

Memorandum

TO: Meeting Attendees
FROM: Amy Sokalski
DATE: May 25, 2005
SUBJECT: Northerly Crossings Corridor
Congestion Mitigation Study
Interagency Advisory Committee
(IAC) Meeting #4

DATE AND TIME: Wednesday, May 18, 2005
10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

LOCATION: Clarion Hotel
1220 W. Main Street
Stroudsburg, PA

PURPOSE: Northerly Crossings Corridor Congestion Mitigation Study Interagency Advisory
Committee Meeting #4

IN ATTENDANCE (27 TOTAL):

Michael Cane	Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission – Project Manager
Linda Spalinski	Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission
Roger Sager	Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission
Jeanne Pomager	Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission
Erich Hizer	DMJM Harris
James Yeager	Michael Baker Jr., Inc. – Project Manager
Mark Alisesky	Michael Baker Jr., Inc.
Amy Sokalski	Michael Baker Jr., Inc.
Joe Lombardi	NJ Transit
John Woodling	Monroe County Planning Commission
Bob Hay	Monroe County Railroad Authority
Doyle Nelson	National Park Service
Peter Vaughan	Warren County Planning
Madelyn Rumowicz	NJDOT
Bob Miller	NJDOT
Laine Rankin	NJDOT
Tom Drabic	Sussex County Planning Division

Below is a summary of key issues discussed during Interagency Advisory Committee Meeting #4 for the Northerly Crossings Corridor Congestion Mitigation Study.

- ◆ Welcome/Introductory Remarks: *DRJTBC*

- ◆ Meeting Agenda/Study Purpose: *James Yeager*
- ◆ Summary of Future No Build Analysis: *James Yeager*
 - Mr. Yeager summarized the results of the future No Build Analysis. He stated that minor improvements are proposed at the Portland-Columbia and Milford-Montague facilities, but capacity improvements are not needed. However, additional lanes are needed at the I-80 Delaware Water Gap facility to accommodate future demand.
- ◆ Concept Development: *James Yeager*
 - Mr. Yeager presented a brief description of the range of concepts developed for the I-80 DWG Bridge. He stated that Concept 2B was recently developed to address congestion issues in the westbound direction.
 - Mr. Yeager presented a table summarizing the excess demand on I-80 in Design Year 2030.
 - Mr. Miller noted that the excess demand equals approximately ½ lane of traffic in each direction. Does the study team know during what year the third lane will be necessary?
 - Mr. Yeager stated that demand currently exceeds capacity during summer weekend peak periods. Analysis is currently being performed to identify the year when commuter peak hour demand is forecasted to exceed capacity. This issue will be addressed in the Final Report.
 - Mr. Nelson stated that motorists are definitely going to divert to SR 611 to avoid congestion on I-80. The issue is whether or not to widen/improve SR 611 to further encourage the diversion.
 - Mr. Hizer asked if the study team looked at improvements to the toll plaza. Mr. Yeager responded that KLD Associates recently completed a study for the DRJTBC that recommended alternate toll plaza configurations to improve plaza utilization and increase capacity. Open road tolling is also being discussed as an opportunity to increase capacity. Improvements to the throat of the plaza (at the bridge's western abutment) are also being reviewed to improve utilization of the plaza's northernmost booths.
 - Ms. Pomager added that the configuration of the toll plaza needs to be investigated if open road tolling is implemented. The small bridge on I-80 in Pennsylvania (just west of the DRJTBC jurisdiction) is a constraint point that may need to be addressed to increase the number of lanes exiting the plaza.
 - Mr. Nelson stated that there will be major environmental impacts in New Jersey with any of these improvement concepts and that an EIS will better quantify these impacts. Mr. Nelson also asked if widening would occur to the river side or the mountain side.
 - Mr. Yeager responded that structural/highway engineers agree that widening in the area of the Point of Gap will likely occur to the river side as opposed to the mountain side. Engineers also looked at I-80 near the Lackawanna Cut-Off Bridge to see if there is adequate width for a six-lane cross section. It may be possible to pass a six-lane section between the Lackawanna Cut-Off bridge abutments; however, this would require that the existing arch be replaced with a new structure. Splitting the eastbound and westbound alignments under two separate arch spans may be a more feasible alternative.
 - Ms. Rankin asked if cost estimates were prepared for each of the concepts. Mr. Yeager responded that the estimates are very preliminary at this point but that order of magnitude estimates will be included in the Final Report.
- ◆ Evaluation Criteria and Concept Evaluation Results: *James Yeager*

- Mr. Yeager presented the evaluation criteria and the results of the concept evaluation. Concept 2A (5 lanes with moveable barrier), Concept 2B (3 lanes westbound, 2 lanes eastbound) and Concept 3A (3 lanes eastbound and westbound) had the highest scores. The study team is recommending that these three concepts be further evaluated.
- Mr. Drabic stated that improvements to I-80 in New Jersey are not included in the NJTPA Long-Range Plan. He asked if the study team will try to get these improvements included in the plan.
- Ms. Rumowicz stated that the county or the NJDOT can recommend improvements for NJTPA to include in the Long-Range Plan. Mr. Miller added that adding projects to the plan can be a difficult process. He recommended that the study team contact NJTPA now while they are still revising the plan.
- Mr. Sager added that the study team will need to provide NJTPA with order of magnitude cost estimates for the proposed improvements before they can be added to the plan.
- Mr. Hizer asked if the concepts should be more focused on the DRJTBC jurisdiction and not include improvements in NJ and PA. Mr. Yeager responded that the concepts extend to the adjacent states because the benefits of the concepts are limited if additional improvements are not made in NJ and PA.
- Mr. Nelson stated that the score of 3 for Concept 3A indicating a moderate level of difficulty to construct may be overly optimistic. Mr. Nelson stated that he felt Concept 3A would be very difficult to construct in New Jersey.

Action Items

- ◆ The team requested that IAC members provide formal comments on Technical Memorandum #4 by Wednesday, June 1.
- ◆ The study team will supply Ms. Rumowicz with a list of attendees (with affiliations) from the IAC meetings, NCF meetings and Public Information Forum.

Next Steps

- ◆ Complete Draft Final Report in June 2005
- ◆ NCF Meeting #4/Public Information Forum #2 – To be scheduled for late June 2005