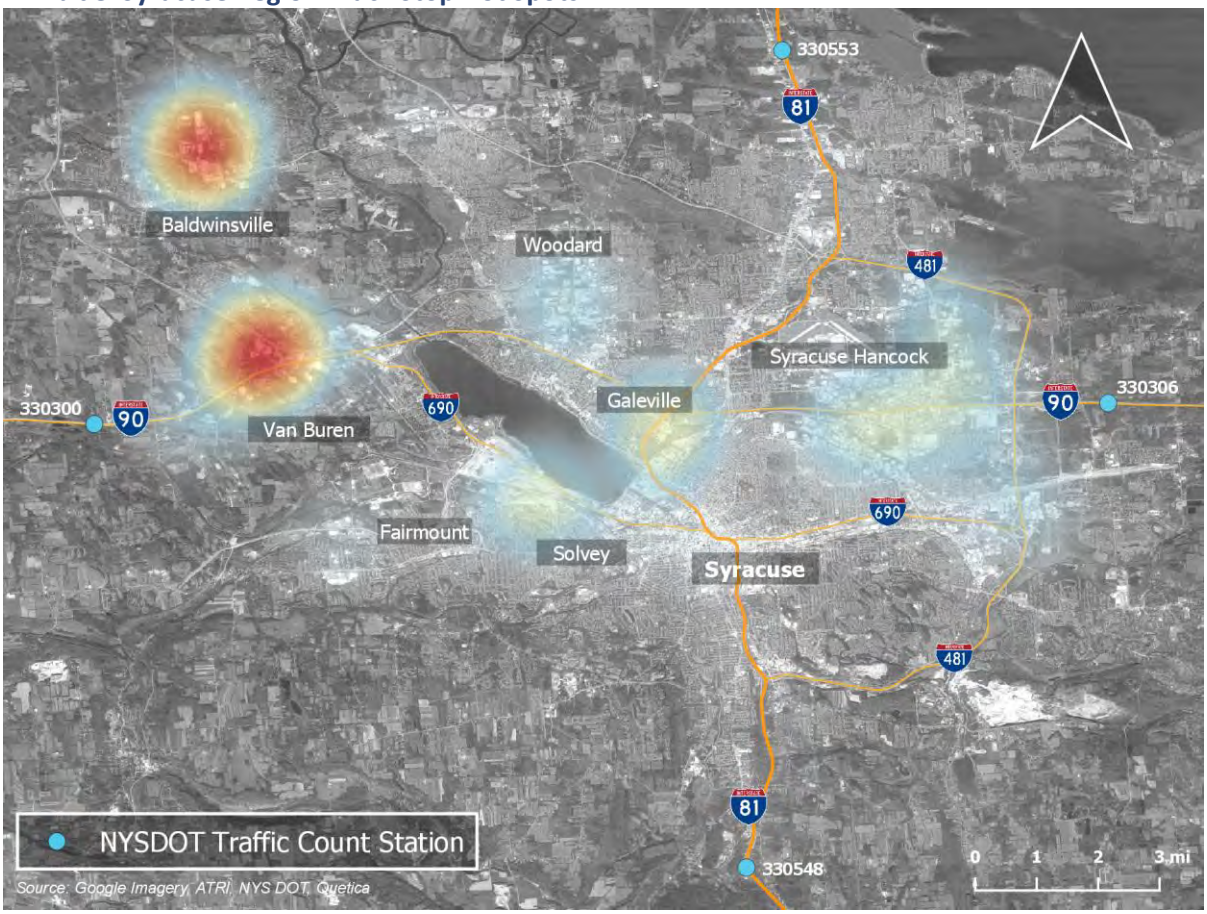
Land Use Description	Count
Distribution Facility	3,642
Manufacturing	2,927
Trucking Terminal	2,626
Vacant Industrial Land	1,302
Road/Street/Highway	942
Service Or Gas Station	772
Commercial Vacant with Minor Improvement	589
Gas Storage/Distribution	428
Large Retail Store	384
Neighborhood Shopping Center	292

However, not all stops are impacted equally by the proposed I-81 Viaduct Project. For trucks which regularly utilize the I-81 Corridor to reach an origin or destination, stakeholder feedback has indicated the impact is an additional 14-18 miles of travel by traversing around downtown Syracuse via I-481 or I-690. Associated with those additional miles traveled are an additional 15-20 minutes of travel during free flow and potentially double that during AM and PM peak travel times. Thirty to forty minutes of extra travel will have a significant impact on truck drivers whose hours-of-service drive time is tracked to the minute through electronic logging devices, and the supply chains they support. The alternative to the rerouted trip around Syracuse would be a truck trip through the community grid including a traffic circle, nearly 20 traffic signals, and a series of turns to get back to I-81.

Shippers in the north and northwest portions of the Syracuse region, as well as trucks completing through trips to and from the west of Syracuse utilizing I-90, would be most impacted by the loss of the I-81 Corridor through Syracuse. **Exhibit 8** shows the locations of major freight generators within the Syracuse region along with concentrations of trucks making stops using the ATRI GPS data sample. As can be seen, major concentrations are located in Baldwinsville and Van Buren. Prominent shippers in the Baldwinsville area include McLane Distribution, Anheuser-Busch Budweiser, Gypsum Express, among others while major freight generators in the Van Buren area include FedEx Ground, Terpening Trucking Co., A. Duie Pyle Inc., Sysco, G&C Foods, Americold Logistics, and Old Dominion Freight Line. Lesser concentrations occur in Galeville and into the Lakefront area as well as Woodard where freight generators such as the Pilot Travel Center, Lockheed Martin, DOT Foods, the Regional Market,

Packaging Corp of America, Victory Packaging, XPO Logistics, Raymour & Flanigan's distribution center, and a number of others are located.

Exhibit 8 Syracuse Region Truck Stop Hot Spots



Utilizing the ATRI truck GPS sample data, freight generators in these four regions accounted for roughly 22 percent of the northbound trucks passing station 330548 and 20 percent of the southbound trucks. In addition, northbound trucks along I-81 which then pass through the region and station 330300 westbound along I-90 accounted for 35 percent of northbound trucks passing station 330548 while trucks passing through the region in the opposite direction accounted for more than 31 percent of the southbound trucks. Taken together, these trips represent roughly 40 percent of the northbound truck traffic passing station 330548 and 36 percent of the southbound trips (the percentages are not additive since some trucks made a stop and then traveled out of the region in the same day). On an annual basis, this equates to over 1.06 million impacted truck trips, an additional 17 million truck miles traveled in the Syracuse region, and more than 2.6 million more gallons of diesel fuel consumed. In terms of costs, companies will expend an additional $15.7 million in vehicle and $11.8 million in driver costs while the region will incur more than $431 thousand in monetized emissions from more

than 17.6 tons of hydrocarbons, NO_X and fine particulate matter[5]. However, the vehicle costs do not include New York State's Highway Use Tax meaning they are conservative estimates.

The impact on freight generators in the Solvey and Fairmount areas such as the West Rock Paperboard Mill, Syracuse Fiber, and others will depend on the travel route: either along I-481 and I-690 or along state and local roads. Both will increase congestion on the new routes. While the I-481/I-690 route would slightly increase the mileage traveled and the state and local routes would slightly decrease the mileage traveled, both would increase the travel time for shippers and carriers. Based on the ATRI sample, shippers in these areas account for 5 percent of the northbound traffic and 4 percent of the southbound traffic at station 330548.

Truck trips that travel the length of the I-81 Corridor through downtown Syracuse, either south to north or north to south past stations 330548 and 330553, would only be slightly impacted by an additional 4-miles by having to travel I-481 around Syracuse. The ATRI data suggests approximately 23 percent of the northbound trucks traveling past station 330548 is through traffic while 26 percent of the southbound trucks represent through trips. Combined, these trips represent 692 thousand annual truck trips through the region and an additional 2.77 million miles of truck traffic and 426 thousand gallons of diesel fuel. In terms of costs, the additional travel would cost shippers and carriers $2.56 million in commercial vehicle costs, $1.9 million in driver costs, and $70 thousand in monetized emissions along with the added congestion by rerouting the truck traffic from I-81 to I-481.

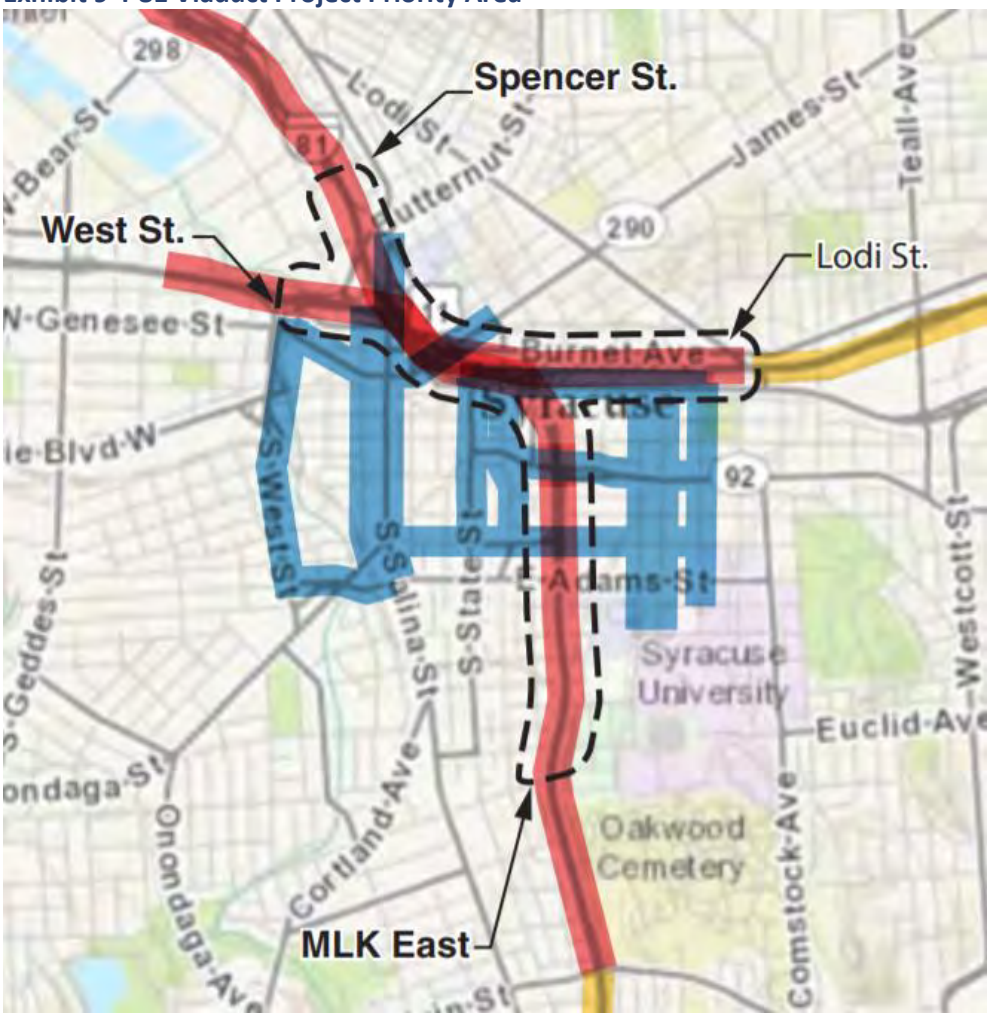
Truck trips that are originated or terminated within the Syracuse region east of the I-81 Corridor (those that utilize I-90, I-481, or I-690) along with those that travel into and out of the region past station 330306 via I-90 would not be impacted by the I-81 Viaduct Project other than from the additional congestion brought on by the rerouted truck traffic. Freight generators that fit this description and are located east of Syracuse Hancock International Airport include FedEx Freight, UPS, ABF Freight, Meadow Brook Dairy, Swift Transportation, and Estes Express Lines while FedEx Ground, Carrier Transicold, Byrne Dairy Dry Warehouse, and Cavalier Transport are located south of the airport with access via I-90. Also not impacted by the project, are the truck trips traveling past station 330548 on the way to pick-up or drop-off containers at CSX's intermodal terminal located south of the I-481 and I-90 interchange. The

[5] Based on Quetica's analysis of ATRI's truck GPS sample, combined AADTT counts at NYSDOT's station 330548 (https://www.dot.ny.gov/tdv), per mile trucking costs and fuel consumption from the American Transportation Research Institute's *An Analysis of the Operational Costs of Trucking: 2020 Update* (https://truckingresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/ATRI-Operational-Costs-of-Trucking-2020.pdf), heavy-duty vehicle emission rates from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (https://www.bts.gov/content/estimated-national-average-vehicle-emissions-rates-vehicle-vehicle-type-using-gasoline-and), and the U.S. Department of Transportation's *Benefit-Cost Analysis Guidance for Discretionary Grant Programs* (https://www.transportation.gov/sites/dot.gov/files/2021-02/Benefit%20Cost%20Analysis%20Guidance%202021.pdf).

ATRI data suggests just under a quarter of the truck trips carrying intermodal containers to and from the terminal pass the southern I-81 station.

Lastly, previous analysis of impacts to shippers and truck trips have focused on those businesses in the immediate vicinity of the Viaduct and most directly impacted by the I-81 Viaduct Project. **Exhibit 9** from the NYSDOT's I-81 Viaduct Project Scoping Report in 2015, shows the project's priority area in dashed lines beginning in its southernmost point at Martin Luther King East, Lodi Street to the east, West Street to the west, and Spencer Street to the northwest. While shippers located adjacent and in close proximity to the project will be most directly impacted by having to route through the local street grid to reach more distant interchanges, the number of these truck trips are minimal when compared to the region's total truck trips. Less than 3 percent of all of the truck stops made in the ATRI GPS data sample were made within a 1-mile buffer of the project's priority area. When expanded using the NYSDOT traffic count station data, the total daily truck trips to the buffered priority area totals roughly 100 stops.

Exhibit 9 I-81 Viaduct Project Priority Area



Draft Environmental Impact Statement Assessment & Evaluation of Freight

Based upon our review of ***Interstate 81 Viaduct Project – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)*** report, it is our opinion that freight, logistics and related industries and businesses were not evaluated fully to objectively assess the potential impacts to businesses, increases in freight costs or potential negative industry impacts. While the recognition that other industries, neighborhoods, and other social and environmental justice are important aspects that should be considered, it appears the freight industry was NOT given equal footing in terms of fiscal and physical impacts of the I-81 decommissioning.

Below is an assessment of the baseline traffic related data, analyses, and findings as presented in the Appendices and chapters of the DEIS. For each of the report chapters and/or Appendices, a brief statement of findings is presented.

Appendix C-2 VISSIM Development and Calibration Report – while truck/trucks are mentioned six times in the Appendix, there are no specific evaluation numbers presented for existing or future conditions.

Appendix C-3 Traffic Volumes and Levels of Service (LOS) – neither trucks nor any vehicle classification is presented in this Appendix that allow differentiation of vehicle types for either existing or future conditions.

Appendix D-2 Economic Considerations – while truck(s/ing) is mentioned 35 times in this Appendix, the references are related to the Pilot Truck Stop or to truck related economic impacts being minimal such as, "Overall, the Community Grid Alternative would not impede freight movement in the study area." *H. SPECIFIC BUSINESS TYPES FREIGHT (TRUCKING) – page 30*

Appendix M-5 Responses to Comments Received – The following are truck related references contained in the responses to comments received at various forums, etc. While truck(s/ing) is referenced 54 times in the document, most are related to limiting trucks on local streets and mitigation for potential increases. However, below are several pertinent references to truck(s/ing) including comments (C) and official responses (R).

C 3-58: In addition to constructing high speed exit ramps, clarify what other changes will be required to bring I-481 up to FHWA standards. Lower speed limit for commercial vehicles/truck only lane for I-481. Maintain condition of I-481, including snow management and removal.

R 3-58: The conversion of I-481 to I-81 is based on a 70 mph design speed, and the highway would have a posted speed limit of 65 mph. Topography and traffic volumes do not warrant a separate truck only lane or truck only speed limit. Most geometric elements would meet NYSDOT and FHWA freeway design standards. **Appendix A-3** in this DDR/DEIS lists non-standard features, which are subject to review and approval by FHWA.

The NYSDOT and FHWA criteria used to determine applicable design standards for all the various highways and streets within the Project Area are listed in **Sections 5.4.2** and **5.4.3**. The design criteria consist of 11 critical design elements and other design parameters. These include recommended design elements, such as ramp lengths, ramp spacing, storm drainage criteria, etc. The shoulder criteria in particular are established to address a number of considerations, including safety, vehicle breakdowns, and snow management.

C 5-64: There will be added fuel costs for drivers and for trucking companies with the re-routing of I-81 under the Community Grid Alternative. The additional mileage will also increase insurance rates for truckers. With the Community Grid Alternative, fuel consumption and related air quality impacts would be much higher because fuel consumption rates are higher for vehicles in slow traffic than on highways.

R 5-64: This DDR/DEIS includes an analysis of the Community Grid Alternative, which accounts for changes in travel patterns for trucks, and this DDR/DEIS does not identify any adverse effects on air quality. The effects of the Community Grid Alternative on freight movement are addressed in **Section 6-3-2.4.1**, and the analysis did not conclude that there would be adverse effects to their continued operations.

C 6-16: Input should be sought from emergency responders and trucking companies. They should be provided a question–and-answer period.

R 6-16: NYSDOT has met with emergency responders and trucking companies and has incorporated their feedback into the design of the alternatives.

C 6-32:	Work with community partners to address concerns about truck traffic. • Mitigate issues related to truck traffic in the western towns; on City streets; in the towns along I-481, as truck traffic shifts east to access the enhanced CSX terminal in DeWitt; and encourage more shipments to travel by train. • Develop a comprehensive rail and freight plan for the region. • Transfer ownership of certain State routes to the county or locality, enabling them to regulate truck traffic.
R 6-32:	To the extent feasible, the Project would mitigate traffic impacts, including truck impacts. A comprehensive rail and freight plan for the region is beyond the scope of this Project, but could be considered as a potential Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council Unified Planning Work Program study in the future. In the context of a future study, the feasibility of transferring jurisdiction of certain State routes to the county or local town, enabling them to regulate truck traffic, could be examined.

As demonstrated in the beforementioned referenced meeting comments and subsequent I-81 Viaduct Team responses, the lack of sound and comprehensive evaluation of the freight related impacts associated with the I-81 Viaduct project is evident. The industry, while supportive of improved and safe infrastructure, as it IS OUR WORKPLACE, feels additional freight related considerations need to be made to fully address future impacts to the industry and the local, regional, state and national economies as well, which depend on the freight industry.

Conclusion

Our review of the associated documents revealed that the ***Interstate 81 Viaduct Project – Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)*** was prepared with a significantly affected industry **NOT FULLY CONSIDERED**. In fact, this appears even more significant given that this project involved the removal of an existing section of Interstate 81. It is clear that according to federal statutes and guidance, listed below, the I-81 DEIS in fact, **DID NOT** fully consider the impacts of the freight industry and, more specifically, interstate commerce or commercial motor vehicles which is a critical component of interstates' role to facilitate interstate commerce.

§ 658.11 Additions, deletions, exceptions, and restrictions.

(d) Deletions and use restrictions - Federal-aid interstate.

(1) The deletion of, or imposition of use restrictions on, any specific segment of the Interstate Highway System on the National Network, except as otherwise provided in this part …

(2) The justification accompanying a request shall be based on the following:

(i) Analysis of evidence of safety problems supporting the deletion or restriction as identified in § 658.11(c).

(ii) Analysis of the impact on interstate commerce.

(**iii**) Analysis and recommendation of any alternative routes that can safely accommodate commercial motor vehicles of the dimensions and configurations described in §§ 658.13 and 658.15 and serve the area in which such segment is located.

(iv) Evidence of consultation with the local governments in which the segment is located as well as the Governor or the Governor's authorized representative of any adjacent State that might be directly affected by such a deletion or restriction.

To understand the impact to interstate commerce, a comprehensive understanding of the movement, routing and cost of freight/interstate commerce must be evaluated, and our review suggests this evaluation **DID NOT** occur. Additionally, we believe that the overarching environmental impacts to air quality from higher concentrations of motor vehicles, including trucks, to both the Downtown Syracuse as well as the new I-81 (former I-481) segments was not fully considered, especially given the recent changes in freight movement/delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic, which will likely continue in the future.

University at Buffalo
Clinical Legal Education
School of Law

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AUG - 2 2021
BY:

30 July 2021

Richard J. Marquis,
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Federal Building
11A Clinton Avenue, Suite 719
Albany, NY 12207

Mark Frechette, P.E.
Project Director
New York State Department of Transportation, Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Re: Request for 60-day Extension of Public Comment Period for I-81 Viaduct Project Draft Design Report/Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Mr. Marquis and Mr. Frechette,

On behalf of the New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU), the University at Buffalo School of Law's Environmental Advocacy Clinic submits this request for a 60-day comment period extension. Specifically, we ask that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) provide an adequate public comment period for the recent I-81 Viaduct Project Draft Design Report (DDR)/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) by extending the total comment period to 120 days.

Your agencies have worked many years and produced many thousands of pages in the DDR/DEIS. The proffered 60-day comment period, at this point in the process, is insufficient for the public to participate in the comment period in a meaningful way. Providing more time will benefit this extensive and critical infrastructure project by allowing adequate time for important community-based input on many vital aspects of the project, including environmental justice, racial justice, and economic justice.

The proposed project is poised to have significant impacts on environmental justice communities in the Syracuse area. Given sufficient time to submit comments, these communities can positively shape the next steps. This project offers a considerable opportunity for New York State to provide restoration to neighborhoods most burdened by the continuing existence of the I-81 Viaduct. Moreover, with a 120-day comment period the most impacted communities can provide input that will provide guidance as to the project can be carried out in a way that aligns with crucial federal and state goals regarding racial and environmental justice.[1]

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[1] See Executive Order 14008, Jan. 27, 2021, available at https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/27/executive-order-on-tackling-the-climate-crisis-at-home-and-abroad/; See generally Renee Cho, A Guide to the Biden Administration's All-of-Government Approach to Environmental Justice, Mar. 4, 2021, Columbia University, available at https://news.climate.columbia.edu/2021/03/04/biden-administration-environmental-justice/.

507 O'Brian Hall, Buffalo, NY 14260-1100
716.645.2167 (F) 716.645.6199
law-clinic@buffalo.edu

www.law.buffalo.edu/clinics.html

The current 60-day comment period is not nearly enough time for the public to submit meaningful input on the DDR/DEIS. Without a sufficient opportunity to comment, opinions and ideas deserving serious consideration regarding the teardown of the I-81 Viaduct could be ignored or undervalued. This would be not just disastrous to those voices, it would fly in the face of what your agencies stand for. We urge the FHWA and the NYSDOT to extend the public comment period to 120 days. The Syracuse community as a whole, and the I-81 project itself, will be vastly improved if all voices are given the space to consider and contribute to the offered alternatives.

I. The Current 60-Day Comment Period Does Not Provide Sufficient Time for Response, and is Therefore Prejudicial to the Public and Contrary to a Key Purpose of the National Environmental Policy Act

The current 60-day comment period for the I-81 DDR/DEIS is shockingly short given the size and complexity of this DDR/DEIS. Such an abridged timeframe will not afford all members of the public who will be impacted by the resulting decision enough time to submit meaningful comments. Inclusion is essential in this situation, when the proposed project will irrevocably change the lives of so many in the community.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is designed to include public involvement. As the Council on Environmental Quality has noted, "[t]he environmental review process under NEPA provides an opportunity for you to be involved in the Federal agency decision making process. It will help you understand what the Federal agency is proposing, to offer your thoughts on alternative ways for the agency to accomplish what it is proposing, and to offer your comments on the agency's analysis of the environmental effects of the proposed action and possible mitigation of potential harmful effects of such actions."[2] To not allow for meaningful participation is in fact contrary to the FHWA's own NEPA regulations in 23 CFR § 771.105, which are described by the FWHA as recognizing that "[p]ublic involvement and a systematic interdisciplinary approach be essential parts of the development process for proposed actions."[3]

In particular, the proposed I-81 Viaduct Project will have significant effects on the community living in the shadow of the Viaduct and on the greater Syracuse area. Moreover, it is designed to set a precedent for highway teardowns across the nation. In accordance with renewed federal focus on working toward true environmental and racial justice, respecting frontline communities across the United States is essential. This is even more important given New York State's re-commitment this year to overcoming its legacy of environmental racism. True inclusion means that the public, especially those who live around the current I-81 Viaduct, should be given a long enough opportunity to review the DEIS and submit substantive comments in response.

The complete I-81 DDR/DEIS is approximately 28,330 pages long with appendices. The 60-day deadline closes on September 14, 2021. 60 days is simply not enough time to read, comprehend, and provide substantive responses to thousands of pages. To

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[2] Council on Environmental Quality, Executive Office of the President, A Citizen's Guide to the NEPA: Having Your Voice Heard (2007), available at https://ceq.doe.gov/docs/get-involved/Citizens_Guide_Dec07.pdf.

[3] Federal Highway Administration, Environmental Review Toolkit: NEPA and Project Development, https://www.environment.fhwa.dot.gov/nepa/nepa_projDev.aspx (last visited July 30, 2021).

expect all potentially impacted members of the public to undertake such a Sisyphean task is both unrealistic and prejudicial.

II. The Current 60-Day Comment Period Does Not Align with the Biden Administration's Commitment to Environmental Justice

In addition to not affording individuals most affected by the proposed I-81 teardown a suitable period to provide input on an area they know well, the proffered 60-day comment period directly contravenes federal guidance affirming its commitment to environmental justice. President Biden's January 2021 Executive Order 14008, Section 219, states: "Agencies shall make achieving environmental justice part of their missions by developing programs, policies, and activities to address the disproportionately high and adverse human health, environmental, climate-related and other cumulative impacts on disadvantaged communities, as well as the accompanying economic challenges of such impacts." The condensed comment period does not achieve that goal.

The July 20, 2021 Interim Guidance titled "The Path to Achieving Justice40" issued by the Office of Management and Budget, the Council on Environmental Quality, and the Office of the National Climate Advisor, calls on federal agencies to engage with communities. The guidance issued this month notes that the Biden Administration is "committing to continuing to listen to and learn from impacted communities and those who have been on the front lines as part of [the] whole-of-government approach to delivering President Biden's promise to make environmental justice a national priority."

In the case of the DDR/DEIS for I-81, meaningful community input is absolutely necessary to fulfill the federal priority. The proposed 60-day comment period for such a major community infrastructure project directly contravenes these important goals.

III. The 60-Day Comment Period Does Not Conform to Requirements under The Environmental Manual of NYSDOT, and New York's Overall Commitment to Environmental Justice

New York has a strong reputation and decades-long commitment when it comes to advocating for environmental justice. The NYSDOT's Environmental Manual specifically references compliance with environmental justice mandates under NEPA. The current 60-day comment period runs the risk of continuing the tradition of excluding crucial voices, counter to what the leaders of New York have championed for decades, with renewed focus in recent years. NYSDOT and FWHA have the opportunity to make a decision that would set a positive and inclusive example here.

The 60-day comment period will not achieve the principles of environmental, racial, and economic justice that New York's government has committed to. FHWA and NYSDOT should extend the comment period for the DDR/DEIS to 120 days, using it as an opportunity to engage with communities, to listen and learn, and to provide "enhanced opportunit[y] for input and participation… so that [economically distressed and minority] communities have a greater voice" in the execution of the proposed I-81 Viaduct Project. *See* S.3211-A/A.6530.

IV. Precedent Supports the Extension of Comment Periods, and Similar Extensions are Often Granted

Furthermore, the comment period for the I-81 Viaduct Project DDR/DEIS is not in any way limited to 60 days. In fact, precedent shows that extensions are often liberally granted. NEPA and its regulations provide the framework for lead agencies to set longer comment periods. EPA liberally grants these requests – in fact, when lead agencies make a request, there is an assumption that it will be granted. Lengthy extensions to fully engage the public through a longer comment period are frequent.

For example, in 2020, FHWA extended an already 90-day comment period on a Maryland infrastructure study DEIS to 120 days primarily to "ensure[] the public has ample opportunity to review and provide feedback on the DEIS." Earlier this year, FHWA also extended the time for public comment for the first comprehensive update to the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices for Streets and Highways (MUTCD) by 60 days for an overall comment period of 150 days. FHWA stated the previous 90-day comment period did "not provide sufficient time to review and provide comprehensive comments." Likewise, NYSDOT has granted extensions for DEIS comment periods. In one such situation [for the High Speed Rail Empire Corridor Tier 1 Draft Environmental Impact Statement], the DOT Commissioner noted that "[t]he community is critically important in helping us plan for effective transportation improvements, and we're pleased that this proposal is generating so much interest" as part of the announcement granting that extension.

Other federal agencies provide such extensions as well. In 2020, the U.S. Forest Service extended the comment period on the Stibnite Gold Project DEIS to 75 days in order to "provide[] the public and other interested parties more time to participate and . . . ultimately support a robust record of decision." These examples are all analogous to the current situation; ample opportunity is needed for the Syracuse community to review and provide feedback on the DDR/DEIS, and precedent dictates that an extension of the comment period should be granted.

V. The Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic Also Warrant an Extension

In addition to precedent and policy discussed above, there is another pressing reason for an extension in this matter. New York, like other parts of the United States, continues to face the realities wrought by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many people are still working from home, many have significantly more complex daily lives, and many are struggling with mental health. The short comment period exacerbates these stressors.

Community meetings that were taking place weekly were moved to Zoom, limiting attendance to those who had the technological capacity to participate for over a year. The ramp up to reconnecting in person has recently been slowed down due to the Delta variant, and the significant increase in COVID cases throughout the state. This past week, there has been reporting of a 70% spike in COVID cases in Onondaga County, and the state of New York is considering new mandates. An extension in the comment period could help mitigate the impact these COVID-related developments are already having on the ability to mobilize the type of community participation needed to ensure that the comments will be robust, inclusive, and helpful to the agencies.

In sum: we request that the FHWA and NYSDOT extend the comment period and provide at least 120 days for public comment on the I-81 Viaduct Project DDR/DEIS. This amount of time is consistent with related FHWA and NYSDOT extensions granted, as shown above. Additionally, it will be in line with New York and the federal government's commitment to environmental, racial, and economic justice. Finally, an extension will set a positive example for subsequent projects, and provide marginalized communities reparative and meaningful opportunities to have their voices be heard.

We submit this in hopes of a receptive and affirmative response to this request.

Respectfully submitted,

Kim Diana Connolly, Esq.,
Director

Daniel Piersa,
Student Attorney

Roxanna Herreid,
Student Attorney

The Environmental Advocacy Clinic
University at Buffalo School of Law
507 O'Brian Hall, North Campus
Buffalo, New York 14260
(p) (716) 645-2167
(f) (716) 645-6199
law-environmental@buffalo.edu
Attorneys for NYCLU

THE UPSTATE MINORITY ECONOMIC ALLIANCE

OUR MISSION: HARNESSING THE ECONOMIC POWER OF THE MINORITY COMMUNITY FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE REGION.

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Laura Cueva
Treasurer
President/CEO
Interior Innovations

Bishop Ronald Dewberry
Founder & CEO
Center of Hope International, Inc.

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President & CEO
Landon & Rian Enterprises Inc.

Natasha Newbury
Audit & Accounting Manager
Dermody, Birke & brown CPAs LLC

Tim Penix
Vice President
SUNY Educational Opportunity Center

Dr. Emad Rahim PHD, DM, PMP
Kotouc Family Endowed Professor and Chair,
Bellevue University

Laiza Semidey
Syracuse Surge Workforce Manager
CenterState CEO

Tai Ngo Shaw
President
CNY Uniforms Plus

Rob Simpson
President & CEO
CenterState CEO

Sheena Solomon
Executive Director
The Gifford Foundation

Hasan Stephens
Founder & Executive Director
Good Life Philanthropic
Youth Foundation

October 14, 2021

Mr. Mark Frechette, P.E.
Project Director
New York State Department of Transportation, Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

RECEIVED
OCT 15 2021
BY:

Mr. Rick Marquis
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration Leo W. O'Brien Federal Building 11A
Clinton Avenue, Suite 719
Albany, NY 12207

Dear Mr. Frechette and Mr. Marquis:

The Upstate Minority Economic Alliance is the only minority chamber of commerce in the 16-county region of Central and Upstate New York. Our primary interest in I-81 is advocating on behalf of minority construction contractors. The Community Grid alone is an estimated $2 billion-dollar proposition. Just one fraction of this magnanimous project will benefit minority entrepreneurs and business owners in general and minority contractors specifically.

Notwithstanding workforce development, UMEA implores the NYS Dept. of Transportation to ensure a fair and equitable process whereby DBEs (federally-certified disadvantaged business enterprises) have an equal opportunity to bid as a subcontractor to the prime contractors. These sub-primes will require support services, and UMEA has members—many of whom are MWBE-Certified—who stand ready to assist; thereby recycling revenues circulated in the community and further boosting the local economy.

It has been historically documented that I-81 adversely affected Black and LatinX communities when the highway was built through public housing. Let's not make the same mistake again. Provide these contractors with an opportunity to build generational wealth as an antidote to generational poverty and contribute to the local and regional economies as they rebuild the highway for the betterment of the *entire* community.

Sincerely,

Me'Shae Rolling
Executive Director

RECEIVED
OCT 14 2021
BY:

October 13, 2021

Mark Frechette, P.E.
Project Director
New York State Department of Transportation, Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Dear New York State Department of Transportation:
I submit this letter as single comment representing the Urban Jobs Task Force, a local 501c4 organization in Syracuse with a mission to advocate for equitable access to employment opportunities for disadvantage Syracuse residents. Accompanying this letter are original versions of 2,369 petition signatures of New York State residents, most of them local to Onondaga County, in support of local hire on I-81 and we are submitting these signatures with the expectation that each be counted as a separate comment.

The Urban Jobs Task Force (UJTF) is delighted to see the shift in your attitude towards prioritizing local hire on the I-81 Viaduct project, as demonstrated by your willingness to create the SEP-14 application for the project in partnership with us, the City of Syracuse, and Legal Services of Central New York (LSCNY) by extension of your participation in the I-81 Big Table, inspired by recommendations from UJTF and LSCNY's Racial Equity Impact Statement. We also appreciate your preferred option of the community grid. We are in support of this option, despite its flaws.

We would like to bring to your attention some concerns we have regarding some equity issues in relation to the demolition and construction of a 1.4 mile raised viaduct portion of I-81. The NYCLU has declared this as a civil rights and racial justice issue and an opportunity for equitable development. With the goal of ameliorating some of the past harms created by race-based policies that led to the original build and continue to exist in its presence.
The raised viaduct portion of I-81 is a representation of what environmental and structural racism, both literally and figuratively. The mostly Black community living in the shadows of the I-81 viaduct have higher rates of asthma than their white counterparts; have been disproportionately impacted by COVID 19; have lower property values; underfunded schools; and is one of the most segregated neighborhoods in our nation. This area, as well as the City of Syracuse in itself has some the highest rates of concentrated poverty in our nation.

Further, the upcoming I-81 Viaduct project will bring thousands of good-paying jobs to the city of Syracuse. In anticipation of this influx of lucrative careers, UJTF in collaboration with LSCNY created the first-ever Racial Equity Impact Statement (REIS) on the construction trade industry in Onondaga County. The report executive summary is attached to this letter as part of our organization's comment submission. The report found that not only racial, but also geographical disparities were deeply rooted in the construction trades. REIS project data shows that 87% of workers on the public projects examined in Syracuse were white, however Syracuse's white population is only 49%. Equally troubling, over 90% of construction workers resided outside the city of Syracuse. This means that if the I-81 Viaduct project were to start

tomorrow, very few Syracuse residents would be able to work on it and we are the 8th poorest city in the nation. These inequities are a direct result of generations of historic exclusion of black and brown people in the lucrative field of construction trades, and the segregation caused by federal infrastructure projects during the 1950s to 70s, including the original I-81 Viaduct.

Infrastructure upgrades nationwide are inevitable, but it is time that we move beyond business as usual and use these projects also as vehicles to correct the racial, environmental and economic injustices they caused upon their initial builds. Failing to frame infrastructure projects through an equity lens can result in severe adverse outcomes especially for marginalized groups and we can no longer focus solely on crunching numbers around traffic safety, flow, and delays. Since infrastructure projects cause significant disruptions to daily life in their building footprints, we must also focus on the people who will be most impacted. What I am calling attention to here is the interrelatedness of process with outcomes.

Our hope is that this project becomes a model for the rest of the nation on best practices and embodies economic, environmental, and educational restoration for this community. To achieve this, it requires the intentional and thoughtful actions by the NYSDOT and the FWHA with guidance and legislation on the Federal level. Please see below UJTF recommendations for amendment to the current DEIS plan, and our public comment to DOT on behalf of our 18 member organizations and membership of several hundred.

Our primary concerns are the following:
First, to ensure that a fair percentage of I-81 jobs go to Syracuse residents the UJTF is recommends (1) a pro-Syracuse version of the federal government's Sep-14 Local Hire Program, including an overall goal of 15% local hire from within the city and the two disadvantaged county zip codes (Solvay and East Syracuse) (2) A Community Workforce Agreement-Project Labor Agreement (CWA-PLA). A CWA-PLA is a legally binding labor-agreement between unions and the community that solidifies targeted hiring provisions designed to get marginalized workers into construction careers and finally (3) an independent monitoring entity to provide public transparency on I-81 workforce outcomes and recommend corrective measures where necessary and/or possible to meet set CWA-PLA and/or SEP-14 pilot program goals.

Second, when the viaduct comes down, there will be 18 acres of developable land. Following the lead of the NYCLU, we are asking that the land not be developed in a way that will gentrify the community. But rather fosters Black inclusion, community ownership and have built-in anti-displacement measures. To achieve this, we are recommending federal and state officials reserve eight (8) acres of land to be placed into a community land trust. This will allow current residents the opportunity to build equity and remain in their community.

Third, we recommend the NYSDOT move the on/off ramp to at least 600 feet away from Steam at Dr. King elementary school. Of which 87% of the enrolled students are Black and 12% are Mixed Race or Hispanic. Despite the school being steps away from the current viaduct, the NYSDOT community gid proposal places an on-and-off ramp less than 250 feet from the school. This proposal goes against decades long recommendations by the Environmental Protection Agency and the Center for Disease Control that recommend placing major roadways at least 500-600 feet away from schools.

Please, do the right thing. Our community's vitality is depending on it, as we do not believe marginalized communities, especially black ones, can endure another systemic blow, which this has the potential to be depending on your actions. Thank you for reading and we look forward to continued partnership as the project develops.

Deka Dancil, Board President
Urban Jobs Task Force

See "**Appendix M-6, Part 8: Petitions,"** for copies of the signed petitions.

United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Office of Environmental Policy and Compliance
5 Post Office Square, Suite 18011
Boston, Massachusetts 02109

October 13, 2021

9043.1
ER 21/0286

Rick Marquis
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Federal Building
11A Clinton Avenue, Suite 719
Albany, NY 12207

Subject: Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)
FHWA Interstate 81 Viaduct Project, New York

Dear Mr. Marquis:

The U.S. Department of the Interior (Department) has reviewed the DEIS including the draft Section 4(f) evaluation for the Interstate 81 (I-81) Project in New York State. The I-81 Viaduct Project would address structural deficiencies, non-standard highway features, and create an improved transportation corridor through the City of Syracuse. The project would include modifications to I-81, Interstate 690, Interstate 481, related highway interchanges and local streets in Onondaga County, New York. The following comments on this project, prepared by the Department's National Park Service (NPS), are offered for your consideration.

Section 4(f) Evaluation Comments

The Department concurs with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) determination that Community Grid Alternative (Preferred Alternative) would result in the *de minimis* impact under Section 4(f) on 13 identified Section 4(f) historic resources in the project area. In addition, we understand that FHWA and New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) worked to develop and apply measures to minimize harm to these Section 4(f) properties through a series of refinements, including the design of roadway alignments.

The FHWA also determined there will be no adverse effect to historic properties in the area under Section 106. In a letter dated March 4, 2021, the New York State Historic Preservation Office (NY SHPO) concurred with the Section 106 finding, and FHWA is using this concurrence to support their de minimis finding. In addition, we understand that FHWA is working with the NY SHPO and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation on a draft Programmatic Agreement for this project.

The Department acknowledges that for one Section 4(f) resource, Wilson Park, there would be a Section 4(f) use from temporary occupation. A 20-foot-wide strip of the park would be occupied during construction for equipment staging during the removal of the existing highway viaduct. In total, a temporary easement on 0.12 acres of Wilson Park would be required for approximately two years of the five-year construction period. Use of this Section 4(f) property would occur due to temporary occupancy, which would be considered adverse in terms of the statute's preservation purpose as determined by the criteria in 23 CFR 774.13(d).

The Department also acknowledges that to mitigate for this temporary loss of parkland, NYSDOT would make numerous improvements within the portion of the park that would remain open. Once construction is complete, the existing eastern basketball court would be reconstructed, and the adjacent lawn area would be graded and reseeded. Thus, the park would be returned to include its current uses, in the same or improved condition, upon the completion of construction.

We also understand FHWA is coordinating this proposed use with the officials who have jurisdiction over Wilson Park, including the City of Syracuse Department of Parks, Recreation, and Youth Programs and the Syracuse Housing Authority (SHA). Prior to making Section 4(f) approvals, FHWA must coordinate with these officials and provide the Section 4(f) evaluation for comment. The officials having jurisdiction over the Section 4(f) lands must agree in writing with the assessment of impacts the proposed project will have on Section 4(f) resources and the proposed mitigation.

The Department encourages FHWA to complete its coordination with the City of Syracuse Department of Parks, Recreation, and Youth Programs and the SHA, and provide their concurrence with the final Section 4(f) Evaluation. The Department has no objection to the Section 4(f) approval, provided that concurrence letters from City of Syracuse Department of Parks, Recreation, and Youth Programs and the SHA, be included in the final Section 4(f) Evaluation.

Section 6(f) Evaluation Comments

Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Act (now codified at 54 U.S.C. §200305(f)(3)) provides, in part, that:

> *…no property acquired or developed with assistance under this section shall, without the approval of the Secretary, be converted to other than public outdoor recreation uses. The Secretary shall approve such conversion only if he finds it to be in accord with the then existing comprehensive statewide outdoor recreation plan and only upon such conditions as they deem necessary to assure the substitution of other recreation properties of at least equal fair market value and reasonable equivalent usefulness and location.*

There are LWCF protected parklands in and around the project area, as described in the DEIS. Based on a review of the document by the NPS, the proposed project should not cause a conversion of LWCF properties. However, should the project alignment change and result in a conversion of LWCF protected parkland at Forman Park or any other LWCF assisted site in the

study area, coordination with the NPS and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation would be required.

Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program (UPARR) Comments

In accordance with Section 1010 of the UPARR Act (now codified at 54 U.S.C. 200507), no property improved or developed with UPARR assistance shall be converted to other than public recreation uses without the approval of the Secretary of the Interior.

The proposed project will temporarily impact Wilson Park, a UPARR assisted site, as described above in the Section 4(f) Evaluation Comments. Since the impacts to recreation resources are not permanent and the park will be returned to its current uses upon the completion of construction, no UPARR conversion is caused. However, should the project change and result in a conversion of UPARR protected parkland at Wilson Park or any other UPARR assisted site in the study area, coordination with the NPS would be required.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this project. If you have questions regarding these comments, please contact Mark Eberle, National Park Service, at (215) 597-1258, or mark_eberle@nps.gov. Please contact me at 617-223-8565 if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Andrew L. Raddant
Regional Environmental Officer

cc: SHPO-NY (daniel.mackay@parks.ny.gov)
NYSOPRHP (Diana.Carter@parks.ny.gov)

From:	Frechette, Mark (DOT)
To:	Bjorness, Joan E (DOT)
Cc:	Smith, David (DOT); Parmley, Elizabeth (DOT); Doucette, George (DOT)
Subject:	FW: EPA Comments - I-81 Viaduct Project - Draft EIS
Date:	Thursday, October 14, 2021 2:45:19 PM
Attachments:	I-81 DEIS - R2 EPA Comments.pdf

From: Benjamin, Arielle <Benjamin.Arielle@epa.gov>
Sent: Thursday, October 14, 2021 1:24 PM
To: (jared.a.gross@dot.gov) <jared.a.gross@dot.gov>; Frechette, Mark (DOT) <Mark.Frechette@dot.ny.gov>
Cc: Austin, Mark <Austin.Mark@epa.gov>; Toni, Melissa (FHWA) <melissa.toni@dot.gov>
Subject: EPA Comments - I-81 Viaduct Project - Draft EIS

ATTENTION: This email came from an external source. Do not open attachments or click on links from unknown senders or unexpected emails.

Good afternoon,

Please see attached for our team's comments on the DEIS for the I-81 Viaduct Project. Thank you for the continued engagement throughout the NEPA Process, and we look forward to seeing this project break ground and completed in Syracuse.

Take care,

Arielle M. Benjamin
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Northeast & Caribbean Region (R2)
Environmental Engineer, Office of Strategic Programs
Office of the Regional Administrator
290 Broadway, 26th Floor
New York, NY 10007
212.637.3650

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 2
290 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

October 14, 2021

Rick Marquis
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Federal Building
11A Clinton Avenue, Suite 719, Albany, NY 12207

RE: PIN 3501.60 – Draft Design Report/Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Interstate 81 Viaduct Project
City of Syracuse, Onondaga County

Dear Mr. Marquis,

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the Draft Design Report (DDR)/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) prepared by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Our review was conducted in accordance with our responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and Section 309 of the Clean Air Act.

The purpose of the Interstate 81 Viaduct Project in Syracuse, NY (the Project) is to address structural deficiencies and non-standard highway features while creating an improved transportation corridor through the City of Syracuse. The DDR/DEIS is written to address potential environmental impacts from the proposed Project and evaluates the Viaduct Alternative and the Community Grid Alternative (the Preferred Alternative) in addition to the No Build Alternative. EPA has reviewed the DDR/DEIS, focusing on the Preferred Alternative, its potential impacts and proposed mitigation methods. We acknowledge that the modifications proposed as part of the Community Grid Alternative would alleviate traffic congestion, safety issues and rectify aging infrastructure, as well as enhance connectivity and distribute traffic into the downtown area.

Based on our review of the DDR/DEIS and participation in agency and public meetings, we submit the following comments intended to be consistent with EPA's ongoing work and commitment to support local communities and reduce environmental impacts. We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on the DDR/DEIS and we look forward to the receipt and review of the Final EIS. Should you have any questions, please contact Arielle Benjamin, the project review lead, at (212) 637-3650 or benjamin.arielle@epa.gov.

Sincerely,

Mark Austin

Mark Austin, Team Lead
Environmental Review Team

EPA Detailed Comments on I-81 Viaduct DDR/DEIS

General Comments

- EPA recommends that a summarized impacts/mitigation chart be included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) Executive Summary to clarify potential impacts to public due to robustness of the DEIS.

- We concur with the purpose and need as outlined in the DEIS with respect to NEPA guidelines as well as the analysis for choosing the preferred alternative, given historical context of mid-century US highway construction and its disproportionate impact on communities of color and communities plagued by poverty.

- We appreciate the use of the plethora of visual aids throughout the DEIS, particularly maps and renderings of current conditions and proposed conditions to help the public envision the future of I-81.

- We recommend that more visual aids are used to explain the impacts on surrounding communities in the study area (i.e. comparison charts, quantitative studies, public comments received during hearings, etc.)

Construction Means & Methods

- EPA acknowledges mitigation efforts intended to minimize the potential adverse effects of construction activities on the community including development and implementation of a traffic management plan, dust control plan, air quality monitoring program and noise and vibration abatement and monitoring program.

- In developing mitigation strategies, EPA recommends that FHWA make concerted efforts to reduce impacts to schools and hospitals located adjacent and in proximity to the construction areas. For example, time of day considerations may limit the impact of construction on nearby schools and day care facilities. *Other recommendations are listed below.*

- During a public meeting it was referenced that Wilson Park would be used as a staging area during construction. We recommend that the park also be included as a location which will not be used as a staging location for equipment, and where additional measures will also be taken to ensure that recreational users of the park are not affected by construction (debris, noise, etc.).

- We appreciate that NYSDOT plans to implement measures during construction to minimize vibration between MLK Jr. East and Harrison Street given this vibration can be detrimental to residents.

- We recommend limiting construction during school hours near the school, as this could be distracting for and harmful to students. Design workflow to ensure that any especially loud construction near schools occurs in the hours outside of school day. Use best practices for noise barriers that were explored in the analysis including: temporary noise barriers, noise insulation of buildings, and buffer zones.

Transportation and Engineering Considerations

- EPA commends the thorough traffic analysis conducted using best available data and resources.

- In the traffic analysis, there is a note that projections were reduced by 20% to account for increased telecommuting and public outreach/transportation management planning. Please provide additional information on how these percentages were determined. Additionally, subsequent sections involving the parking analyses applied a 25% reduction due to telecommuting. Please account for this discrepancy and provide justification for why the same reductions were not applied.

- The FEIS should explicitly state whether traffic has moved closer to nearby schools and homes and indicate where concentrations of mobile source air toxins would be higher under each of the different build alternatives. This would be helpful in considering specific mitigation measures in these locations.

Air Quality

- Syracuse is currently designated as an attainment area for all criteria pollutants, including Carbon Monoxide (CO), Sulfur Dioxide (SO2), Particulate Matter (both PM10 and PM2.5), Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2) Lead (Pb) and Ozone (O3).

- While the concentrations of the atmospheric constituents are below the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), these pollutants can still impact human health and the environment, and can cause problems such as asthma, heart disease and low birth weight. The City of Syracuse has the highest percentage of low birthweight births compared to the rest of New York State. The rate of emergency department (ED) visits for asthma per 100,000 for children aged 0-4 years is also highest in Syracuse compared to the rest of the state (City of Syracuse's Health Equity Report 2017).

- We recommend that the air quality should continue to be monitored and mitigated throughout construction. Mitigation measures include the use of Ultra Low-Sulfur Diesel, limiting idle time for diesel powered engines, dust control, restrictions on burning of materials, and protection systems/techniques when drilling, cutting, etc.

- Additionally, EPA recommends use of Tier 4 rated diesel-powered equipment during construction to minimize any localized Particulate Matter 2.5 (PM2.5) concentrations that might affect nearby communities.

Environmental Justice

- We recommend that the air quality monitoring program be especially vigilant in overburdened EJ communities and near vulnerable populations such as near schools. *(See recommendations for Air Quality section above)*

    - Students with uncontrolled asthma often miss more school and have poorer academic performance than healthy students. Diesel fumes, dust, and other outdoor air pollution can trigger and exacerbate asthma symptoms of children in nearby schools like the Dr. King Elementary School.

    - Indoor air quality problems/pollution in school buildings are most frequently associated with respiratory health effects, including, outdoor pollutants or vehicle exhaust. Studies demonstrate a connection between improvements in IAQ-either from increased outdoor air ventilation rates or from removal of pollution sources and improved performance of children and adults. (Air Filters, Pollution, and Student Achievement, M. Gilraine/NYU, 2-17-2020).

    - We recommend a comprehensive indoor air quality mitigation plan to address the respiratory health effects related to outdoor pollutants and vehicle exhaust in collaboration with the New York State Department of Health and Department of Education. While speed limits were mentioned for noise abatement, there was no mention of traffic control near schools. Since the school is close in proximity to the project area, we recommend that speed limits and/or stop signs/lights be implemented in the plan to protect the children after the project is completed.

- We also agree with the creation of a Traffic Management Plan to reduce the health and safety impacts of construction on pedestrian traffic and local travel.

    - We acknowledge that there are many concerns from the community regarding the health and safety implications of the location of the roundabout near Martin Luther King Elementary School. We are pleased to learn that DOT is considering alternate locations for this I-81 traffic roundabout.

    - We appreciate that improvement of pedestrian and bicycle lanes will be included in the project, as well as noise reduction measures.

    - We appreciate the inclusion of Wilson Park in the recommendation to include traffic flow management in the commissioning plan to minimize air pollution from cars moving through the neighborhood.

- According to the Onondaga County Health Department, more than 10% of Syracuse children were tested to have elevated levels of lead in 2019 with the area closest to the I-81 viaduct demolition/removal being a "hotspot" where one in six black or brown children are testing with very high blood levels.

    - We therefore recommend that NYSDOT in collaboration with the Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Unit (PEHSU) of Mount Sinai University Hospital, New York State Children Environmental Health Center in Syracuse and the partners of the Green & Healthy Homes Initiative (GHHI) of Greater Syracuse institute a lead monitoring prevention program in children and adults to specifically address the potential exposure to lead in ambient dust that may result from construction. This lead dust would exacerbate the current high blood lead levels that exist in children from black and brown communities.

    - A best practice model from Cincinnati, Ohio was published in 2012 and can be replicated in the Syracuse project. A neighborhood in Cincinnati expressed concern about the planned demolition and replacement of an elevated roadway bridge spanning the neighborhood. Community partners played a key role in developing outreach, lead exposure prevention activities and adherence to lead mitigations methods throughout the duration of the demolition project.

- We appreciate the efforts mentioned in the DEIS 6-104 to conduct public meetings in spaces accessible by public transit, as well as the efforts to advertise meetings across multiple platforms.

    - We agree with and appreciate the proposal to provide community outreach materials in languages spoken within the community in addition to those in Spanish and Mandarin (e.g. Vietnamese).

    - We recommend that the community be consulted for time availability for public meetings to ensure community input and record the meeting time and number of attendees to confirm adequate public participation.

    - We recommend public meetings be advertised as far in advance as possible via public forums including social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter and the project-specific app mentioned in the EIS.

- Thank you for acknowledging and addressing our comment on public housing:
    - 6-112 "Project-related impacts on environmental justice populations (for example, on the needs of Syracuse Housing Authority's populations living in close proximity to the highway)."

    - We appreciate NYSDOT's efforts to hold a meeting with the Syracuse Housing Authority to discuss concerns related to construction impacts to residents near the work zone and other impacts on residents from the change in traffic.

END OF DOCUMENT

In 2019, the New York State Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) was enacted into law, the goal of which was to transition our economy to one without the use of fossil fuels. Interim goals of 85% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, and 40% by 2030 were set as part of the law. To achieve this, it is expected that the on-site emission of carbon from buildings will need to be eliminated, generally by electrifying thermal activities such as comfort space heating and domestic hot water in combination with using power drawn from a carbon-free electric grid and/or power self-generated on-site via renewable technologies.

CHA and the Central New York Regional Development Board (CNY RPDB) have been awarded a grant from NYSERDA under PON 4614 to study the feasibility of a community heat pump system in downtown Syracuse. This system would recover heat from clean water that is discharged from the outfall of the Metro Syracuse Wastewater Treatment Plant to provide low-carbon energy services to buildings the in the Inner Harbor, Downtown and University hill neighborhoods. The system would provide water at a mild temperature year-round for use for heating and domestic hot water heating by water source heat pumps and replace the use of boilers and cooling towers in connected buildings.

A community-style heat pump system uses a network of pipes to share heating water among a cluster of buildings, where the cluster of buildings will use that heating water to produce comfort space heating of occupied spaces. In dense, urban environments such as Syracuse, a community-style heat pump configuration is the only viable option for large-scale de-carbonization of space heating.

The I-81 Viaduct Project Draft Design Report (DDR)/Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) (July 2021), page 5-129 of the Transportation and Engineering considerations describe a proposal for a new storm drainage line that would follow the current I-81 viaduct path North to South along Almond St and west roughly along the route of the existing I-690 viaduct (see attached plan for reference). The storm line would require trenching, coordination with, and possible relocation of, existing underground utilities. A significant portion of the cost of district energy infrastructure in urban areas, such as the community heat pump system being studied for downtown Syracuse, is the cost of excavation, utility coordination, backfill and hardscape restoration. Coordination of work involving streets that are planned to be excavated for the proposed Community Grid network would allow for a considerable reduction in capital costs for a district energy system.

According to the City of Syracuse 2010 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory Report prepared by the CNY RPDB, the commercial building sector accounted for 34% of community-wide emissions or nearly 540,000 metric tons of CO2 equivalent (MTCO2e). Development of a district energy system to provide a fossil fuel-free source of recovered heat as is being proposed could reduce carbon emissions by up to 8,000 tons of CO_2 per year, which is equivalent to removing over 1,700 passenger vehicles from the road each year. In addition, a district energy system would increase the efficiency of existing heating and cooling equipment, reduce costs for building owners and increase community resiliency.

We request that NYSDOT consider coordinating and co-locating additional utilities with the downtown Syracuse community heat pump system to minimize disruption and reduce the cost of installation. This is a once in a generation opportunity to create the infrastructure to allow our downtown economic core to move away from fossil fuel heating.

Should you have any questions, please contact Ryan Voorhees. Thank you for your consideration.

Ryan Voorhees
Team Leader
rvoorhees@chacompanies.com

Brendan Hall
Project Technical Lead
Senior Engineer.
bhall@chacompanies.com

3.11.21

Stormwater Analysis Summary

Segment North of Butternut Street
Total area= 41.6 acres
Existing impervious area= 20.7 acres
Proposed impervious area= 22.3 acres
Detention storage volume required = Minimum storage volume provided = 1.9 acre-feet
Water quality treatment volume (WQV) required = Minimum WQV Provided = 1.1 acre-feet
Treatment type = hydrodynamic units

Segment South of Butternut Street
Total area= 171.1 acres
Existing impervious area= 125.5 acres
Proposed impervious area= 114.5 acres
Detention is not required due to reduction in impervious cover and peak flow.
Water quality treatment volume (WQV) required = Minimum WQV Provided = 6.5 acre-feet
Treatment type = hydrodynamic units

Hydrodynamic Unit
Stormwater Analysis Boundary
Proposed Storm Sewer Trunkline
Detention Pond

Viaduct Alternative — Stormwater Management and Treatment, Central Study Area
Figure 5-28

RECEIVED
OCT 15 2021
BY: postmarked 10/14/21

2759 State Rt 174
Marietta, NY 13110
October 10, 2021

Dear Mr. Frechette,

First, let me thank you and the DOT for mailing me a paper proposal map of the I81 project. It shows me that you read my comments from my attendance of the in-person hearing in La Fayette in 2019. For that, I salute you!

Having said that, a couple further points:

1. So glad you decided to move the traffic circle away from a school! It is my understanding this circle is to slow down traffic as it enters the city. Why move it north to Van Buren or Kennedy where there is even more traffic? Why not south of MLK school where it would give traffic a fighting chance?
2. Just how big are these proposed roundabouts? A double-tandem trailer could conceivably block one or two entrances in a high-traffic situation.
3. It is a well-known fact that I81 in its current state has long been a route for drug traffic to Canada. How convenient to bypass the new 81 (481) and bring drugs right into the city where the children are?!?! I realize this is not your area of concern - but will there be more pro-active policing on city streets? I highly doubt it.

My only consolation is that first, I avoid using Rt 81 and second, long after I am deceased those of you who remain will realize the folly of your ideas.

Sincerely yours,

Linda S. Wilcox

Linda S. Wilcox

ESW Realty, LLC

65 Gray Road, Box 4
Falmouth, Maine 04105

RECEIVED
SEP - 8 2021
BY:

September 3, 2021

Mark Frechette, P.E.
Project Director
New York State Department of Transportation, Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, NY 13202

Rick Marquis
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration
Leo W. O'Brien Federal Building
11A Clinton Avenue, Suite 719
Albany, NY 12207

Re: Interstate 81 Viaduct Project (Community Grid Option)
Record Owner: ESW Realty, LLC
Property located at: 110 Almond Street & Water St & Washington St
F/K/A Dunkin Donuts Parcel

Dear NYS DOT & Federal Highway Administration:

I am the Managing Member of the owner of the above-referenced property and submit my comments and strenuous objection to any proposed acquisition of this parcel.

It has been repeatedly represented by the State of New York Department of Transportation (DOT) that every effort would be made to avoid the taking of private property by eminent domain for the I81 Reconstruction Project. According to the video and other descriptions of the "Community Grid Project", this property is slated to potentially be acquired not for highway reconstruction of I81; rather it appears to be a site for a future public park. It is submitted that any proposed acquisition for this use is unauthorized and illegal under the NYS Highway Law. Moreover, as stated above, since it is not necessary for I81 reconstruction, the State should modify its proposed design and leave this property alone.

Sincerely,

Ed Wolak

Edward S. Wolak,
Managing Member

cc: Sidney Devorsetz, Esq.

RECEIVED
AUG 25 2021
BY:

Elaine Wolf
113 Dorset Rd.
Syracuse NY 13210
August 23, 2021

Mark Frechette, P.E., Project Director
New York State Department of Transportation, Region 3
333 East Washington Street
Syracuse, N.Y. 13202

Re. *I-81 Viaduct Project, Onondaga County, New York: Draft Design Report/Draft Environmental Impact Statement*

Dear Mr. Frechette:

I am pleased that the New York State Department of Transportation's current preferred option is to remove the I-81 viaduct going through downtown Syracuse and to replace it with a street-level grid. I have been a Syracuse resident for nearly 30 years, and for 11 of those years, until I retired in 2010, I walked to and from work daily between the University neighborhood and the corner of East Jefferson and South Salina Streets. For me, it seemed a shame that what would otherwise have been a calm (yet lively) and interesting urban journey, was, below the viaduct, fraught with risks due to unreliable walk lights at the intersections, fast-moving cars driven by people racing to get to work on time, near-thundering noise overhead, and potentially confusing traffic patterns for drivers from out of town. So I look forward to the restoration of the eastern end of Syracuse's downtown to what I hope will turn out to be a thriving community-, pedestrian-, and small business-friendly cityscape.

Although I do not live in the area that will be directly affected by the demolition of the existing viaduct and the construction of its replacement, I have been made acutely aware, over the past few years, from attending community meetings about I-81, of the disgraceful history of the process leading to the construction in 1965 of I-81. That construction process ignored the area's thriving neighborhood economy, the humanity of its residents, and the rich urban culture in its path. The viaduct effectively ensured that poverty, pollution, and a lack of resources would hurt the community that lived in the highway's shadow that persists today. New York State must take extreme care to conduct the demolition of the viaduct and restoration of streets in ways that ensure racial justice and the health, safety, and economic wellbeing of the area's current residents.

I have some specific concerns and recommendations, as identified below.

- State and federal oversight of every worksite throughout the project. Because the area most affected by the demolition and construction projects is an EPA-designated Environmental Justice Community, it merits especially systematic and meaningful scrutiny and special protections for the community's health, as well

as well-defined consequences for miscreant contractors. The current designation as "reasonable" oversight is inadequate.

- Health and safety for school children. The transition from highway to City streets (currently designed as a roundabout), whereupon speed limits would be reduced to 30 m.p.h. in keeping with City speed limits, should be located at least 600 feet away from the STEAM at Dr. King Elementary School, preferably south, such as at East Kennedy Street. Wilson Park, where youngsters congregate, should not be used as a staging area for construction or construction materials.
- Economic justice for the community. Requirements should include information that specifically addresses the NYDOT's plans for training and hiring people from the affected community and historically disadvantaged workers for the work that must be done. Plans also should include the creation of a Land Trust for the eight acres directly east of Martin Luther King Boulevard East for development by residents connected to the community and where they can build equity.
- Meaningfulness of the designation of the area as a Community Grid. To achieve NYDOT's goal of safe streets for cars, pedestrians (children and adults), and bicyclists, the width of streets should be limited to ten feet. This width is consistent with guidelines promoted by the Congress for the New Urbanism and would encourage the use of smaller trucks for local deliveries, thus potentially reducing carbon emissions.
- Housing. The project should include accommodations for residents who would like to relocate (e.g., market-rate buyouts, rent subsidies, and/or temporary relocation assistance) with an automatic right to return.
- Communication between NYDOT and residents affected by the demolition and construction phases of the project. Quarterly communications between NYDOT and the community should include compliance reports to the community and opportunities for residents to hear from project officials in person.

Thank you for considering these suggestions. I hope that your team finds them useful.

Best wishes.

Elaine M. Wolf

Elaine Wolf