

The I-81 Challenge

May 2012 Public Meeting

Appendix A – Participant Comments

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Appendix A: Meeting Participant Comments

Station 3: Your visions

Strategy development and pre-screening process
<p>My thought is to take another look at re-routing I-81 along present I - 481. The road is already there and has the capacity to handle through traffic without any changes except for some signage. As far as the current I - 81, re-number that to US or State Highway and make it at grade throughout the city (the boulevard idea) Doing one without the other would lead the FHWA to re designate I - 81 anyways because the boulevard idea would not meet interstate standards. If you need any more proof of this look what's happening to I-86 in the southern tier. The I-86 designation is only applied to the portions that MEET interstate standards; the rest is NY-17 still and will be until those portions meet Interstate Standards.</p>
<p>My first impression is that they are too limiting, although that may change as I look further into this. Combinations of all the various options should remain on the table. This set of 5 possibilities seems to oversimplify the issue.</p>
<p>I think the current location is fine but would rebuild with ground level, tree and barrier lined highway.</p>
<p>It is not clear why the "No-Build" option is included, when there is universal agreement that the existing highway is approaching the end of its useful lifetime. Doing nothing is a formula only for allowing people to die. This is unconscionable.</p>
<p>I do not like the idea of the tunnel or depressed highway.</p>
<p>I'm a little surprised that others are suggesting rebuilding I81 through the west side of Syracuse. Isn't that just repeating the mistakes made 60 years ago?</p>
<p>I love the boulevard option. This could be a central space in the city that attracts businesses, pedestrians, and bicyclists. I don't see how any other option could offer so many benefits to the city.</p>
<p>I like how it's been weeded down. I really like the idea of a depressed I-81 or a Blvd. with a West street bypass. Both options will remove the elevated sections of I81 that divides downtown and will hopefully eliminate summer construction season</p>
<p>Regarding the main issue at hand, the I-81 viaduct through downtown Syracuse: I think the viaduct should be replaced with a tunnel. This provides a win-win for people who argue we need to maintain I-81 as a through expressway, and for those who argue the viaduct is an eyesore which divides the city.</p> <p>Some critics think a tunnel will be a budget disaster, like "the big dig" in Boston, but that doesn't have to be the case. Yes, a tunnel will be among the more-costly options, but in the long run, it will be well worth it. If I am not mistaken, the ongoing maintenance costs for a tunnel can be much lower than a viaduct, simply because a tunnel is less-exposed to the elements than a bridge. A tunnel will also keep traffic noise underground. In some parts of Boston, Washington or Montreal, you'd have no idea there was a bustling, eight-lane expressway ten feet below the ground on which you're standing. We could have the same thing here in Syracuse -- a highway that continues to provide direct, speedy, north-south access, and while at the same time, remaining unseen and unheard at the surface, aside from the holes in the ground for ramps to get on and off the highway.</p>

<p>Although a relatively new resident of Syracuse (32 years) I have often heard comments about how the construction of the highway decimated neighborhoods. When I drive through downtown on my daily commute to work, I often wonder about the buildings and communities that were lost. I think that it should be of the highest priority to NOT repeat that mistake. I think that if this very creative and intelligent community tries, they can produce a solution that will avoid disrupting any more neighborhoods and sacrificing any of the lovely, unique and irreplaceable architecture that our city displays. If people have any doubts about the value and character that these lovely buildings give to a city, they should take a trip first to Moscow and then to St. Petersburg (Russia) to see and understand how old buildings help to give character and warmth to a city.</p>
<p>Please maintain the ability to get quickly in and out of the Syracuse downtown area. This should be the number 1 priority of any plan.</p>
<p>A tunnel is not feasible. The city was built on a wetland. The engineering involved to relocate the existing utilities to the schools and the hospitals, let alone digging a tunnel into the ground, seems highly unlikely and extremely expensive. Progress the boulevard idea.</p>
<p>I travel from Cortland into as well as thru Syracuse via i81 at least once a week. I continue to believe that the boulevard concept would be the preferable solution. Thru traffic north and south should be shunted to i481. A boulevard in place of the existing viaduct south of the city utilizing a portion of the existing right-of-way, portions of State St and West St would commercialize this area and encourage retail growth.</p> <p>The creation of a light-rail transit system with a terminus at the RTC in the north and extension as far as Binghamton to the south would create a new economic corridor for the communities along the way. Cortland would become an attractive bedroom community for people who might choose to work in Syracuse. Complimentary to that would be the access that communities like Cortland would have to an expanded and skilled professional workforce. Weather would no longer be a deterrent to those who want to enjoy the employment, social, cultural and sports activities offered by Syracuse.</p> <p>For those entering the city from the south by auto or light rail the attraction a spacious boulevard lined with retail establishments, restaurants and sports venues would bring a new consumer population. Its traffic would be those entering the city to engage in its commerce. 481 should serve those who want to travel efficiently N-S. The boulevard, perhaps with bike paths and pocket parks would engage those who want to experience the fruits of a metropolitan area.</p>
<p>The elevated roadway needs to be removed as it has divided the city both sociologically and economically. With a tunnel too expensive, a boulevard appears to be the only viable solution.</p>
<p>The only recommendation I don't agree with is doing a boulevard. The amount of traffic that goes through underneath on Almond St. is already congested especially during the rush hour times; adding the traffic from 81 will be a huge mess. The speed limit would be set at probably 35 mph because of pedestrians and there will be traffic lights like every 150 ft. or so. This option would cause a major traffic mess.</p>
<p>I like how alternative options outside of route 81 (the western bypass and rail) are being considering. It's refreshing to see so many ideas and hope we can all feel proud of the decision being made in a few years. It's also nice to see these ideas being categorized and broken down to be easily identified and understood. While it may not be completely feasible, it would be pretty cool to have a hybrid of the different recommendations, such as a tunnel for thru-traffic while having a Blvd. and light rail for those wanting to go into the city.</p>
<p>I would prefer a tunnel, but it would probably be too expensive. A boulevard is a good idea, and the West Street arterial sounds like a good addition.</p>

<p>The boulevard option, with through-traffic redirected to the existing 481 through DeWitt, seems to be the most beneficial for the city and regional as a whole.</p>
<p>Developing West Street into limited access highway that would further divide the west wide from downtown is not a viable option and would only shift the burden. If West Street could be redeveloped as a boulevard that compliments an I-81/Almond Street boulevard, this might be worth pursuing. The options within the city must emphasize enhancement of the urban environment (i.e., human environment) over high-speed commuting.</p>
<p>I've been strongly in favor of the boulevard option ever since it was brought up years ago. I've lived in cities in this country and in others, where a lot of traffic moves along boulevards where people nevertheless are able to walk, shop, sit in cafes (inside or on sidewalks), relax on rows of benches along wide sidewalks and green space in a center median. All of this contributes to a sense of place and a sense of community. People spend a lot of money to travel to the world's great cities and to walk along the great boulevards of those cities. There's no reason why Syracuse should not have its own. I-81 can go around the city on what is now I-481. People should not be able to get out of a city all too easily; it leaves the city desolate when the people leave. It's clear that people want to live in downtown Syracuse, given the high rents they're willing to pay every time the next apartment opens up. With a boulevard bringing traffic down to where the humans are walking, businesses will be more willing to locate in the city. I look forward to the day when this is accomplished.</p>
<p>The economy would be able to rise again if jobs were moved back downtown, with a proper way of transport such as a boulevard.</p>
<p>I lived in Boston during "The Big Dig" project. While it was severely over budget and behind schedule, the results were beautiful.</p>
<p>I live in Syracuse and my priorities are seeing downtown revitalized and becoming more pedestrian/bike friendly. I think a tunnel or boulevard option offers the most potential. I also like the idea of a light rail from the suburbs to downtown.</p>
<p>I worry that, like the urban renewal projects of the 1960s, there will be unintended consequences of limiting traffic and utilization of downtown if it is too difficult to get there.</p>
<p>tunnel/depressed highway</p>
<p>Personally, I don't have much of an opinion besides not building at all. All this rebuilding and relocation will just cause angry individuals and a lot of chaos. If we decide to just continue fixing and renovating weak and damaged areas, we will be able to solve the aging problem. All of this rebuilding is unnecessary and will just create more of a problem than we already have. This may not be the best idea but honestly the others weren't too impressive either.</p>
<p>Reasonable alternatives to consider. However, I am strongly in favor of rerouting 81 to 481, tearing down the viaduct, replacing viaduct with a boulevard, and improving the city street grid with complete streets models.</p>
<p>Boulevard through the city - highway either under or around. Have seen this effectively work in various places - Zurich Switzerland, Santiago Chile, et al</p>
<p>Whatever is done, please make allowances for regular replacement of burned out street lights. Having so many lights dark is dangerous and UGLY.</p>
<p>I think the boulevard/arterial plan in the existing footprint in combination with the western bypass is the best choice. This will eliminate some unsafe and overused on/off ramps and provide better access to downtown from the arterial. Hopefully this will eliminate the need for so many one way streets in the downtown/University areas. Better access to hospital/University area from 690 is needed as well.</p>

Replace bridge, but with improvements.
A boulevard seems the most pedestrian & bike friendly. We already have 481 and 690 for those who aren't stopping. Leave the city area to those who can use it.
Bldv- Greatest potential for downtown economic development. We need to enhance the core of this community.
What about the great things going on in the Near Westside? Do not impact! Please
Just tear down I-80 through the city and send through traffic over I-481.
Why not add a lane to 481? Leave I-81 as an arterial through Downtown (like West St).
Take the 81A Duct down and replace it with Boulevard. Create "Alternate" routes in and out of city to meet commuter needs.
No build- You must be kidding. We need more highways to make Syracuse business attractive, not less. Need to connect 695 with 481 (west to south also).
What buildings would be effected/torn down if I81 is widened, rehabbed, etc.?
Options & concepts shown in this "room" need blow ups to see Row impacts historic buildings, needed for public to evaluate for key structural resources impacted.
Western bypass only recreates the same problem and shuffles it to the Near Westside (essentially, cutting it off further from downtown).
Reconstruction of elevated highway.
Rec-tree-linked, park-like boulevard from Clinton St. to south of Adams along Almond (not as in Erie). Traffic funneled to 690 East to 481 or 690W and (essential) viable rapid transit to get commuters in and out of Syracuse (downtown) without cars.
While I'm not totally against the western bypass, I'm glad that concept #2 was eliminated. If it followed the route on the map (unlikely), it would literally be across the street from my house! (It was such a nice neighborhood before I moved in!)
The Boulevard would still completely separate SU and downtown. Although not visually, but in terms of connectivity you still could not walk or easily get from SU to downtown.
Boulevard or Tunnel/Depressed highway YES!
I think that a tunnel will allow for a fast flow of traffic through the city while allowing an easy connection between downtown and the "hill." Even though this may be the most costly solution, we need to think LONG TERM. Yu are making decision for decades/centuries to come so the tunnel may not be accomplished in 3 years, but even if it takes 15 years it will revitalize the city for decades.
Thank you so much for listening and providing this excellent display of the discussion to date.
Think of cost first, then work on which ideas fit one economic landscape/current conditions - NYS Dept.
Regarding the West St. Option: Bad Idea! Present plans call for reducing traffic on West St. to better improve the new West side with downtown. This is a good plan. Increasing the traffic is not good.
Love the boulevard concept! Just hope that in thinking about how we handle overflow traffic we can be respectful of neighborhoods already.
I am very much for a boulevard, park land easy pedestrian travel.
We like the tunnel!
Boulevard. Make our city beautiful.
No-Build should not be an option!
A boulevard has some clear advantages for access to downtown, Mall, etc., and 481 already exists for bypass!
Bypass the city through downtown and create loop, 81 area currently occupied becomes park space.

<p>Keep the same route so as not to disrupt more neighborhoods. BUT- make it below grade with pleasing cross streets and shops.</p>
<p>Throw out scheme to direct traffic to West St. Residents of that neighborhood, after decades of being dumped on, are trying to reduce the barrier of West St. Not make conditions worse.</p>
<p>No Build: Do you let the existing viaduct fall down? Rehabilitate: Feasible, least costly, shorter life span Reconstruct: No property taking, leaves "substandard" features. Could add a 2nd level for thru traffic or allow limited exits. Tunnel/Depressed: Really splits the community. Water problem. Very expensive.</p>
<p>Take it down, but has to spur in center of Syracuse.</p>
<p>I support the boulevard idea. As long as you build infrastructure for motor vehicles, it will be filled. Build infrastructure to support active transportation, such as walking and bicycling, and infrastructure to support public transit, and people will use it. Look at Portland, OR and other US cities, and many European cities such as Amsterdam & Copenhagen.</p>
<p>I have read these other comments - these people are CRAZY!!! It is so nice living in a city where I can enter and exit easily!!! There are no real traffic delays compared to any other cities. Leave I-81 downtown alone! Improve the ramps and the curves and keep traffic moving!!! Please</p>
<p>SW quadrant of Sup. Mention a case that proves no real need for a western bypass-just slight improvement to existing roads. Can do boulevard without western bypass!</p>
<p>I just want people to realize that there is no "magic bullet" and there is no one perfect solution that will address all the issues.</p>
<p>Also, removing 81 totally, and the "support for a car-centric culture" will not suddenly put all of us on bikes, it'll likely just clog the streets.</p>
<p>You need a study showing the traffic pattern during the two years of demo and rebuild. Then why do it if folks can do a temporary for 2 years.</p>
<p>Pre-screening Western Bypass-disrupting residential developments not a good idea.</p>
<p>It is preferable to go w/ a tunnel/depressed highway. More importantly, LOCAL PEOPLE need to be hired for this project.</p>
<p>Pre-screening: Relocate I-81 through downtown=Terrible idea. We are hoping to see growth in that area on the near West side, not another highway.</p>
<p>Repair and improve existing Highway and consider multi-level roadway to access city point and exits, i.e. Richmond, VA. Keep current foot print.</p>
<p>"Boulevard with Bypass:" Seems to resolve most concerns and provide opportunity for economic development. Glad to see NYSDOT proactively addressing this now, rather than reaction to a crisis.</p>
<p>A lot of effort has been going towards rehabilitating the downtown area (Franklin Square, Salina St., etc.). The West-street and RR option would destroy downtown. A city without a vibrant center/downtown is a dead city!</p>
<p>As an SU student, I would love to see better connection between the university & downtown. Therefore, I feel that Reconstruction/Rehabilitation is NOT an option! Depress the highway or bury it.</p>
<p>Please show care and concern for people of the Westside. The Boulevard option entailing the larger use of West Street (via vehicular traffic) inhibits the Westside community from downtown. My fear is the use of West St will split the Westside further from the care and concern of the public.</p>
<p>I believe the boulevard may be the best option.</p>
<p>Question-the city is planning on "downsizing" West St., any effect on this strategy?</p>
<p>Without cost estimates of acquiring land and construction, these studies are of little value.</p>

I believe I-81 should be reconstructed and built wider. I use I-81 at least 3-4 days a week: Plus I use it to visit families on weekends.
My first thought would be a tunnel. Though the economic feasibility of that is probably not practical. It would allow property above to be used for a number of public and private uses. My 2nd though is the Boulevard plan. As I think this will in the end help Downtown and the new look and feel of Syracuse. Thanks.
Diverting traffic to West St. negates the initiatives that are now in process and once again cuts off a section of the city that is beginning to make a comeback! Bad idea!
Reconstruction or Western Bypass is the only options to consider. There has to be Free Flowing traffic from 81 North of the City to 81 South of the City.
Reconstruction/Enhancements. I believe the I-81 footprint is fully functional in moving traffic throughout the city and region. Improve the exit/entrance ramps and improve the aesthetics of the elevated portion by nicer concrete panels and sound attenuation panels to reduce traffic noise. Enforce the speed limits.
The idea of a highway is ludicrous and outdated. We should build a giant wagon system powered by the free will of hamsters. The wagon system could prove to be a cheaper and environmentally friendly option which could also increase tourism.
Built Western bypass as a long term strategy, then consider tunnel, depressed highway to bring the city together. If tunnel proves too expensive the boulevard option is fall back, but for a long term solution to tunnel is optimal for our weather and community.
Put pictures of the buildings that will have to be torn down to accommodate the new wider requirements of 81.
Please keep traffic moving-cars are very clean at highway speeds!
I like the boulevard concept best. A tunnel concept seems way too costly.
Rochester has 2 circles around it - inner one and an outer one - Why can't we do this? Rt. 481 will become Rt. 81 East. Opposite Rt. 481 make another circle to the west and name it Rt. 81 West. Then make a parking lot on roadway (non-elevated) that will go into the city for public transportation.
The boulevard idea seems the most in keeping with overall goals for improving quality of life in the city. The West St. arterial idea concerns me though-seems like a BAD IDEA-need to reduce the width and speed of West St. to promote connectivity to west side.
I support the option which costs the most. This region needs to get its share of Fed. Money.
Revisit OnTrack commuter line and expand. Offer tax money for development around stations and tear down viaduct. Good presentation! Very well planned event.
Option 4 should be considered with tunnel-take some of traffic out.
I believe the underground option is the best one for the city of Syracuse. Re-establishing neighborhoods that were destroyed by the highway should be a top priority. Parks and green space could replace the aesthetically displeasing highway that exists now.
Tunnels will not work in this climate. I worked in a DPW as an administrator and know salt, freezing, thawing, expansion joint problems-like leaks in parking garages etc. Not in this climate. RE-BUILD.
I think the idea of completing option 4 should be part of the mix. Along with that I would put I-81 underground with entrances and exits to and from the South only at Adams and I-690. Exits to and from the North should be at Hiawatha and in the Court/Butternut area and include concept 6. There should be a boulevard at ground level above the depressed highway.

<p>Until the mindset changes from: "Syracuse will become a great town" "People will move away" "It will shift the problem elsewhere"</p> <p>To: What choice do we have! Jobs will be created. Neighborhoods will improve and life will be better. Move the damn thing!</p>
<p>Bldv design inside city access to businesses & neighborhoods. Buses do not support city transportation other than AM & PM commute.</p>
<p>No Boulevard - Tunnel with park on top. Separate vehicular & pedestrian traffic - Revitalize downtown.</p>
<p>Local and regional traffic impacts have not really been examined yet for the Boulevard option. With two colleges and two hospitals adjacent to this area, the boulevard option will still need to be able to handle the growing traffic volume here. The Blvd. option will negatively impact pedestrian and bike crossing from downtown to the east side for the current low traffic intersections such as Almond/Water, Almond/Washington and Almond/Fayette as more traffic would be at street level. Pedestrian crossing would probably be improved at Genesee/Almond and Adams/Almond for the Blvd. option.</p> <p>Reconstruction, with some engineering improvements and beautification is a very viable alternative.</p> <p>Depressed highway: Rochester was mentioned as an example of a depressed highway in downtown area. Rochester has recently approved removing/filling a good portion of the depressed Inner Loop and is looking for federal funds. Rochester's experience with the Inner Loop should be examined as part of consideration of this alternative.</p> <p>Thanks</p>
<p>The near west side is becoming the next jewel of Syracuse! Companies like King & King, WKNY, and Proliteracy are making it grow! Putting a highway through the middle of this neighborhood is not the way to go!</p>
<p>Things of importance:</p> <p>Would like to remind us all that expanding capacity only equals more demand.</p> <p>Would like to see a final solution that uses, light-rail, a boulevard, w/ green planting, cycling and pedestrian means of travel serving downtown.</p>
<p>Reconstruction/Rehab is the very minimum of what is needed. Tunnel/Depressed highway seems "over the top" cost wise.</p>
<p>We need a route 81 that is not a boulevard. Otherwise we would get gridlock becomes more traffic (games, work, event). I prefer rehabilitation. I81 is not the barrier that West St and a Boulevard are. It could be attractive underneath it.</p>
<p>I love being able to zip downtown - or across town from my home in the valley (since 1969). Anything that prevents this has my thumbs down!</p>
<p>I still prefer the idea of a western bypass (481). But find the idea of a depressed 81 very interesting. What about flooding concerns in the depressed area? Now how about both concepts?</p>
<p>A boulevard provides a greater economic opportunity for the city.</p>
<p>It is life threatening to try to cross under 81 in a wheelchair.</p>

<p>None of the above.</p>
<p>Look towards the red and blue train link in the center of N.Y.C. built of stone with cut out.</p>
<p>I support the tunnel option, since that would allow for more friendly pedestrian routes in the heart of the city, as well as improve bikability.</p>
<p>I absolutely support the idea of a Blvd. It will help traffic flow and commute times in and out of downtown, which a lot of people fail to realize.</p>
<p>Boulevard inside city 4 lanes outside Stress 481!</p>
<p>If I had a car, I'd drive it to the city and park it and use some other transportation to get around save gas.</p>
<p>Western bypass solutions are absolutely non-viable environmentally, economically, and transportation-wise. An interchange near Velasko Rd. dumping traffic into the southwest city streets is the ultimate in stupidity.</p>
<p>Do not destroy new development on west side!</p>
<p>The boulevard is the way to go! 81 through the city was obsolete the day it was opened! BLVD traffic will flow ok.</p>
<p>Boulevard option - Thru truck/freight will use 481 anyway, leaving only that traffic needing access to CBD. However, pedestrian access must be a very high priority. Cheaper to build pedestrian bridges than car bridges.</p>
<p>It seems that if one develops the 481 corridor as the primary route for traffic not needing to stop in Syracuse, then it becomes a matter of the downtown section of Rt. 81 only functioning as entry and exit points to downtown, in combination with 690 and the east-west section of Rt. 481. Why not have present Rt. 81 north end at Harrison plus add an additional service exit for University traffic that could exit near the 81 & 481 interchange through the Skytop area.</p> <p>Traffic coming in from the east along Rt. 690 could have an additional exit added before Townsend Street (and after Teall) to funnel traffic to the University section.</p> <p>Rt. 81 South would end near Butternut.</p>
<p>It's commendable to receive everyone's opinions and ideas. However, the studies over the past year haven't done much. They just reiterate there are five potential strategies.</p> <p>The greater the cost, the more difficult it is to make an accurate estimate of economic and sociological costs. Based on the inaccuracies of these estimates, if one solution is significantly cheaper than the others, that solution will be approved.</p> <p>And the cheapest solution will be to no-build, despite it not being "a long term solution."</p> <p>A lot of time and money will have been spent, but will not change anything with the current layout of I-81 through Syracuse.</p>
<p>It's unfortunate that the condition of the highway is such that we have to make a decision now, when we're still caught up in a car-dominated lifestyle. In a few years, I think it will become more apparent that we need to shift to reducing urban sprawl and rely more on efficient public transit. Most of the options seem to fit the 20th century better than the rest of the 21st century, which will have to deal with life beyond peak oil.</p>

I want the tunnel/depressed highway. I have seen them in other areas and I think they are great. Much less noise and it makes the ground level prettier.

The boulevard option should be implemented however I totally disagree with the "western by-pass" route as shown on the pre-screening models, more on that later.

Regarding the boulevard option, and as some others have suggested, I would use the autobahn in Germany as my model. A fantastic super highway constructed between major urban centers, that doesn't penetrate the city proper. This super highway runs mainly through rural or sparsely populated areas to connect Germany's major cities, thus avoiding the 81-like twists and turns; numerous and tightly distanced exits/entrances and inevitable traffic slow-downs. When you approach your destination city, there is a "spur" which directs you through the outer suburbs and eventually turns into a boulevard street which directs you into the heart of the city.

We have 481 in place, modifications at the north and south route 81 interchanges would allow for a successful diversion of all north and south bound traffic, passing through Syracuse.

The western bypass schematic almost follows the original route that was part of the Camillus/Fairmount by-pass construction in the mid- '70's. The time to construct that route was then, when all the rights-of-ways were in place and the route had limited impact on existing housing, businesses, etc. Recapturing this route nearly 40 years later would be extremely expensive and disruptive, virtually impossible.

While I do believe a western by-pass is necessary, a different route, skirting around the south west city suburbs (boundary), perhaps more along the 173 corridor, would be easier from a route perspective, however a bigger challenge from a construction standpoint.

Many others have articulated the issues well. I add the following to the chorus of voices and ideas in favor of removing I-81 from the City entirely.

I-81 as currently positioned leads people to see the city as either a place that one simply is expected to pass through or as a place to which one comes from outside for a short period of time, after which one leaves to go home (which is somewhere else). If this city is to thrive, it must come to be more about itself--about cultivating life within.

We need more people to live in the city. It is underutilized for living. When more people live in the city, there will be more activity of every kind and it will become the vibrant place we aspire for it to be--and will attract more people to want to visit it.

All of this starts with changing the messages sent by having a highway bisect the city. It would no better--in fact, worse--to reroute I-81 to West Street, for example. That would be repeating the tragic mistakes of running it through the 15th Ward to begin with--from raw discrimination to misguided urban planning. We need a solution for the next 50 years, not for decades past.

I-81 needs to go for all of our sake--and not just elsewhere within the city, but out of the city entirely.

<p>I strongly support the Boulevard option. It will open up a very large area of the city to be more livable, walkable, and inviting for retail and other businesses. It will improve air quality, noise, and safety in the downtown area. And it will break down an enormous barrier between east and west sides of the city, allowing ongoing initiatives like the Connective Corridor to achieve their maximum potential.</p> <p>As someone who lives not far from the Colvin Ave entrance to I-81, I appreciate the convenience of getting through the city quickly, for example to the airport, but I also regularly bike, walk, and ride the bus from University Hill to points downtown. The value of removing the viaduct far outweighs the value of keeping it, to my mind.</p> <p>Other cities have had great success with removing highways through downtown. Many cities thrive without limited access highways near their downtowns. Syracuse deserves a chance to become a ground-level, human-scale, welcoming place rather than just a drive-over zone. Furthermore, I understand that rebuilding the highway would involve claiming even more territory than it already commands, to meet current safety standards. This is absolutely unacceptable, and Syracuse deserves better.</p>
<p>I prefer the boulevard option. It will prove the most cost effective and will open up a vast area for redevelopment in the center of the city. At the same time it will remove an ugly barrier between downtown and University Hill. I hope West Street can be reduced in size as well, certainly not expanded.</p>
<p>A tunnel would eliminate the isolation of the University and the near east side from downtown while allowing traffic to continue to use Route 81. Eliminating the corridor or turning it into a boulevard would make commuting into and out of the City miserable. Use of Route 81 is important to commuting as both a direct and alternative route into the City. We have serious weather delays in the Winter and construction delays in the Summer which makes it important to have more than one interstate accessing the City.</p>
<p>I support the Boulevard option. I lived in Milwaukee before and after the Park East freeway was demolished and replaced with a Boulevard:</p> <p>http://www.preservenet.com/freeways/FreewaysParkEast.html</p> <p>Downtown Milwaukee was significantly improved by the removal of this freeway. I-81 is in a much worse location than the Park East was, cutting University Hill off from downtown. A boulevard would be a major improvement to the City of Syracuse, at a reasonable cost.</p>
<p>Take down as much of the raised highway in the downtown area as possible. Route interstate traffic around the city on 481. Reunite the city!</p>

1. Turn the current 81 viaduct into a nice, slow (but efficient with timed lights), street level Blvd., eliminating the "single exit" choke points of the current viaduct design.
2. Officially change the 481 stretch to be 81, so non-local traffic avoids downtown.
3. Efficiently connect to West St., but West St. should also be redone, probably with the same standards at the viaduct Blvd., to be friendly for pedestrians foot traffic, bikes, and recreation.
4. Improve access routes to 690 downtown on-ramps, to reduce 5pm congestion by distributing traffic to more balanced and distributed on-ramp usage.

The current viaduct area, as well as the better connected West St., should be designed in a way that makes pedestrians WANT to walk, and feel like a "people first" (not "cars first" focus when walked. The pedestrian design should connect to the creek walk. The pedestrian paths should extend into the park like streets in the West side neighborhoods, making the near west side part of a cohesive pedestrian network into downtown, carousel (the creek walk should connect), and SU.

I'd vote for a full block-wide, park-like median with pedestrian path ways. The median should not feel like a median. The median should be a space designed to attract people and walkers/bikers. Think parks in Paris. Shade trees. Benches. A Fountain or two/three. The median should be a destination in and of itself. (Clearly, consider the cost of this "people first" median vision in relation to the cost of other the project options. A park is cheap to build on the grand scheme of things.)

The best possible option is to keep the I-81 Bridge and 690 Bridge where it is. The harsh reality is that they have become necessary for traffic flow to and from the City. But DO find a way to make the Bridge less vulnerable to the Syracuse weather and to find a way for better and safer pedestrian traffic in crossing the streets under the bridge. Getting rid of the bridge and creating a boulevard would only create a brand new set of problems for traffic flow and pedestrian flow. A tunnel is not a practical solution as that area especially around the Harrison Street and Almond Street Intersection is prone to flooding after and during severe rainstorms and could cause problems inside a tunnel.

Also the improvement of Mass Transit can be a contributing factor.

Keep it elevated and rebuild it the best that it can be done, brighter colors (enough with the puke green color) for the metal and quieter concrete. The damage to neighborhoods was done once so relocating it would be a terrible idea. Somehow make the 690/81 interchange complete. A boulevard wouldn't work too much traffic as it is now.

Syracuse in a nice, medium sized community. Rt. 81 thru the city is like the Berlin wall. It cuts the city in two and is unlit and dangerous at night. Tear down this monstrosity and construct an Avenue that is people friendly. Make access easy from SU and the Hospitals. 481 was supposed to be a bypass. Use it as such. Tear down the wall I'll be there with a hammer.

A tunnel will be great for scuba diving. The Erie canal came thru here because it was swampy here. 690 West floods on a regular basis, just for one example a tunnel is doomed to fail.

I'm concerned that we're designing our future in the context of an auto-centered 20th century world rather than the post-fossil fuel world we'll be living in.

It would be a shame to use our increasingly limited public funds to create a structure that first, encourages us to continue along our unsustainable path for the next decade or so, and second, be totally useless when we face the fact that we need to dramatically change how we design our society for the future.

Even more tragic, our current auto-centered is ultimately less satisfying and less robust than a more community-centered regional design would be.

I would like 81 to stay the way it is or it can be rebuilt along the same route and rebuilt to look prettier. I personally will not drive underground and I think the underground option is the worst option. 81 should stay elevated just the same as it is now. I do not support the boulevard option.

Station 4: Possible future strategies

Rehabilitation Strategy
No
This is not a very bright Idea with the No build / Rehabilitation. That would be wasting money that could go towards a New and Improved Interstate that the area would benefit from.
A parallel frontage street and/or southbound entrance ramp from Colvin St. (and possibly one near Castle Street) should almost certainly be added, in order to facilitate southbound travel from the University area. This will significantly ease the travel between the "eds-meds" complex in Syracuse, to Cornell University to the south.
For similar reasons, a northbound exit ramp should also be added at Colvin.
An alternative would be a tunnel under the railroad, connecting to Thurber Street, from the existing Brighton Ave. exit area. But this would throw a lot of traffic into the Outer Comstock residential neighborhood.
We have an opportunity to do something great. Let's make something that other communities envy. Rehab is just about the least creative thing to do. It's taking the easy way out.
This is a terrible idea and a huge waste of time and money.
Does not solve many of the existing and long term problems. Lacks imagination for what could end up being a lot better solution!
Not a good option

<p>I think the biggest problem with the current interchange of I-81 and I-90 at 7th North Street is that there simply isn't enough room there. Everything is crowded into a very tight space. If you're coming from I-81 north onto the Thruway, you have to make a rather abrupt lane change to reach the lane usually dedicated to E-Z Pass. Likewise, traffic coming from I-81 south onto the Thruway has to make an equally abrupt lane change to get to the staffed toll lane. There's not much space for this to happen, and sometimes traffic is backed up as a result of people trying to cross lanes. If more land could be acquired near this interchange, there might be a way to provide more "breathing room" between I-81 and the Thruway toll booths.</p>
<p>The same weaving then happens again past the toll barrier, if E-Z Pass lane traffic needs to move left to get onto I-90 east, or manned lane traffic needs to get onto I-90 west.</p>
<p>Perhaps if the Thruway would follow the lead of other states which have unmanned toll stations, this entire scenario could be avoided. I realize that NYSDOT doesn't have any control over NYSTA's activities, but an unmanned toll booth would benefit many more people than it would inconvenience.</p>
<p>The no build strategy is an abomination. I have been in Syracuse as an undergraduate (62-66) grad student (69-73) visitor (74-88) and ESF faculty member (chemistry) since Jan, 1988. Any strategy which cuts the University area (SU and ESF) off from the city ultimately hurts both. Downtown loses much of the purchasing potential of SU students and the students are reluctant to cross the barrier of a dangerous route in the shadows of a lurking I 81. When I dealt with that in 1965-6 and again in 69, I was fortunate to have friend in Upstate. I would duck in there and emerge on Irving Avenue to continue my walk without the local thugs. Today, of course, I merely drive through and never stop. The student community enriches downtown Syracuse with its energy and its parent's purses. Both are beneficial. The safer they feel in making that journey the more the city benefits from their presence.</p>
<p>The so called rehabilitation strategy in the No-build plan focuses solely on motorist convenience and ignores everything. As someone who has been threatened with violence underneath that edifice, years ago as a student, I can assure you it would make me think carefully about retracing those steps. I could probably find somewhere else to visit with less danger to myself.</p>
<p>I believe that the rehabilitation would not be the best option, but is certainly better than taking the highway down and making it a normal street. I believe a major problem with the current 81 is the inability to go every direction from every direction, also having at least 3 lanes each direction (NB and SB) north of and south of the city and then funneling into 2 lanes at the portion of the highway most people are trying to reach creates traffic slowdowns and congestion.</p>
<p>Replace Adam street off-ramp with a ramp to Burt street under the railroad.</p>
<p>How are you going to lengthen ramps with the limited amount of space that is already there?</p>
<p>Any options that further encroach onto the urban fabric of the city and exacerbate the community impact of the existing freeway are unacceptable.</p>
<p>Think about pedestrians.</p>
<p>No; in my driving routes, the Pearl Street on-ramps and intersection of E. Genesee and Almond Streets are the most dangerous sections.</p>
<p>Alright, but we'll just be driving on patches after a while.</p>
<p>Now</p>
<p>Why rehab or reconstruct one of the elements of Syracuse most hated by its residents?</p>
<p>Still need a 690E to I-81N link.</p>
<p>Deep six this alternative.</p>
<p>What about 81 north of city and 690 west of city connection?</p>

No rehab. Tear it down!
"Planning" for accidents accepts that some people drive too fast!
Is it possible to "fix" the Almond Street I-690 interchange and ramps to they are less of a hazard? I see no drawings of what it would look like after rehab.
All this rebuilding would eat up even more of downtown. The rehabilitated viaduct would need to be bigger and wider. Just tear it down and give us a boulevard for that mile or so.
Doesn't address issues below the viaduct.
Love living in Syracuse because there is no traffic. Keep traffic moving please.
We need to address urban sprawl - the reason people "need" I-81.
Do something about the timing of traffic lights on main streets, i.e. Genesee.
I love that this strategy includes the entire length between 481 interchanges - great system perspective! And, obviously consider how the highway is actually used now!
Life isn't just about how fast I can get somewhere.
1. Uses lots of urban real estate for faster "suburban" traffic character
2. Existing infrastructure already too imposing on landscape
Wouldn't do much to change/improve the city. Not a good use of money, as we'll be back at the same point in 30 years.
Ice design.
Reconstruction of elevated highway.
What does making ramps longer and updating geometry mean in terms of required teardowns?
Rehabilitation: Great - quick for hospital access in and around Syracuse. Remember people come from all areas.
A widening of the highway, new ramps, etc...Would be such a negative impact on what's left downtown.
With weather (snow + rain) playing such a huge role in our lives, would super elevation highways still be a realistic answer? The greatest highway designs don't often solve bad driving either.
This strategy makes a certain amount of sense - what would it cost? Who pays?
Rehabilitation: Let's be innovative this time around, and solve the problem. Remove that hideous viaduct, re-route the regional traffic, and sew downtown back together.
Rehab option does little/nothing to address issues of public transportation, future forms of mobility, e.g. light rail.
If you demolish any more public housing to lengthen the on-ramps at Adams and Harrison - we will see! Never again!
I don't see anything about the number of lanes. It would be desirable to have 3 lanes (plus wide shoulders) in each direction. Rehab won't address this.
Rehab is the best option for maintaining the status-quo, for better and worse.
Rehab would be a stop-gap measure. We should strive to get another 50 years from any revised system.
Status quo/Rehab: this may, unfortunately, be the best option!
Rehab option: use very long life concrete to reduce ongoing maintenance.
High-speed highways do not belong in cities. No amount of tweaking will remove the noise and pollution that city residents suffer for the convenience of drivers.
As a lifelong resident of Syracuse and Central New York, I have considered various strategies offered and definitely feel the rehabilitation strategy.
I find myself walking past this strategy as it likely represents the most adverse effect to a revitalized downtown.
More risk assessment documentation for each proposed strategy and project scope.

Interchange from I-81N to I-690E is currently unsafe as current highway is too narrow and two lanes of traffic entering I-81 just before it turns to 690E is unsafe.
Rehab it to get another 30-40 years of the same?? How have the last 30-40 years treated Syracuse? Why would we want more of that? The current constituency has self-selected for low expectations, but Central New York is clearly not attracting any influx. Major change is imperative.
(Viaduct Corridor) Almond Street off Ramp I-81 South (Exit 18): - Pre-program traffic signals to allow for better/smoothier/more continuous Almond Street traffic flow. - Off-ramp Exit 18: signal remains green for an average 1 minute 30 seconds during the morning commute; the Almond/Harrison intersection stays green for barely 30 seconds. When cars speed through (regardless of signal changes), risk of collision automatically skyrockets. - Similar changes needed for signal timing exit 17 - I-81 North/Harrison.
It's too difficult to expand the viaduct area. I would much prefer a boulevard through this area of downtown.
Under the bridge in the viaduct area is unproductive and feels unsafe. We should think about ways to make that area feel alive and provide benefit to the community. An example exists in Baltimore, downtown under I-83 - a craft fair and farmers' market happens there year round. Not sure that would work in Syracuse, but perhaps part of the rehab plan should be rehabbing the spaces the highway effects.
Improving the Colvin/Brighton interchange making it simpler for travelers to understand. Beautifying it for all.
Need to avoid additional acquisition and demolition.
Most of the current I-81 corridor would still exist in some form even if the viaduct is removed. There would still be good access to downtown with a boulevard replacing the viaduct. Traffic in downtown would probably move more smoothly without the bottlenecks at the exists where all traffic funnels through a choke point. A boulevard and street grid would offer options rather than one single route.
Rehab strategy and widening highway and ramps the best overall option.
Need to consider impact on street level non-auto circulation - tying together adjacent neighborhood areas. A wider footprint for the highway will devalue surrounding property.
Most accidents are because of bad drivers - not enough speed signs on city 81 and no one seems to know who is responsible for the street lights that have been out for years!
I-81 North/I-690 West to West Street exit is very unsafe. Any reconstruction needs to address this interchange.
Viaduct area: include additional protected (by traffic light) crosswalks on Almond Street. Also: lights under viaduct. Ten times more fixtures needed and need to be Metal Halide NOT HPS!
There is no reason not to beautify the entire under highway areas - a la Seattle. Parking under the highway should be banned in favor of trees, shops, benches, etc.
Boulevard and western bypass are the best choices. Tunnels are depressing (no light) and elevated portions need to come down.
No tunnel! Consider using multilevel highway in existing road plan and this will not only improve traffic flow but also add lanes to deal with future motorist growth.
This is too much of a status quo - capitulation to the suburbs. We need more compromise.
Pictures of Learbury Building, VIP Structures, N Warren Street, Upstate Out Buildings, the bricks, all come down!! (Nuts.)

<p>Need additional capacity for university exits, provide a new high capacity off ramp on 81 north to serve the university, VA and Crouse Hospital which discharges straight to Crouse Ave. (placed just prior to the existing off ramp) and keep the existing exit ramp for University hospital & south downtown, splitting the load, and expediting traffic to hill and/or provide dedicated exit ramp for south downtown with flyover exit off of 81N with west travel</p>
<p>I-690 East to I-81 South: - Dangerous entrance on to I-81. Can't see cars coming on to I-81. - I always drive left lane of I-81 when approaching this mess. - I-81 off to Harrison Street is touchy.</p>
<p>This is not a solution. If the 81 is widened, it further separates us from downtown. It increases the noise in the area and pedestrians continue to go under an ugly bridge.</p>
<p>Route through traffic - off Nedrow to Cicero on 481 - drop level of road through downtown one level, improve east/west connections to city streets. Make a top with active and passive recreation.</p>
<p>The Outer Comstock neighborhood - in particular Airsley Drive, Thurber Street and Comstock - currently carry more traffic than they should. They cannot carry any additional traffic.</p>
<p>A depressed highway does nothing to solve one of the major problems caused by the highway: a fracturing of our city into two halves which has exacerbated racial and class segregation in Syracuse. A tunnel could be a good long-term solution, especially when combined with creative above-ground solutions, especially those that involve an attractive at-grade boulevard, light rail/dedicated bus lines and ease for pedestrians. I do worry about the cost of constructing the tunnel however.</p>
<p>The status quo simply is not acceptable. It divides our city, brings unnecessary air and noise pollution in the form of vehicles passing through without stopping and is frankly quite ugly. It is time to get beyond this 1950s car-centric thinking and be serious about building a city that is for living in, not driving through.</p>
<p>Doing nothing is not a viable strategy. What is existing now can't be up to code and is extremely dangerous. Not to mention how it cuts sections of the city off from each other. Bad for pedestrian/ bicycle flow.</p>
<p>There has to be a way to go from 690 East to 81 North and staying on the highway the whole time. No more exiting on Hiawatha going past the mall to get on 81 north.</p>
<p>There's no attention given here to how an expanded interstate highway would eat up even more city real estate, and continue to depress property values and quality of life (noise, dirt, vibration) for city residents. Convenience to commuters should not be the only concern. These same commuters often cite "crime" and "poverty" as reasons they don't live in the City and need an interstate for a quick commute - yet an interstate running next to a residential neighborhood is exactly what creates low property values that lead to low-income neighborhoods and a concentration of crime.</p>
<p>We need a map showing exactly how much MORE land would be required for all this widening of bridges and roadways and lengthening of ramps. What buildings would have to come down? How would this larger footprint of the highway affect circulation at ground level? How would it affect the ability to get under or around ramps now, for example for pedestrians or bike riders? What would it cost to make the underpasses safe and appealing? Or is that not even in the mix of options?</p>
<p>The rehabilitation strategy is short sighted: people are prioritizing their own convenience commuting over the societal and economic benefits that come from a revitalized downtown.</p>
<p>I think I-81 should remain elevated along the same route as it is now.</p>

Reconstruction Strategy
<p>Reconstruction is the way to go. A rehab doesn't go far enough to ensure the durability of the structure or increase safety features, which impacts fiscally in the long run. The 81 and 690 interchange is a nail biting event (actually no time for nail-biting) with far too much accident potential and history. Eliminate that one on-ramp north completely and have traffic enter 81 North past the interchange where there is currently an on-ramp in place near Little Italy. This removes a sudden change in lanes and promotes traffic through an area that hasn't benefitted from previous attempts at revitalizing. This entrance would need to be updated to be safer. 690 East-bound traffic gets on at the first entrance to 690 East currently in place near Erie Boulevard and James St. 690 West, many entrances currently in place. Keep 81 Southbound on-ramp near hospitals. Keep current off ramp near hospitals. Convenience and efficiency are far too vital when seeking medical attention and emergency vehicles as well as general populace need quick access to this area, in addition to easy access to SU and the dome. What the highway can do without is the sudden entrance of traffic just before they are forced to make quick decisions and lane changes. This lessens the many interactions and lane changes in one concentrated area and lengthens lanes for smooth traffic flow, while keeping costly major changes at a minimum. I think it's far too costly to remove the entire overhead highway completely, and creating a loop around the city would mean traffic jams on the streets and lengthy waits for emergencies, drastically impacting lives. Ground level highways are far too dangerous even w/ pedestrian crossings and you still get pollution - lower. Ground level with traffic signals slow traffic too much. Major safety renovations - especially on bridges and overpasses - and better signage - necessary. Tunnels??!! Talk about trapping exhaust fumes. Safety concerns, snow, depressing darkness, entrapment, and removal of existing underground infrastructure...We need to keep the overhead highway in place, just update it and make it safer.</p>
<p>Prefer this strategy. Think we can build a more attractive highway in the same general location.</p>
<p>In this You are going Backwards Not Forwards! The Old way is Not working, So why rebuild the Problem I thought this was a way to Fix the Blunder that was put into Place so Many years ago! Plus this Plan does not address the issue of not having an Exit from I-81 south to I-690 West and or Not having an Exit from I-690 East to I-81 North.</p>
<p>Add Colvin St. access to and from the southern portion of I81 (see my comment on the Rehabilitation strategy).</p> <p>Add access between I-81 in the city and the southern portion of I481. Right now the southern end of I481 connects only to the portion of I81 farther to the south.</p> <p>The combination of the two accesses above would give an alternate route between the University area and Dewitt/Manlius, taking significant traffic pressure away from the East Genesee corridor during rush hour, and especially away from the Harrison St. onramp to I81 north (and I690) during afternoon rush hour.</p> <p>Also, add on- and off-ramps directly between I81 and all the Destiny/Inner Harbor parking area(s), both to the north and south of Hiawatha Blvd, using a frontage road to connect all of those parking areas to both I81 southbound, and Hiawatha Blvd, in a straightforward manner. Avoid requiring southbound traffic from Destiny to travel onto or across Bear Road. This should help to reduce the need to have traffic entering I81 southbound from Destiny, and trying to get to the I690-east exit, cross several lanes of traffic in a short distance.</p>
<p>Nobody will want to live by this, and it will continue to hurt the city's economy.</p>

<p>This seems the best to me. Additional suggestion - Re-route 81/690 intersection (and make it complete in all directions), by building new highway off route 81 over or between Bear and Geddes streets to connect to 690, both ways. Likewise 690 back to 81 (@ Bear Street) with option for traffic to go both ways. 690 would continue over existing route, also 81 continues existing route, BUT, no more intersection at Almond Street area. I.e. They would cross where they now intersect, but NOT actually intersect. Intersecting traffic would take new access road between Geddes@690 and Bear@81.</p> <p>Helps to clean up SU - Hospital area and creates new commercial opportunity around Destiny, Harbor, West Genesee, Bear, Geddes, etc.</p> <p>So there you are.</p>
<p>Rebuilding a mistake doesn't make sense.</p>
<p>It doesn't work. It is the worst space to be in the city and creates one of the most dangerous places to drive and walk. This should not be considered a viable option.</p>
<p>Good idea, would be great to get a E690 ramp to I81N</p>
<p>I lived in Brooklyn Heights, NY for 10 years prior to my return to Syracuse as a faculty member. If you compare the results North of Atlantic Avenue (The Heights) and South, it is clear that an above ground 'solution' did not work there and will not work here. In the Heights, the BQE was tiered and the upper layer was the 'promenade', children's playgrounds, chessboards, etc. things focused on a sense of community. Below that were a tier of Northbound lands and a tier of Southbound lanes of the Brooklyn Queens expressway (BQE). Expensive, yes. Did it save a neighbor? Unequivocally. Compare the Heights in the 70-s -90s with Red Hook, etc. south of Atlantic Ave. The lack of disruption to an existing neighborhood was its salvation. We have already severed the University from down town once; let's not compound the mistake by doing it again. Bill Winter, lowly chemist at ESF</p>
<p>This seems to be the most practical solution to most of the problems; it solves the interchange issue, and also creates a better looking viaduct. I do not know if decreasing the onramps and off ramps are a good idea, I work in emergency services and this decent access to a limited access roadway makes for awesome time for ambulances to get to ALL of the hospitals (Community being farfetched, but getting from Liverpool to Community would take a lot longer without the Brighton/Salina/State exit), police officers responding from the north of the city or county to the south or vice versa. I think it also needs to be noted that Almond St under 81 seems to be a vital street in the city.</p>
<p>I overall like this idea. The frontage road idea concerns me however. My experience with these is that they create dead zones between the highway and the frontage road that are often just wastelands and junk traps.</p>
<p>Consider increasing speed limits to 65 mph or more to improve traffic flow.</p>
<p>The viaducts shown in the pictures are beautiful, a wonderful testament to modern engineering. We highly encourage the pursuit of this option.</p>
<p>This seems to be the best forward move, but I see nothing directly addressing the current lack of an interchange connection for travelers driving south on 81 to get to 690 going west. The location of the current interchange makes the addition of a more typical 4-way interchange very challenging, and might be very disruptive to the commercial district.</p>
<p>Reconstruction/rehab strategy should be eliminated as an option. It doesn't deal with the innate issues of neighborhood restoration and other issues of improving Syracuse's aesthetics or living spaces.</p>
<p>This is a terrible idea. There is nothing beautiful about any highway that cuts a city in two, destroys connectivity, creates dangerous spaces where no-one wants to walk, and generally prevents the city from being knit together as a whole human-scaled environment.</p>

Money.
No; the new viaducts are much more appealing, but how soon will they be out of date?
Should not be considered as it can lead to more problems.
Not the worst strategy going forward, but not the best either. Assumes automotive technology stagnates and a preference for faster, larger vehicles continues. If smaller, safer, slower, more fuel-efficient vehicles eventually become the norm, will this highway reconstruction strategy be 'overkill'?
So long as pedestrian/surface user needs are considered, this reconstruction is best for Syracuse.
Reconstruction with higher elevation and enhanced aesthetics would be an acceptable option, but who pays? How much?
Should the city sacrifice more land, more homes, and more businesses to meet highway design standards?
Viaduct still likely to impose on downtown/University Hill. Frontage road may exacerbate walkability issues in urban area.
How about public transport? Monorail!
Will this include a connection between 81 north of the city and 690 west of the city?
This strategy is based in 20th century thinking. It won't work for the future.
Reconstruction is probably the worst option thus far. As a downtown resident, this is only reinforcing the same problems and barriers. Polishing and improving the elevated sections isn't getting to the root of any of the real problems that plague downtown (walkability, quality of life...).
What happens in 2070? Will my grandkids have to spend a trillion dollars to rebuild it then? No more mega structures!
Why show frontage roads in other areas? We have nice ones near Carousel and the Airport! They work great!
Bridges are expensive in a cold climate like ours.
I like this option the most - improve safety through design - seems it would be most economic.
Reconstruction: Sorry, but could we please solve the problem this time? Spending millions to end up with the status quo would be a monumental mistake!
The Seattle viaduct is actually nice underneath!
I still like this option the best. Reconstruct the bridges to modern standards; widen it to three lanes, and a wide shoulder. We need to keep traffic moving (although the construction phase would be a nightmare). It also minimizes problems from flooding.
Opposed to Tunnel/Depressed Highway as this area is vulnerable to flooding.
Not a viable option for the city's future development.
If you are going to spend all that money elevating the highway, why not instead put it underground and eliminate the division with downtown completely!
Reconstruction should not be an option. The highway has destroyed entire neighborhoods.
No frontage roads, please! They are not visually pleasing, and view from frontage roads is highway. They will, therefore, not be developed by businesses/housing that do not like the view.
This is no vision for new city.
If you must build a raised highway, Seattle version would help.
Keep 81 downtown. If we are to be a major city, we need highways in and out of downtown. No traffic jams!
I understand that reconstruction would require much wider cross section, requiring destruction on both sides. I do not support this option/approach.
I say just reconstruct I-81.

It seems to be the least disruptive option and maintains speedy access to University Hospital from the north.
The status quo isn't working - that is why we are here! East access is great, but let's make it less convenient to leave the city at 5.
Viaducts don't have to be ugly. See panel at left. The "split" is a myth. With proper walkways and traffic lights, there is adequate passage one to the other.
Why reconstruct a terrible part of the city for the benefit of people who don't live in it?
Slow down the speed limit!
Complete the I-81/I-690 interchange to all directions.
Aesthetically pleasing viaduct is an oxymoron.
You are on the right path. Keep up the good work!
Reject No-Build strategy. 81 still divides the city and interferes with development and a more pedestrian-friendly city.
Reconstruction does not help with tourism/civic attractiveness at all.
Reject Reconstruction strategy. 81 must go so we can make our city more people friendly, more desirable, and suitable for economic development.
Reject Rehab strategy: 81 still divides city and interferes with economic development and a more pedestrian friendly city.
Reconstruction to facilitate local users is superficially attractive by profoundly inefficient. Moving people within the metro area is a problem with more efficient and environmentally and ultimately lower-cost solutions. And truly interstate traffic can bypass Syracuse.
You will never resolve the exit/entrance ramp problem or accident rates. The elevated section would continue to "split" the city in two - not a good thing. Also, too expensive.
Sounds like a good idea. Any other option than rebuilding what is currently in place will not work.
Just to clarify, the I-490/I-590 interchange pictured here moves traffic more efficiently compared to the original design 24 years ago.
I have traveled extensively by auto. Have seen few places where "viaducts" are so ugly and depressing to walk around or view when driving by. Why? Was Syracuse an experiment in cheap and ugly? Reconstruction may be the answer if it is aesthetically pleasing and resolves safety issues for cars and pedestrians.
Please note: the I-490/590 interchange in Rochester is known as "the can of worms" for a reason! It's hard to navigate unless you know where you are going.
This is the most economical, environmentally friendly option. Any re-routing would be detrimental to the existing infrastructure and put the public at risk. Land values on the East Side and DeWitt would plummet due to increased traffic, noise, and emissions of GHGs.
Reconstruction is the best option! It will retain the functionality of I-81 but make improvements to interchanges and improve the aesthetics so that underneath the highway is pleasing and I-81 would not be viewed as a barrier.
Wouldn't help transform city and make it vibrant. Another version of status quo and not visionary. Won't fix problem as we'll have to do this all over again in 30 years.
Move 81 to what is currently route 481, allowing for a better connection to a growing University area, a growing medical area, and a developing downtown!
Even a nicely reconstructed viaduct is unlikely to create a safe or welcoming pedestrian connection East-West.
Replace current elevated I-81 with double-deck (3 lanes each direction) as I have seen in Austin, TX...
This is all part of the conventional spatial wisdom of I-81. It's part of a broader agenda to expand

upstate and SU.
Not sure that this addresses the "split faction" between downtown and The Hill.
I oppose "reconstruction". The deficiencies in the current viaduct would require extensive widening - adding a break down lane, the very dangerous sight lines would require straightening if they are to be eliminated. It would require limiting on/off ramps and access or it would eat up an even larger share of downtown - and in a few years the viaduct would deteriorate again.
Aesthetics can't be the only concern for reconstructing the viaduct - need to consider noise, air pollution, and the impact on surrounding property values. You can put lipstick on a pig - but it is still a pig.
Reconstruction is best idea. Underground is worst. If no 81 through city - I'd move out of city and go north.
Reconstruct I-81 with proper ramps and width. Traffic volume demands it. Going back in time serves no purpose i.e. local parkways, too slow, hurts environment with air pollution. Go with viaducts i.e. Marquette plans. I have seen Orlando, Providence, New Haven etc. and a new viaduct would resolve along with better ramp designs.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Build the western half of 481. 2. Rebuild I-81 through Syracuse exactly as it is today, only higher (so it's not in your face so much, or divisive), and bigger (to accommodate the ever increasing traffic).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A bridge is a bridge is a bridge. - I walk almost daily under I-81 crossing Almond through to Townsend area. Ugly. - The viaduct must go!
I am all for the "reconstruction" strategy. All the better if you can make it look attractive (e.g. Seattle photo). But - most of all - it works!
This strategy should not be acceptable to city residents. We need to take our city back from commuters. This concrete monster divides city neighborhoods and is a hazard for people having to cross Almond as pedestrians, especially upstate faculty, staff, and students. Take it down.
How much additional acquisition and demolition needed to alleviate 2 or 3 issues of negative impact of barrier between neighborhoods?
<p>Reconstruction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No. Need to move thru traffic outside city of Syracuse. - I-81 should be existing 481 from Jamesville north. New road from Lafayette, east of Jamesville to connection at Woodchuck Hill Rd. - Need west side highway. Follow Route 20 to Navarino. North, west of Marcellus and Camillus. Intersect I-90 at Peru.
Regarding the Element development page, seems to be inconsistent in its bullet layout.
Identify/evaluate/review item types should be separate from straighten/eliminate/remove item types.
After all, everything has to be reviewed before it can be implemented.
Neither this nor the status quo is acceptable as they still divide the city in two and bring in unnecessary pollution (noise and air). We need to think beyond the car-centric models we inherited from the 1950s-1970s and build a more livable, walkable city. I-81 was one of the worst things to happen to central Syracuse--perhaps not to CNY, but to the fabric of the city itself.
What happens to the existing infrastructure in this option? How many buildings will have to be torn down? It will further degrade the area?

<p>It is certainly a good idea to eliminate left-side entrances, like where 690 enters 81 South just before the Adams exit.</p>
<p>Can we get a map of what the impact would be on buildings and roads to do all this straightening and changing of ramps? This seems highly disruptive and potentially destructive.</p>
<p>A bridge would still reduce property values and maintain the isolation of downtown from the university, despite any attempts to improve its aesthetics.</p>
<p>I think I-81 should remain elevated along the same route as it is now.</p>

<p>Tunnel/Depressed Highway Strategy</p>
<p>My favorite option is the depressed highway. The tunnel would be very expensive. I'm originally from Montreal and we have such a depressed highway. It helps that you can see the sun and also the landmarks as you go by. You can get off the road and stop for lunch or dinner or to visit something interesting. From the perspective of the pedestrian you have a clear line of sight and makes the neighborhood more unified. Definitely would support the depressed highway.</p>
<p>It seems that this strategy separates through traffic from traffic actually using the highway to get into the city. Limiting access to major streets within the city would make commuting very difficult. The fact that this has been utilized in much larger cities with a better selection of alternate routes does not mean that it makes sense here.</p>
<p>Do not like this strategy especially in light of all the problems they had in Boston.</p>
<p>Now this is a more Logical approach Than the First Two Ideas!! If this Highway were to be put underground, you will have more Headway to. Fix and create new exits, You would finally be able to make an interchange with I-690 / I - 81 in both directions. Plus you would reconnect Syracuse. Some People are afraid of Change in Syracuse, but this Would be the Best way to Restore the city in the center of the state. Plus Think of All the Road salt that you wouldn't have to use If you Built the Tunnels?</p>
<p>Destiny USA and Inner Harbor parking lot connections at the northern terminus; Colvin St. connections to/from the more-southern portions of I81; connections from the southern portion of I481 to/from the portion of I81 immediately to its north. (See my comments in the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction strategies).</p>
<p>The comments about the added cost of drainage and other maintenance should be balanced by reduced cost from snow removal, especially during ultra-snowy winters when there is no space within the viaduct area to push the excess snow. This will greatly reduce the risks seen during the winter of 2004, when portions of the viaduct turned into "ski jumps for vehicles", and drivers of several vehicles (including one driven by Jason Rhoades, the former mayor of East Syracuse) plunged to their deaths.</p>
<p>I like what you've illustrated.</p>
<p>As someone who travels on 81 with some frequency, who looks out at it out of the window of my apartment, and who crosses under it every day to get across the city, I strongly support the tunnel option. I think it would be much more aesthetically pleasing, and would make the city feel much more connected.</p>
<p>Consideration for a large snowfall, Where would the snow be plowed for a very large snowfall?</p>

<p>I strongly favor a tunnel rather than a depressed highway. As I've commented elsewhere on this website, a tunnel keeps traffic noise underground, and it eliminates the "eyesore" of a highway ripping through the heart of downtown. Depressed highways like Rochester's Inner Loop are just as "depressing" (pun intended) as an elevated highway. A depressed highway still divides the city just as much as a viaduct.</p> <p>Not to mention, a depressed highway means Almond Street, which now runs directly underneath I-81, would need to be split to run on either side of I-81. That could involve demolishing more buildings than would be required for a tunnel, and it would mean more traffic lights (because you'd need separate lights for northbound Almond and southbound Almond at each cross-street), which mean more delays.</p> <p>A depressed highway is also prone to flooding, and it still needs to be sanded/salted and plowed in the winter time. A tunnel is covered, protected from the elements. If the pavement isn't being scraped and salted every day, it'll last longer. Ventilation shouldn't be a problem -- there are tunnels underneath almost every part of Manhattan and they do just fine.</p> <p>A tunnel would allow Almond Street to maintain its current alignment as much as possible, within the same width (or even less) than it requires now. Without the I-81 viaduct supports in the way, these intersections could be redesigned to provide better, safer traffic flow. Any excess space could provide for grassy or landscaped medians, and perhaps as others have suggested, room for a walking/biking trail.</p>
<p>Montreal would be another model to consider.</p>
<p>Tunnel would be great, but not practical at all, also, emergency access would be compromised. I have been through recessed LARs before, and they seem to be efficient, but people driving through do not see the city at all. Our city actually looks great driving through on 81 at night, perhaps we should continue to show off our city by keeping travels high where they can see the city, pass through downtown, or stop if they want. Burying it or making it a boulevard would have people never see any portion of the city limits passing through, with the only exception being the 481 interchange....sure they can see Loretto and Brighton Towers...</p>
<p>I suspect that time and cost considerations would be quite high for this concept.</p>
<p>Nothing, looks great. We should do this.</p>
<p>CONSTRAINTS!!!!!! City built on wetland, relocating utilities, grade change, COST, etc.</p>
<p>This could very well work out the best. It would keep traffic moving smoothly but still allow for traffic overhead and pedestrians. we sort of have that concept near court st. area is over 81</p>
<p>I like these ideas better than the previous strategies. With a tunnel it leaves room up top for major improvements, innovative ideas, green space, and other endless possibilities that are not possible due to a depressed highway, or the current viaduct. Snow removal would essentially be nonexistent underground, although the need for an efficient drainage system would be in the spring. That's the one thing that bothers me, Syracuse was initially a swamp. Other than that, possibly fuse this idea with the boulevard and rail system, and I think that would be the best solution. If not the most impressive.</p>
<p>I believe the tunnel strategy to be the most aesthetically pleasing option for the future neighborhood restoration project. It would help to re-connect many city blocks with downtown portions of Syracuse thus restoring small businesses, grocery stores, etc., to the city. This would improve the tax base of the city while improving the green spaces above the underground highway to a much better looking and user-friendly city. Pedestrian and bike path routes would be improved dramatically.</p>

Even if this didn't basically maintain a cut right through the heart of our urban fabric, it would still maintain the auto-centric nature of our transit system and prevent great swaths of urban territory to be taken up not with people but with fast-moving cars. The areas outside of cities are fine for that. Cities should behave like cities: people where people live, work, walk and have multiple opportunities for bumping into each other in public and semi-public spaces. This is how great ideas blossom - those chance encounters which do not take place when everyone is in a car.
Nein.
Collected carbon emissions in the tunnel. A depressed highway seems to be a better idea.
No; the depressed highway strategy is really not that different from what we have now.
Better than no-build, rehab, or recon strategies, but not as good as boulevard strategy. Walls in depressed roadway provide opportunity for creating aesthetically-pleasing infrastructure (murals, plantings, interesting facade work, etc.). Tunnel might become very dangerous in wintertime.
Need to consider impact of snow/ice that could fall here, much like winter of 2010/2011.
Love the Boston pictures - also see other cities that have benefited
Although the idea of green space and pedestrian and bike routes is appealing, I don't think this is the best option. 481 can easily handle through traffic so I don't think there would be enough use to support it. Most of the traffic is going to from hospitals/university, and I don't see how the tunnel would help with access to this area.
I like the tunnel design because I think it is so important to connect the hill with downtown.
No tunnel, stupid idea with snow/ ice freezing.
Depressed highway doesn't seem to improve aesthetics. Isn't Rochester trying to get rid or replace its depressed inner-loop? I like the tunnel option, but I'm guessing cost is significant.
The Boston model is attractive, but it took a long time and cost far more than expected. The soil has to be put somewhere and will be contaminated. I fear the tunnel would cut off local access.
Pittsburgh has tunnels under the rivers, they smell. There's water dripping and it's scary especially when a vehicle is on fire in one. I also saw people walking in them, indigents. We are at sea level now and we are a swampy area, water will take over. Your concrete spec. need to be extremely good.
Way too expensive an option.
Depressing the highway would divide the city more than it is now. Tunnel would be better.
The big thing, avoid long slowdowns. Need to move the main traffic.
This option does not eliminate the concrete barrier between east side and downtown and just limits care and pedestrian access across Almond. It increases the number of bridges that need to be maintained. It does not decrease pollution.
I grew up in Schenectady, which in its history had a covered bridge that crossed the Mohawk, connecting to Scotia. Maybe a half mile long. What about a roof over Rt. 81 through the city to keep snow and rain off the highway?
Good idea because it will help with traffic and it will help with walkers.
The tunnel is the way to go. But, whichever way is chosen, the project must employ local people.
Cost? Is it possible to maintain connection points to downtown? What are the effects on surrounding property values? Lapping over areas north of 690 to link to Salina Street and Franklin Square?
No tunnel. They are depressing to drive through, have environmental issues and are difficult to design so as to be aesthetically pleasing (Rochester is awful).
Good idea but route through traffic on 481 equals tunnel with active and passive recreation on top in park, shelter, trees, pond, picnic, bike, hike trails, ball fields, tennis, and open lawn areas. This is the best scheme shown.

Depressed highway leads to major disconnection between both sides of 81/ the city.
I like the potential of this option. Worry about the cost. However, space above could help revitalize area.
Seems expensive and would reduce downtown on and off ramp/ access.
This is to me the best solution. It completely eliminates the division with downtown and allows for an aesthetic connection. Yes it is more expensive, but this solution is for decades, so think long term.
Tunnel is the optimal solution. It is visually the most attractive, e.g. it is minimally visible. The infrastructure is below ground and in - visible again leaving the above ground space for connecting the city and human beings.
Sort of tired of S.U. taking over the city, and we are S.U. people.
I understand the challenges that this type of highway would cause. Though, the unique spaces of our city would change how people view downtown and Syracuse in general. My major concern would be cost. As the Boston tunnel was very very expensive.
Depressed boulevard would eliminate drag racing due to the fact there would be no stop lights. Stop lights and stop signs lure drag racing.
Drag racing is too huge of a problem already on Erie Blvd and Taft Rd. A ground boulevard would increase accidents and death. Please consider drag racing problem. 50+ people drag race every night. Seriously.
Tunnel concept has no benefit with serious challenges and high cost. Eliminate it.
The tunnel strategy in Boston was really expensive and took a super long time to complete, causing a lot of congestion and messy traffic in the meantime. Just saying...
Check out the via duct in Stockholm, Sweden that virtually disappears at street level, which is pedestrian and bicycle friendly. Buildings and via duct seem to merge. Via Ducts tastefully lit underneath.
The depressed version is just that, depressing. It looks more dividing than the current highway. I like the idea of a tunnel with parks etc. above, except cost, drainage, ventilation.
Because Boston's Big Dig worked so well!
Big Dig was expensive, but Boston is so much nicer because of it. Go see it.
Don't replace our Chinese wall with a moat. This will divide Syracuse more than a via duct.
If a sub-grade option is utilized, it would be a tunnel (not depressed highway) or aesthetics, connectivity, etc. will remain an issue.
I think the depressed roadway would divide the city even more than the present viaduct.
Let's have a mini Big Dig. Love the way those parks and walkways look.
Impractical and expensive.
Water table issues. Pump stations required during/ after storms.
Public transportation - monorail.
Yep, this is what the engineers concluded in the "Leos."
Awesome, but too expensive.
It unfortunate but SYR construction has to take into account water tables and winter freezing and snow. Below grade is not a good idea.
Not a good option. Big Dig in Boston horrible to drive in, too expensive.
Why not put at grade and bridge local streets over top? Pedestrian access too could be above the highway instead of under.
I think the tunnel is the ideal solution.
Depressed highway may make city much less accessible to people with disabilities.
Tunnel concept - no! Ventilation problematic, another hurricane "Hazel" flooded.
Least attractive idea from standpoint of traffic distribution, any maintenance.

<p>Good but water, sewer, electric, gas, etc. lines all need attention and modernization. Archaic, corrupt local governments. Unable to do this option well, and higher emergency risks than other options.</p>
<p>To maintain current traffic flows (east-west) at this interchange, any depressed tunnel's entrances and exits, for either I-81 or 690 or both, should be built / exit at the Franklin Square and University Hill areas. Current I-81/ 690 interchange, deconstruct so it no longer exists. If existence of depressed tunnels affects housing and or commerce, they need to be fairly compensated. How affect existing business?</p>
<p>Flooding Issues - Re watershed. Uncovered tunnel, what are the VOC impacts to local environment? A viaduct starts gases mixing at greater height.</p>
<p>The depressed highway scenario or concept seems to be the least disruptive option, which still addresses ease of passage through downtown. A number of grade level crossings could be maintained to connect west and east sides. For instance, the Adams Street crossing would still provide quick access to hospitals/ SO.</p>
<p>What would have to be torn down to create tunnels? For the massive cost involved, we could instead create a really good transit line to take the place of the I-81 route through the city (and also 690).</p>
<p>Having an open hospitable area above the tunnel would be great, if that would be the result.</p>
<p>Tunnels would not solve the congestion issues resulting from the number of people commuting to the Hill.</p>
<p>Whatever you do, make it mandatory that local labor is used. Also important, don't displace communities as was done originally, or severely compensate displacement.</p>
<p>Tunnel/ Depressed Highway - No pun intended, but it actually does seem depressing. We'd be trading our old elevated infrastructure problem for a new, depressed infrastructure problem. Re-route the regional traffic. Re-establish the grade-level street grid through downtown.</p>
<p>The trench where buried highway descends and ascends will be larger than the elevated highway.</p>
<p>A depressed highway would be a greater divider than an elevated one or a boulevard. It does not appear that there are enough access points such as an important one on Adams Street. What would happen to utilities? How about flooding?</p>
<p>The depressed highway would be just as bad, if not worse, as a barrier and aesthetic liability for downtown. Not sure Syracuse has the people or money to warrant a tunnel. This will not be a cost effective method of dealing with I-81.</p>
<p>Raised highway and depressed highway - the same old thinking, just expressed in the opposite direction.</p>
<p>I strongly support the tunnel idea, primarily because of its ability to remove weather from the equation. A highway is vital to the downtown area so putting underground solves transportation and saves DOT from plowing. Weather (snow) keeps us inside so this could be encouraging. Drainage - collect the water from summer water projects?</p>
<p>Tunnel, not an option. High ground water table existing utilities. Industrial and historic fill. Need for intricate and energy consuming drainage and pumping facilities. High snowfall and intense rainfall due to impervious area. Way too expensive. Lawsuits by the ton. Taxpayers pay more money.</p>
<p>Unless you cover it like in Boston, it will still be a scar and a worse barrier than the viaduct. To cover is too much money (as evidenced by the Big Dig). Transitions would be long/ awkward.</p>
<p>A tunnel or sunken road/ highway are my preference from a landscape perspective. But from a practical perspective, a tunnel would be prohibitively expensive. A sunken highway may work if smart removal and ground water issues can be satisfactorily addressed.</p>
<p>Why even consider a tunnel? Didn't you learn from the Big Dig? You won't know exactly what's underground until digging begins. Then, costs begin escalating.</p>
<p>I'm skeptical, but it would have traffic going fast, and it would have pedestrian advantages, especially if it is a fully enclosed tunnel with park on top (Almond Street area). Cost is a concern but if the FEDs pay,</p>

then do it.
Nowhere have I seen what the speed limit in the tunnel would be. Does it remain highway speed? Could only support this if it remains 45-55 MPG, with same exits (i.e. Adams Street, etc.).
A boulevard/ pedestrian-friendly boulevard seems attractive. I remain concerned about the air pollution issues that would remain in the vicinity of the boulevard. A tunnel would keep the above-ground area bike-able and exhaust-free.
Project costs will be prohibitive. The money could be better spent.
Depressed - What is the water table flow the current streets? Is this to be studied?
Ice buildup snow at entrance/exit. Entry/ exit needs are quite wide. Good buildings turn down.
If it can work, great. We need highways in the city. It's a fact of life for a major city. Our lack of major traffic jams attracts businesses and talent and keeps them here.
Tunnel/ Depression. New possibilities, but seems to be exorbitantly expensive and time consuming. I do like the bike lanes, we need more of those.
Open cuts do nothing to solve the barrier issue.
Tunnel strategy is best option but also most costly. However a mixed tunnel covered option will work especially highway is on Hill.
I have seen depressed highways in other cities and they can still function as hostile barriers and depress adjacent properties (Humboldt Parkway in Buffalo). To truly eliminate the road as a barrier and negative aesthetic, a tunnel is the best alternative
2nd best strategy but definitely not the best. This option addresses connectivity but could still lead to demolition of buildings and may not be the best strategy due to our inclement weather.
I like this one a lot.
A tunnel seems like a great idea, but is it feasible? Cost, and the time it would take to build -- it just doesn't seem to be in the cards for Syracuse. Yes. It would be a far smaller and less complex project than the Big Dig, but we also have a far smaller city and less likelihood of getting a return on that investment.
Atlanta has a similar depressed freeway and it still presents a barrier between different parts of the city. A tunnel (similar to those in Boston) would be a very nice option, but perhaps too expensive. I would rather see a realistic compromise: perfection is the enemy of the good. This is why I support the Boulevard.
I see no major difference between a "raised highway" and a "depressed highway". With the exception of a tunnel, or tunnel-like portions, I think it will make the disconnect between the two parts of downtown even worse.
A tunnel is a different issue entirely in that regard, but either option would do nothing to eliminate the traffic problem of all downtown traffic trying to enter/exit the city through a single choke point.
I think I-81 should remain elevated along the same route as it is now. I will not drive underground.

For me the beauty of this approach should be its simplicity. The first step is to just knock out the elevated portions of the road, the I81 viaduct. Do the minimal reconstruction necessary to reconnect 81 to the surface streets, then just wait and see what happens. People will cope, transportation will not collapse. What will happen though is you will then be able to see what to do.

I was told only 12 % of the I81 traffic is thru traffic. Rt. I-481 can certainly handle 12% of the I-81 traffic. The rest of the I-81 traffic was dispersing itself in the city anyway. I don't see what you're losing. Traffic would still get on and off at Adams St. The Southbound Harrison St. exit speeds up getting to what, the south end of downtown. There's other ways that are just as convenient to do that. The Northbound ramp from Almond St. is a hazard and isn't that different from getting on 81 NB at Pearl St. Going from I-81 NB to I-690 is, again, pretty scary as it is now. There are existing downtown entrances that do the same thing now and aren't that far from the Adams/Almond St. exit.

So, the initial consequences would not be dire. And, you would then still have the resources: money, time, and ambition to be able to make enhancements and developments where it becomes clear they'd be useful.

Boulevard Strategy
It's a great idea but I wonder if it would diminish the possibility of people stopping in Syracuse.
I- 81 would need to be rerouted around the boulevard otherwise I-81 will cease to exist in the Syracuse area. Interstate Highways are defined as a roadway that does not have any at grade intersections.
Transforming any portion of I-81 into a boulevard would seem to create extreme impacts during rush hour and at other times when high traffic levels would normally be expected (major events at SU, etc.) Personally, I would be inclined to completely avoid the city altogether and would choose to work elsewhere if this concept were constructed. There simply are not enough alternative routes. While constructing the bypass from 5/695 to the southern 481 interchange improves options for through-traffic, it does not address the cutting off of access downtown. While I am all for public transportation where it works, it would not be enough to compensate.
Do not think this would work considering the volume of traffic on I81
The Boulevard Part of your plan, You Need to Cut that Out Point Blank!! You need to Do the western end Bypass that could hook into I-481 and be apart the Tunnel Plan .Plus Finish I-690 east of Syracuse and run that to the eastern end of I-90 (The tolls collected at that end could Help Pay for that Half of the Project). If we Address I-81 and Include the Bypasses and make this a major to do project, Traffic in the area would flow much better. Also it would mean there would not be as much Road construction. That we see every Spring to fix up the wear and tear on the roads we have now. There are Too Many roads in the Area that are heavily traveled day in and day out. And we are always spending money to patch the roads instead of taking the money to make Major Improvements.

By itself, this would be a terrible outcome. Travel times between the University area and the airport would be phenomenally increased, handicapping these institutions enormously.

The only way to compensate for this problem would be to introduce a light-rail connection, perhaps using the existing OnTrack route for the portion between the existing "Carrier Dome" stop and Destiny. But it would require building the long-hoped-for OnTrack rail bridge over Park St. (and I81?), to get the OnTrack connection all the way to the Airport.

Bicyclists attempting to cross this street-level boulevard would face much worse challenges than we now face crossing Almond St. I have taken my bicycle on E. Genesee across Almond St. many times. I expect that at the crossing of E. Genesee and this boulevard, the traffic would be at least 10-20 times more challenging, with cars making both right and left turns coming from every possible direction. Establishing "no right on red" at this intersection would simplify life for bicyclists, but worsen it immensely for automobiles.

I lived in the SF Bay area from 1977-83, while obtaining my Ph.D. in Berkeley, and drove over 100 times on the Embarcadero Freeway. Hoped-for analogies to this area of San Francisco are based on ignorance. A key factor in the success of the tearing down of the Embarcadero Freeway is that it was at the edge of a city, bordered by a body of water. This meant that there is, essentially, no significant source of west-bound traffic crossing the recently-built street-level boulevard. Likewise, east-bound traffic from the City's street grid generally doesn't continue across the boulevard, since there is only one row of buildings to the east, and then San Francisco Bay. Instead, east-bound traffic from San Francisco city streets generally just goes north or south onto the boulevard, and vice-versa. Thus the Embarcadero area's traffic flow is greatly simplified compared to what must be accommodated in the center of Syracuse. A boulevard replacing I81 within Syracuse would have to accommodate equally traffic flowing both east and west across it. The east-west traffic flows are both likely to be as great as the north-south flows. These fundamental geographic differences mean that a boulevard is NOT a good solution for our area. It would lead to much poorer traffic flow, and incredible irritation for drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

This benefits the people who live in the city, instead of the non-taxpayers who live in the suburbs. Rebuilding the city so it is walkable and less ugly is essential in attracting members of younger generations, who already favor moving to urban areas that have easy non-car transportation. By repairing the city to benefit these people, we will attract a new generation of intelligent, high-quality workers, which we need to rebuild Syracuse's economy and attract new businesses.

I like this strategy, but would consider a tunnel for thru traffic with a boulevard on top for those entering/leaving the city.

Absolutely the best option. Make it a space where people and businesses want to be, with vegetation, bike lanes, and sidewalks. This could be a terrific entry point into the city that would make people want to spend time in Syracuse.

I think the Boulevard Strategy would be the most effective solution and will address more issues plaguing Syracuse than any of the other alternatives.

The boulevard strategy is the WORST idea presented here.

Someone said I-81 should be turned into something similar to the north-south arterial in Utica. After living near Utica for many years before coming to Syracuse, I can tell you that the Utica arterial is one of the ugliest, most poorly-designed highways I've ever seen. You're cruising along, and then, BAM, red light. People get hit walking across these intersections. Many of the buildings alongside the arterial look awful. There are many intersections where left turns aren't allowed, so you have to know your streets well or else risk getting lost trying to find the correct street to make the kind of turn you want to make. It just feels and looks like something that was supposed to be a "better" highway, but then they must have had a budget problem and just "settled" for what's there now.

Don't let that happen to Syracuse. Don't turn I-81 into a boulevard. We want through traffic to see our city, and maybe exit off the highway and spend some money here on their way through. We want our own residents to be able to keep the speedy access they enjoy to places like the universities and hospitals. We don't want to make through traffic detour all the way around town via the present-day I-481. What happened to being "green" and conserving fuel? Making people drive 20+ miles around the city, rather than through the city, is the opposite of that.

A tunnel will allow I-81 to maintain its present alignment through Syracuse, while eliminating the "eyesore" of an elevated highway. Go with the tunnel option!! A boulevard will do us no good!

Love the SFO examples--they created a Blvd. model when a major bridge was damaged by an earthquake. Took a horrible event and made something so much better!

Bill Winter SUNY-ESF again

Once again my thoughts turn to a decade in Brooklyn, overall a very positive decade. But the approach to the Brooklyn Bridge starts as a Boulevard in downtown Brooklyn. Above say Jay Street, try and cross that Boulevard. You might as well have a ten foot high wall topped with razor wire. Some did use this as their entrance way to a grand walkway across the east river to Downtown. Most merely avoided it. If you build a ground level Boulevard to replace I81, how many people will climb the bridges to cross that Boulevard and continue into downtown Syracuse. While not exactly zero, I suspect that the answer still approaches a nice round number. The traffic from University to the city needs to have easy egress and exit or it won't happen. It also needs to be safe after dark. I spent 10 yrs. living across the street from the firehouse that later took the biggest fatality hit in 9/11. If you make it seem threatening, you may as well build the 10ft. wall with razor wire, for no one will cross after dark.

Please have a look at Jane Jacobs' "life and death of the great American cities" it has a great deal of insight. Bill Winter

Fundamentally, any strategy that does not encourage free pedestrian traffic between the university area and downtown, ultimately, will weaken both. The U and city need to cross-fertilize. Their coupling will breed a rich community that benefits both of the special interest groups. The failure to support that will create a no-man's zone like we have had since the 1960's. Take your choice.

I think this option is a disservice to the community. I think finishing the 695/Route 5 Bypass SHOULD be done no matter what; however it would be extremely expensive, as most of the area where it would be completed is densely populated. I believe a boulevard will take travelers completely around our city, where some may stop if they go through the center. Also, Bob Congel is building this "Regional Attraction" mall, which is expected to bring even more travel to the area. Essentially removing the non-stop connection to the mall from the south does not seem to be a wise idea. We are at a point where the majority of the city is tax exempt, and the only real solution to the problem seems to be increased sales tax revenue. While the highway won't generate sales tax, not having it there may deter some shoppers from coming here to spend their money in our city. The city, from Castle St north to Willow St, has a highway running through it, that has almost unlimited access underneath it. It has a north-south road, and uninhibited streets going east/west underneath it. These streets also have pedestrian crossings. The SU Hill is not "separated" by the highway, it is separated because there is a huge section 8 housing tract that was built next to the University, with a highway in between, that has unrestricted access underneath the highway, and there is a section 8 high rise attached to an SU dorm. The high crime in these areas divides the city, not the highway. There is far less "separation" as you go north in the city, but the highway loses its connections underneath and becomes recessed (?). We do not hear a lot from the North Side that the highway separates the city, when there is far less east/west access crossing the highway than there is down south. Also, if you look at 690 through the city, this is mostly a complete physical barrier, as it is not built on a bridge, it is literally built on mostly raised land, or at grade, with very limited north/south connections, and this functions very well, but this is because it maintains its integrity as a limited access roadway. Also, consider how quickly ambulances can get to Upstate Hospital right now from the north, south, and west (EB is longer because you can't get off at Almond from EB 690 - that would be nice to have fixed too). Upstate is the region's level 1 trauma center, which means all of the most critical patients are transported there, most of the time in short order. If we drop 81 to a boulevard, access to Upstate and Crouse would be delayed. Also, consider getting to the dome during any event without the highway. I do not think tearing 81 down will benefit the area at all, I think it would mostly harm it.

Not loving it. I use Erie Boulevard (east and west) very frequently and do not see this concept as being the best choice for Syracuse although I like getting rid of the bridges downtown. Do not like the construction of NEW road to connect 81 to 690/695 west even though I often lament the lack of such a road now (I live outside of the western suburbs and have need to travel to the southern suburbs very frequently) I think that a new road will disrupt the quality of life in the south western suburbs.

A boulevard is BAD for traffic, BAD for business, and BAD for residents of the Eastern suburbs who will deal with a massive increase in undesirable traffic. People move to Syracuse for the short commutes. We don't need another "boulevard of death" like they have in NYC.

I travel from Cortland into as well as thru Syracuse via i81 at least once a week. I continue to believe that the boulevard concept would be the preferable solution. Thru traffic north and south should be shunted to i481. A boulevard in place of the existing viaduct south of the city utilizing a portion of the existing right-of-way and State St would commercialize this area and encourage retail growth.

The creation of a light-rail transit system with a terminus at the RTC in the north and extension as far as Binghamton to the south would create a new economic corridor for the communities along the way. Cortland would become an attractive bedroom community for people who might choose to work in Syracuse. Complimentary to that would be the access that communities like Cortland would have to an expanded and skilled professional workforce. Weather would no longer be a deterrent to those who want to enjoy the employment, social, cultural and sports activities offered by Syracuse.

For those entering the city from the south by auto or light rail the attraction a spacious boulevard lined with retail establishments, restaurants and sports venues would bring a new consumer population. Its traffic would be those entering the city to engage in its commerce. 481 should serve those who want to travel efficiently N-S. The boulevard, perhaps with bike paths and pocket parks would engage those who want to experience the fruits of a metropolitan area.

Of all the strategies under consideration, the only one that I think would dramatically increase the time it takes me to get to work is the boulevard strategy.

I may be missing something, but I do not see how a boulevard strategy can avoid creating congestion that would back up onto the highway portion of the current I-81, bringing traffic to a standstill all the way back to the Liverpool interchanges every weekday morning. Route 481 does **not** provide drivers like me with a viable alternative, because the north end of that road is really very far away.

Drivers who currently get on I-81S at the 7th North Street interchange or anywhere south of it, with destinations downtown or anywhere south of downtown, who wish to avoid the boulevard and the Giant Traffic Jam ("GTJ") just north of it would have to proceed northward at least 5.5 miles out of their way before they even get to 481, at which point they will find themselves at least 5 miles further from their destination than they started out! Think of the wasted gas and pollution that would result, in addition to the inconvenience of touring the distant northern suburbs every morning.

My current route takes me from 7th North Street south on I-81, through downtown, on to the southern I-81/481 interchange, onto 481N. From there I travel I-481 north to the Jamesville exit. Driving through downtown really is the quickest, easiest way for me to get to 481.

Taking 690 to 481S instead would not be helpful, due in part to the aforementioned GTJ just north of downtown, which would be sure to engulf the I-81/690 interchange and its approaches. (Also because taking I-481S through Dewitt at 7:45 am on a weekday is a truly hair-raising experience: the people on that road at that hour are crazy-mean, and don't let anybody change lanes even to get off.)

When construction or other problems disrupt traffic on I-81S today, what I have to do is take the Thruway east to 481. This is still quite a bit out of my way, and of course it is a toll road, so there would be additional expense to me on an ongoing basis.

Therefore I hope and pray you will decide upon a tunnel/depressed I-81S through downtown, or failing that simply reconstruct the current viaduct. The last thing I need is for the current path of I-81 to be bisected by a downtown surface street approachable only through a GTJ.

<p>Better than all your alternatives, but your focus on vehicle throughput is still disappointing. Consider constructing a bypass? Rebuild major streets to "boulevard standards"?</p> <p>Come on. Whether it's an elevated highway or a surface boulevard, neighborhoods shouldn't be bisected by freeway-style arterials. Almond Street is already six lanes wide at most intersections. We need bulb-outs and shorter crossing distances, not 12-foot lane widths and a median.</p> <p>And the idea of constructing an arterial to speed traffic from 81 to West Street - why? What purpose could this serve? Because the five minutes it takes to drive down Taylor Street or Castle Street isn't fast enough?</p> <p>You're making the same mistakes that your predecessors made five decades ago. A successful transit network - and the city that relies on it - depends on a lot more than widening streets and moving automobiles through as quickly as possible. Please - pay more attention to what successful cities are doing and not what the flavor-of-the-day was in traffic engineering circles in 1970.</p>
<p>not a good option for that area</p>
<p>The idea of a boulevard by itself doesn't seem feasible considering the amount of traffic it will have to deal with. Swapping 481 and 81 would have to be a MUST. LRT would be complimentary no doubt, but there's no way a boulevard can handle the amount of traffic I-81 currently does without serious traffic jams, and wrecks. I can only imagine a good dumping of snow will only cause more delays as well. To sum it up: by itself, horrible. Complimenting another strategy or swapping 481 and 81, great.</p>
<p>The primary need for the boulevard is the viaduct area, south of 690. 690 and 81 north of 690 are not as disruptive to the community because they along historic rail corridors or are depressed.</p>
<p>The boulevard strategy should not be the best option. Even though boulevards can vastly improve the appearance of a highway, ending up with another Erie Boulevard would not be user-friendly for pedestrians or bike traffic. It would be difficult to cross due to the large size and volume of traffic. I don't think Syracuse needs another Erie Boulevard. It is a very aesthetically displeasing example of our present life style-mainly only accessed by cars. Any small businesses created would have to be well off the road for easy access and there is very limited space in the downtown city blocks.</p>
<p>Absolutely this is the way to go. People in cars really can be integrated into the fabric of the city, and this is the way to do it. People who have to go north or south fast can take I-481 (which would be I-81) around the city. When San Francisco lost its elevated highway in an earthquake, they wisely did not rebuild it. There's a reason for that. And San Francisco is one of the most visited cities in this country. We need to learn from other cities that have gotten rid of the highways that divide cities.</p>
<p>Not a good idea when winter comes around to play.</p>
<p>I think it is the best, most practical option.</p>
<p>The best of the ideas presented. Still should consider my idea from May 2011 of combining this strategy with leaving the viaduct up and turning it into a new park (see my drawings/comments from May 2011, all written/drawn in orange marker).</p>
<p>My favorite option. I think in the long run much cheaper to build and maintain</p>
<p>Also nice</p>
<p>Given that most of the traffic on the viaduct is local traffic accessing downtown and University Hill, the Boulevard option seems to make the most sense operationally and economically, by improving access while increasing connectivity, and minimizing both construction costs and future highway maintenance costs.</p>
<p>Bringing the traffic down where there are pedestrians is dangerous! The Near Westside Matters!</p>

"Boulevard" is the worst of all options, guaranteed to create congestion at some points to avoid congestion at others. Forget the "Boulevard".
Boulevard strategy is best - + only viable way to revitalize the city = our future quality of life
This is the answer. It gives people more choices/better access to downtown, and will be easier to maintain over the decades.
Most attractive and pragmatic concept for me. Only question about safety issues around crossing - what are the plans to keep pedestrians flowing?
I think the boulevard makes the most sense. Significant study must be done to mitigate negative impacts on near Westside.
Talk to the business owners on the Near Westside - your highway will not help our plan.
No way. This is not Auburn (no offense). Major city needs highways. I'd like more (like Rochester).
I assume that the boulevard would have stop lights to allow pedestrian crossing at various points. That would be essential. This seems to be the best alternative to address current deficiencies. Most drivers are coming into the city anyway - not driving thru.
How is this safer for pedestrians? A wide road with all the I-81 commuter traffic would be horribly busy and dangerous to cross!
Boulevard! Train or Tram! With designated lane would be so efficient!
Boulevard option conflicts with NEPA regulations unless an additional through route, i.e. interstate, is also built.
To connect West St. to a boulevard following rail line without disrupting Armory Square and Red House, put road in tunnel under Fayette and the Red House. Use flyway bridges to avoid creating traffic problems where boulevard would cross major roads. Examples of this are in NYC and Florida.
West Street is already a problem in its current state. My community is working hard to shrink it. It is important to make the city more walkable, West Street is an epic fail for walking.
This makes so much sense and actually corrects some of the mistakes of the past. This would result in URBANISM and help to revitalize downtown.
Rte. 31 Exchange needs to be moved further north on I-81.
Need center strip of "green" not at all like Utica!
I believe that Route 81 through the city should come down - replaced by a wide boulevard with green space between the North-South lanes.
"Exchanging" West St. for more through traffic is not acceptable. That must be a complete street for the neighborhood.
Boulevard or limit access (but not interstate) following the railway berm would solve many problems: congestion near Upstate, access to downtown from North and South, eliminating one interchange (81 South and 690), and would really open up the west side to development.
Boulevard Concept - traffic count is too high for this concept to work without a more comprehensive regional plan that would improve mass transit.
Does Erie Boulevard work well for you now? Is it good for pedestrians? No!
I have seen the boulevard strategy work well in other cities - I know it will improve my city.
Boulevard strategy: - Permit two-way right-of-passage on Erie Boulevard (Has there been a functional analysis/efficiency audit conducted for the east-bound-only section?) - Cost-benefit analysis of this strategy?

Two concerns: 1. Impact on travel time coming from south of city line to the Medical Center or SU area 2. Impact on home values for the same area (suburb near city line)
No western bypass needed. Use boulevard, and improve Adams/Harrison to connect to West. All choke points are highway interchanges, grid overall underused.
Include potential speed limits with any proposal. Makes a huge difference.
Do not make West Street more of a barrier. Do not solve one problem by making another worse. Need to focus on mass transit opportunities.
Boulevard will be dangerous to cross for people walking to access/go home to/from courts and civic center DSS (especially with kids).
If West Street is to be a "relief valve" - make sure it is a pleasant boulevard and pedestrian-friendly - as should the main boulevard be.
Combining 81 with 690/481 - won't that increase traffic on 690?
Love the boulevard idea. It is the best one of them all.
In heavy traffic it is better to be one a street grid where you have option routes. Try going from Clay to Baldwinsville when the only choice is Route 31 - going from one route to several is good.
This option is necessary for the much needed re-connection of neighborhoods to downtown, improving walkability and energy (read economic impact) in downtown.
West Street will become and still is a barrier to cut off the west siders from all of downtown!
Boulevard would also increase the potential for connectivity between Southside neighborhoods and University Hill.
Boulevard - not easily accessible for hospitals.
I've heard from at least two different people about how rush hour was in the 1950's, before I-81 and I-481 were built. I want to make sure that won't happen again. Apparently, it was total gridlock; it took hours just to get a few blocks.
The boulevard approach inherently includes the needs of pedestrians and local residents. Our natural desire is for a plan that is aesthetically pleasing AND safe to travel on foot (or bike). This adds to the value of surrounding properties as places to hire and do business. It's NOT all about cars.
Boulevard would need to incorporate crossing spots that are safe so that city becomes more walkable. The more walkable - the more retail establishments want to be there.
Turn 81 south of 690 into a boulevard but leave 690 as a highway - with a western bypass - you could easily get to the Dome.
I like this option. Saw a version in San Francisco. Is pedestrian safety an issue?
You would need good crosswalks, maybe pedestrian bridges. It would be better than a viaduct. West Side Highway in NYC - No. Portland version - Yes.
Boulevard option: trades a psychological barrier for a real one!
Only if bicyclists obey vehicle and traffic rules. Too many folks disregard stop signs, red lights, use sidewalks, use the wrong lanes, and weave in and out of traffic.
The boulevard option might work, but I believe it will continue to divide neighborhoods by the heavy flow of traffic and associated traffic patterns.
Bike paths!
I really like the boulevard concept but it will never work without a growing population to contribute more development (business and residential).
West Side Highway in NY is congested and loud!

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Boulevard cheapest to maintain - Have I-81 end at Adams like I-83 ends at President Street in Baltimore - Have bus lanes - Have bike lanes - Traffic lights and crosswalks
<p>I like this idea the best (Boulevard Strategy). But, I think traffic flow needs to be carefully considered - if there are lights they need to be timed well to keep traffic moving. Right now it can be difficult to drive through Syracuse (off of 81) because it is easy to get stuck at red light after red light.</p>
<p>Ensure that steps are taken to make boulevard pedestrian-friendly (even in winter) and attractive.</p>
<p>This will separate us from downtown because the boulevard will need to be so much wider. I also don't know how traffic is going to get more space without taking down some buildings. This will have to be very well executed to work.</p>
<p>Could create slowdowns for the main traffic flow.</p>
<p>Erie is a "Boulevard" in name only. It's a shame. Two days ago a man was struck and killed by a car crossing on foot between Smith and Thompson.</p>
<p>Erie Boulevard is a Boulevard and it is NOT safe for walkers or cars.</p>
<p>The boulevard seems the most HUMAN solution - cars, bikes, buses, pedestrians are all part of the landscape and we have to move and live together. 481 already exists as a bypass, but for those on their way into Syracuse, this seems like a good choice.</p>
<p>The boulevard system is great but should include roundabouts at Almond/Adams and Water/Erie Boulevard to keep traffic moving and allow easy on/off at intersections. And pedestrian cross over bridges - great!</p>
<p>Continue boulevard strategy to Carousel Mall.</p>
<p>The Westside will be cut off/isolated if traffic is increased through West St.</p>
<p>Increase traffic hazard to pedestrians. Would have to be ADA compliant. Need for bridges for folks in wheel chairs or need assistance. Maintenance nightmare. Diverts more pollution to expensive homes in DeWitt. Not good!</p>
<p>I would hope that this option would be designed in a way that is much more bike-able and friendly to pedestrians than the arterial in Utica.</p>
<p>This is the most appealing. 481 should have been 81 to begin with.</p>
<p>This problem requires a real solution and re-routing regional traffic with a boulevard through central city has the greatest potential for future of city. I particularly am intrigued with the western bypass. And a "back door" to University Hill, off of route 481 up to outer Comstock, is essential.</p>
<p>Love the idea of a light rail or street car - like Buffalo.</p>
<p>Bike tunnels under/next to boulevard.</p>
<p>Boulevard concept pictures from other cities seem unreal. Show us a picture of these streets at rush hour!</p>
<p>I'm surprised that this option doesn't mention York, PA; it's strikingly similar. I-83 goes east of the city; Business 83 (George St.) takes a direct route.</p>
<p>Please don't pattern the boulevard after car-centric, pedestrian/bicycle unfriendly Erie Boulevard!</p>
<p>Bike paths! This is a good option for enhancing pedestrian movement in this space.</p>
<p>I like the boulevard idea the best - 81 section downtown and later maybe the 690 section.</p>
<p>By far - my least favorite option. Removes easy access to almost all major destinations in Syracuse: Destiny, SU, Hospitals, downtown, Armory Square, etc. Puts traffic, noise, congestion on ground level of center city.</p>
<p>Westside = walkers and bicyclists. Please increase the walkability and cycle-ability across West Street to</p>

Downtown!
If designate 481 as 81 will have major traffic problems near Wegmans and 690 that need major attention. Already there are backups.
Do not make changes at Brighton, Calthrop. Too many houses were lost, including mine!
Have a boulevard starting at Adams and going north. Northern lights going south and remove interchange.
If the main downtown areas are respected (Armory Square, SU, and business center), a high speed boulevard would be great. I feel most residents are essentially "daily tourists" that live outside of the city and therefore utilize our "20 minute" feeling to keep us involved in downtown activities (SU games, fests, Armory Square, etc.). A boulevard would seem to blend all desires: high speed access, costs, no need for too many new paths. Perhaps foot bridges for pedestrian safety and exit ramp type ways to allow vehicle access without backing up the flow. Ease of access is most important. That's why no one ever drives in New York City!
I support the boulevard strategy. However, looking at the "considerations" board, the diagram showing the possible lanes distribution, I notice that there are no bicycle lanes. Bicyclists are, apparently, expected to (continue) to "share" the lane with cars. While some of us bicyclists are hardcore road-sharers, studies show that we will only get a significant increase in people riding bikes for transportation if they feel safer, with at least bike lanes. Real ones, that don't end just when you need them. Of course, there are sidewalks for walkers. Why not infrastructure for bicyclists?
This is by far the best option. Any reworked viaduct would still be a maintenance hassle and would still create unsafe conditions underneath and loss of development opportunities.
Since 88% of the I-81 traffic does not go through the city but rather goes to downtown, little is lost by entering a downtown boulevard with well-designed intersections, perhaps side access roads for local traffic.
Instead of one or two choke points at the interstate exits, there would be a street grid with all its optional routes.
Ever try to cross the Utica Arterial on foot?
This is the only sound approach. This can lead to more walking, more biking, revitalized downtown, better transit (especially with own right-of-way). It's not the whole answer, but it's a necessary first step.
My preferred option. Would be transformative and allow Syracuse to grow. Concern about boulevard pedestrian crossings. Need wide medians and pedestrian friendly signaling. Traffic modeling must consider Salina and State Streets as relief valves as well (look at whole road network).
Wasn't land for western bypass purchased many years ago? Part of it has since been sold off. It went to Fairmount.
I don't think I-81 mainline has to be changed for this option. That's just more problems in the city without serving much.
I travel south to north every day and return. If a boulevard - I would sell in city and move north of city - North Syracuse, Liverpool, or elsewhere.
Boulevard concept: - Straight through requires control devices. Need to get away from them. - One way loop around city center would work better. Use constantly curving roadway to limit speed.
No West Street option! The same separation problems I-81 has would just do the same thing to Syracuse Westside neighborhoods. And, introducing 1,000s of more cars on West Street would kill a lot of business in Armory Square and the downtown area!

<p>Could I-81 be connected from the north along Hiawatha Boulevard to 690, and then traffic would head west to 695 unless it was local? (Extend I-81 south at Carousel Mall and get rid of it through the center of Syracuse.)</p>
<p>Beautify West Street! The new businesses are great, it's a neighborhood where the residents walk and need to connect to downtown. Putting a highway through it is not an option!</p>
<p>Effect on increased traffic through DeWitt and Cicero.</p>
<p>Consider the whole area, not just the elevated I-81. Try harder to build or remodel with the future in mind. Why were all those hospitals and universities allowed to be built in such a restricted area?</p>
<p>This is the best option overall, but discard the West Street scheme- don't dump suburban traffic into another neighborhood! West Street should be returned to its former width and disconnected from the highway system.</p>
<p>How will people with visual or hearing or mobility impairments get across the boulevard safely?!!!!?</p>
<p>Need to consider the importance of East-West traffic connecting downtown to University Hill - this movement is very important for the health of downtown - make room for alternative transportation.</p>
<p>Boulevard (tree-lined, park-like, not as in Erie) is ideal. Should offer limited auto, or no auto and bus only access. Needs to support/enhance pedestrian and cycling (non-motorized) traffic on and across boulevard. As city residents, we need to take back our streets from the commuters to enhance quality of life for all. And, improve transit options so commuters can leave their cars home or in park and ride lots.</p>
<p>I am concerned about speedy access to Crouse and University Hospitals from the north, and to St. Joseph's from the south.</p>
<p>Love this! As a city resident, this is the best option to build a better CNY! If you live in the suburbs I'm sorry that your commute will be five minutes longer, if you don't like it move back into the city!</p>
<p>The boulevard solution still leaves a lot of problems with the 690 exchange. It just pushes the problem further north.</p>
<p>Worst option so far, in my opinion. Where do you mention speed limit for this option?</p>
<p>The boulevard seems the most appropriate way to advance the goals of connectivity, livability, and complete streets. I like the idea of extending the west ring road at Rt. 5-695, but not the West Street Arterial - this should be a less intrusive road, not more.</p>
<p>All the examples shown look better than what currently exists.</p>
<p>Pedestrian bridges are problematic. They take a long time, accessibility is poor, and they can be scary. If they take too much time and trouble, people will jaywalk instead - unsafe! On the other hand, if you have stoplights and crosswalks you get more emissions from idling cars.</p>
<p>Fully support the idea of the western bypass to provide quick access from smaller communities with direct access to destinations within the state.</p>
<p>If people from the suburbs had to exit into the city, it might help vitalize the city shops and restaurants - they would see what the city has to offer - take more interest.</p>
<p>The worst solution - will not revitalize downtown. How do pedestrians cross this street without getting killed?</p>
<p>This is the most environmentally sound, sustainable, and human option. Less cost, more opportunities for the city. It's a no-brainer to me. Pick the boulevard!</p>
<p>West Street option: Current efforts are to reduce traffic - not to greatly increase it on West Street. It is probably a bad idea to consider increased flow on West Street.</p>
<p>The boulevard strategy is appealing - but no mention of money and interim plans for routing or re-routing traffic.</p>
<p>This alternative meets the greatest number of needs - western extension is interesting - is it critical?</p>

<p>Gridlock! Most traffic goes to Cedar Street. A boulevard would not relieve congestion and be hard for pedestrians to cross. Space is limited between upstate and Pioneer homes.</p>
<p>I wonder if anyone has talked to paint folks - like DuPont - for durable product for the future and civil engineers who may have learned something because highways have always been a problem.</p>
<p>I think this is the best option, along with the western bypass. It will ease traffic congestion, lower long term maintenance costs, beautify, and help to promote business hopefully. Through traffic can use 481.</p>
<p>There is insufficient right of way currently present, so many structures would need to be acquired and demolished probably including the University and Hill steam plant. Eminent domain and all sorts of legal issues with the corridor's community making it a very expensive endeavor, very time consuming, very disruptive.</p> <p>The sectional concept is very true, 6-8 lanes wide would be the minimum requirement, to think that it would improve pedestrian travel is incorrect, try walking this distance in less than 25 seconds, imagine trying that distance if you at all handicap or lack in mobility, pedestrians would be more in peril with this concept, and the traffic flow would decrease increasing travel time and fuel consumption, not very green...</p>
<p>The boulevard is by far the best option for the city. Today, the elevated highway is not only an eyesore, but a source of unnecessary noise and air pollution for the city-center. I recently visited the housing projects along the southern end of the city and was shocked at the omnipresent sound and smell of the highway; I could not help but think about the children being raised in those buildings and the effect of the road upon them. In addition, the raised highway serves as a divider between neighborhoods and reinforces Syracuse's deep-seated racial and class segregation. It is an artifact of an earlier car-centric form of urban planning which has devastated cities across America.</p>
<p>Some of these boulevard ideas could be a real boon to the city, especially the ones that incorporate alternative forms of transit: bike lanes, pedestrian-friendly sidewalks and crossings (especially bridges), and light rail/dedicated bus lanes. I have seen all of this used to great effect in other cities in America and beyond, especially in Bogota, Colombia where their Transmillenio project is re-thinking how Bogotanos move within their city. A city more similar to our own that also inspired me with its mass transit was San Sebastian in the Basque Country in Northern Spain, where the government has made a premium on ensuring that all citizens can access all of the opportunities of city life through attractive, affordable and convenient mass transit.</p>
<p>Best and only viable option!! I live on the east side of the city and when I travel from I-81 South - I typically utilize 1-481 anyway as to avoid the mess of I-81/I-690 interchange. But if there was a safe, easy to utilize boulevard to get me where I need to go locally - that would be ideal.</p> <p>This strategy not only restores the neighborhood connectivity but presents a viable economic development solution as well. Restoring connectivity (safely) promotes commerce between downtown and the hill. As well as providing safe routes for pedestrians and cyclist. This is the only way!</p>
<p>Only if there is a permanent budget allocation to provide for street performers (buskers).</p>
<p>This is clearly the optimal strategy. If people are just in transit along 81, let them circumvent the city. I doubt they bring in much business, and they contribute smog, noise, and danger. A boulevard would slow traffic along its length but speed it laterally, getting rid of bottlenecks like the traffic jams on Harrison at the end of the work day. It would open up a whole lot of street front to retail, residential, and other uses and make that whole area more desirable. It would make it far more likely that SU folks, including parents, would explore the city.</p>

<p>I support the boulevard option, but not the construction of a western bypass. This will damage existing neighborhoods. I-481 has sufficient capacity to carry the I-81 traffic.</p>
<p>Best strategy, if West St. option is included. Access routes to 690 should also be improved. The median should be very wide, possibly block width, and be designed as a "people first" park and pathway. West St. should be done the same, with the pedestrian park/paths extended into the near west side neighborhood. The paths should extend to the creekwalk and provide more direct access to the SU hill as a single comprehensive pedestrian system.</p>
<p>Addition option to consider. Townsend for south bound traffic. Almond St. (current viaduct route) for North bound traffic. That would make both streets easier to cross, and less intimidating.</p>
<p>I think I-81 should remain elevated along the same route as it is now.</p>
<p>I agree with this strategy. It provides a more cohesive link between Syracuse University and the downtown areas and will remove physical as well as psychological barrier between sections of the downtown region. I-690 although preferred to be part of the removal, probably needs to be maintained unfortunately given the geographical limitations for commuting from east and west of the city.</p> <p>The only reason we have this eyesore is because of some politicians' insistence before many of us were born. When we decided to mimic Germany on their infrastructure design, we twisted the underlying vision of the rationale for the establishment of interstate transportation commerce and made it a political point under the auspice of access to all social and economic classes. I-81 does nothing to lure businesses downtown and only expedited the deterioration of urban city residential life.</p>

Station 5: Our transit system

Transit Needs
<p>Be careful not to neglect the fact that many people might wish to use public transit between suburban communities, not necessarily to go downtown or to University Hill.</p>
<p>I think more mass transit is definitely the way to go for the future of CNY.</p>
<p>1. Bicycle travel across the I-481 right of way is harrowing. I know for certain that I am one of a very small number of commuters who cross this right-of-way fairly regularly, at least during summer months. The painted bicycle lanes across the I-481 on- and off-ramps are a pathetic joke. They provide no protection at all for bicyclists--perhaps increasing danger to bicyclists by guiding us falsely to an incredibly dangerous location.</p> <p>There is a fairly simple solution to this problem that should be investigated by the CNYRTA. There is an existing underpass under I-481, due east of Manlius Pebble Hill School, carrying a creek (actually, I believe, the old canal feeder). This is wide enough--at least 40 feet (I have hiked through that underpass), that a bicycle path could be constructed along it. With paved connections running alongside creeks through Town-of-Dewitt-owned parkland, and across Holy Cross Cemetery and behind May Memorial Church, could easily be turned into a nice, flat major bicycle connector between the City of Syracuse and Dewitt, as well as other eastern suburbs.</p>
<p>2. The OnTrack trains should be put back into service, and extended. They were poorly scheduled when they operated between about 1998 and 2004--with service ending at about 10 p.m. even on weekends. If they had operated until 2 a.m., they would have provided the best, safest connection between University dormitories and Armory Square nightspots. Train service needs to be reinstated. When it is, it</p>

must run between the University and Armory Square until 2 a.m. on weekend evenings, and at least until midnight between the University and Destiny USA, so that students can rely on the trains to ferry them both to and from late movies. If newly planned nightclub(s) at Destiny are opened, then service needs to run until 2 a.m. there, as well.

Frequency of train service also needs to be increased from the once-per-hour that it was during the 1998-2004 period, to at least 3 times per hour. I believe that the only way that this could be done is to find a way to allow the single track to carry trains in both directions. A careful computer-regulated switching system should permit trains traveling in opposite directions to pass each other while both are in the Armory station, where there is a side track and a switch.

More frequent trips from University areas to grocery stores.

Sadly, I don't believe the average Onondaga county suburbanite cares much about the city. They generally support what's most convenient for them. I don't think you'll get much buy-in with public transportation from them. Is there any possibility a bike path network could be incorporated into the master plan for Syracuse? I live and work in the city and would consider riding my bike to work if I felt it was safe.

I miss the Stop Strathmore Route. I can use West Onondaga but it is not as convenient. I do like the bike racks on the front of the buses. They come in handy when it rains downtown.

My current commute to work is less than 2 miles, and it takes 7-8 minutes when I drive myself. I don't use Centro because the route which passes my house takes at least twice that long to get downtown, and then I'd have to transfer to another bus to get back in the right direction towards my workplace.

Many of Centro's routes are not direct. They wind through neighborhoods, which I understand is intended to serve more customers, but as a result, the bus takes much more time than simply driving oneself directly.

I am also frustrated that Centro buses will literally stop at EVERY corner along their routes. As an occasional bus rider, I hate that this makes the trip take much longer than it needs to. As a self-driver, I hate that the frequent stops cause traffic to get backed up. When I was a kid, my school bus didn't stop at every single person's house or every single corner. Stops were consolidated. Some people would have a longer walk, but it would allow the bus to finish the trip faster, and it would be less disruptive to traffic.

It would be nice to see a light rail system in the area; however I do not think it would be widely used.

Many people, especially elderly and disabled, who live in the suburbs and do not drive, have great difficulty getting to appointments and services only available to them in downtown Syracuse. I had one elderly lady who left her house at 6:30am to catch the bus to downtown (make transfer) and walk 10 blocks to her 11am appointment. She still had to face a return trip that would take her another 5 hours to complete. All for a 15 minute appointment! Centro's Call-A-Bus system is very inadequate and people still face extremely long travel times and waits. That is if they can even get a hold of Centro to get an application or make arrangements for a ride. Also, when I lived in the city, routes required too many transfers and took so much time that it was just much easier to drive than to try to ride the bus, although I was willing to do so if it had been somewhat more convenient.

Rail service needs to be part of the solution.
All of these stated concerns about increasing road congestion, increased travel times, and difficulty finding parking will be rendered moot if we make a real commitment to mass transit.
I think other colleges in the area other than just SU need to be considered when talking about mass transit. Lemoyne and OCC should receive more mass transit, especially OCC with their addition of the SRC Arena. They're starting to hold some large events and Centro only runs a few buses up there. College kids look for fun things to do, so make the transportation available to get them there.
In 25-50 years, due to increasingly warmer (read: unpleasant) temperatures down south, as well as currently ongoing and planned improvements in the city and its surrounding suburbs, the population of this region will increase dramatically, possibly back to pre-WWII levels. It is absolutely essential to include a light-rail system in the redesign of I-81.
Not sure this applies, but my 7 year old son suggested a giant slide from the dome down the hill to the parking garage. :-)
I currently never use the transit system, but used to love Ontrack for Dome events. I would suggest that they come up with new ways to educate the public how to use the transit system, and maybe offer free rides all day sometime to show how it works to us non-users. I know it is probably simple, but not sure about how the hub works when you have to switch buses. Color coding routes such as NYC subway lines may help.
It would be great to revive OnTrack and create a park and ride option for those arriving at the southern end of the new boulevard from 81. Let them get off, take the train to downtown, the mall, the regional transportation center, the regional market, the airport. This could also serve SU and University Hill. Would have to run frequently.
The frequent, free bus service on U Hill is hugely successful and very user-friendly. I would love to see this extended for all city residents -- if you pay taxes in the city, you should get some priority access to the bus system, since you are reducing your impact on other city services by leaving your car at home.
Alternative fuel transportation.
Public transit is only part of the solution. Any improvements in transit will reduce traffic counts only slightly. Not enough population density in Syracuse to have any real impact.
Better access for areas outside city (such as Jamesville).
I would love for Syracuse to consider street car routes or a subway system along Genesee Street! Central New York public transit is in desperate need of improvement.
Marketing campaign for CENTRO - Directed at middle class commuters/yuppies - solve public image problem.
The whole bus system needs to be redesigned. A central station is only useful for buses that go to the far suburbs or long distance. City buses need to be accessed everywhere and go North to South and West to East, e.g. a circular system with crosstown buses.
CENTRO must be available to and appeal to progressive types who live in the burbs - there are actually a lot of us.
Really need to seek funding to expand CENTRO. It doesn't go to a lot of the suburbs! I had better mass transit in another county in NY that's more rural than in Onondaga! Also - link mass transit to Cortland and Madison Counties. Work with DOT on this, please!
Get serious about promoting bike transit. Not an "add on" to existing roads. Make real bike roads.
Late night DWI prevention T.O.D.

Connections to other transport services are so important. Parking to bus to bike to train to airports - should all be linked seamlessly!
The network is so limited and the buses are so infrequent that it will be impossible for me to use.
Vehicle parking all day at suburban stop points.
As a commuter from Liverpool, I have no incentive to take public transportation. Parking is easy and 15 minutes of "rush hour" is nothing. Until gas is \$100/gal, it is not beneficial to stand in the snow and ride a bus/train.
Transit is critical to the whole picture. Glad to see that this is being considered!
Saving money on this 81 thing won't help the average bus rider.
Bus fares can't be 2-4 dollars if you expect riders who are not already desperate and careless.
A BRT (bus rapid transit) along Salina St. north to the transportation center and down to the south side would improve quality of life and mobility of city residents.
Transit should definitely be included regardless of the chosen scheme. Salina St. streetcar perhaps?
Last year, I took the bus to work, but they eliminated the bus at the time I took it. The bus line is still there, but I'd have to leave my house at 7:00 AM for an 8:30 AM job. (I'd get there at 7:40 AM.) The next bus goes there about 8:45 AM. I drive now!
Transit options need to be convenient - with short wait times and attractive stops. Transit is vital. We must find a way to increase ridership.
Requires intensive maintenance even in more temperate climates.
Finish the Ontrack Line from C. Mall across Park St. to the Trans. Center and Ball Park. Track and Bridge are there. All that is needed is vision to get it done!
A monorail system would be worth considering. Fewer roadways up keep. No weather related problems. Good pedestrian flow. Great aesthetics. Portland ORE system works ok.
Bring back the "old" CENTRO! We need more buses, not less! I second!
Safety and complete streets, access for those who can't drive, a trolley along Erie Blvd. median!
A call system monorail based for transit carry of 10-20 people max - commuter call and delivery sites programmed nonstop.
Take the city back from the highway and look at all innovative alternative transportation systems. I love my car, but let's plan for the future.
Needs to consider an alternative to bus - people in cold climates drive cars will not spend several hours in cold.
Must be part of solution.
I take a CENTRO express bus from No. Syracuse to upstate and it's awesome. Need more express routes with more trips throughout the day (my bus runs 3x in AM and 3x in PM - not at all in the middle of the day.
I agree. Hub and spoke can stay but there should be a perimeter. Vis-a-vis D.C. Metro.
Add LT Rail.
More bike lanes! Yeah!!
Use cars that drive themselves so no one has to worry about others driving. Have a small ring around the downtown area and only use public transportation. Take all the bridges down and make access lanes North to South, East to West in several areas.
Convert 81 North of city to light rail system.
Rail to OCC.
If you make it impossible or horribly inconvenient to get from one side of the city to the other. Light rail will be the only answer.

Put in the Park St. bridge for OnTrack and develop coordinated service between Amtrak, Downtown, and Syracuse University, perhaps even to Jamesville Beach. OnTrack went out of existence at a time when use should actually have been increasing but service had become almost non-existent.
Where do the wheelchairs go?
Centro has already discontinued vital routes. No more incentive to take the bus if you have to drive out of the way to pick one up. Service cuts due to lack of \$\$\$, so where will it come from? Metro area does not have the population density to support it at this time.
If travel by bus takes less time and is cheaper than driving, people will come to the bus stops, but where are they? I.e. bus stops, and when is the bus coming?
A number of issues: 1. The hub and spoke system has to go. It makes it take an hour to get somewhere that is 15 minutes away by car. 2. People don't want to take the bus because of the people who take the bus*. In Syracuse, very few middle class people are on the bus, and we find the people who are on it scary. * Anymore
Combine boulevard strategy with monorail to have an approach aligning with what could be less on fossil fuel should have.
Why is there no bus connection to our airport?
Attractive public transit can greatly reduce cost of living in CNY. Must have!
Make transit more attractive by increasing car transit times.
Monorail.
Signal prioritization for buses.
All options must address light rail/other mass transit at same time as doing 81 fix.
It would be nice to have more public transportation on the Geddes St Corridor to cut transfer time and help a community with few cars.
Lack of coordination with current problems (city streets).
Construct a light rail system for CNY.
You need to work on the public perception of who takes the bus. Amen. Yes, absolutely true.
Great opportunity for environmental protection.
Too expensive. How will it run driving late effect snow storms? What if train breaks down? How do you get around it?
The key problem with Centro is that it is consider transportation for people who cannot afford cars. That's a problem. It is considered to be so, because that is what it has been allowed to become. For most people outside the city core, they have two choices: 1. Drive to work, and spend 40 minutes a day in the car. 2. Take the bus, spend 2-3 hours a day on a bus (or waiting for transfers), and have no flexibility in their schedule. I'd love for that core problem to change, but right now that's the reality for many.
Syracuse needs more buses and public transportation options. I think I-81 should remain elevated along the same route as it is now.

Transit Enhancements
Add stop info (what buses/sched) to all stops, not just shelters!
Anything that makes buses faster would be great - i.e. bus-only lanes, etc.
Attractive transit requires either its own right-of-way or effective priority on existing right-of-way. So long as car traffic takes priority, Central New York loses.
Better bus scheduling - the long wait between scheduled buses does not encourage bus use over private cars.
Bicycle lanes everywhere.
Bicycling can be done fairly easily as a means of commuting here in Syracuse, but the infrastructure needs to reflect that. In addition to light-rail, a SIGNIFICANT improvement must be made in the bicycling infrastructure of both the city and surrounding suburbs.
Bike and mass transit placement in the street scape needs priority. Lane placement will dictate usage. Bike lots will be reg'd.
Bus lanes seems premature - but must plan for long term light rail now (east/west).
Bus pullout is a great idea!
Bus Rapid Transit to the suburbs - decreased headway between buses in the city - 10 to 15 minutes.
Bus schedule is confusing to figure out!
Bus shelters.
Car seats.
Carpool.
Colored lanes? What about snow when you can't see colored lanes? Cars parked in lane for whatever reason.
Consider transit options where people can take the bus or light rail from their suburb and either take their bike with them for that last mile or two or have a bike-share program for that last mile or two.
Convenience is a major reason that people do NOT use mass transit. If I leave work at 5pm and it takes me an hour and a half to get home because I have to wait for buses and connections why would I ride a bus when I could get home in 35 minutes driving my car? There is no pay off for me. If mass transit is going to work in Syracuse, the travel times have to be significantly better than they have been or are currently. As stated in one of the first boards, the majority of people are able to drive to work in 40 minutes or less. The mass transit has to do as well if not better in order to generate ridership. And I am not sure that economic benefits alone are enough to create the draw. They would have to be pretty significant to work for me since I want to get home in the evenings so that I have time to do chores and activities before bedtime. By the same token, I am not going to want rise from bed at 4 o'clock in the morning to be able to catch a bus for an extended trip into the city so that I can arrive on time for my 9am job. (Especially in January!!!!) In large cities, mass transit use is much higher because of the cost of parking, the prolonged car travel times, the lack of parking but most importantly the convenience. If buses/trains/ light rails run every 15 minutes, you can almost always count on being able to get to where you want to go quickly. Also remember this is Syracuse, if you have to wait outside in November, December January, February it is cold and miserable to be standing on the corner waiting for the bus that is 45 minutes late!!!
Even if a bus/shuttle exists, people often feel "trapped" and work and unable to run errands or go to appointments because the bus operates morning and evening but not so often at midday.
Explore other transit rights of way along important corridors - Salina, Genesee, etc.
I appreciate the bus option from Brewerton to Syracuse and vice versa - however, there are limited options and low usage.
I do not like the change in schedule made to the connective corridor within the past year. There was also

very little effort made to notify anyone of the changes, at least not for students.
I like the bus pull-in/outs. Generally, bus traffic isn't too important to me. I like seeing the 'green' natural gas buses being used.
I live in LaFayette. Judging from discussions with our neighbors, many of us would be more amenable to and actually would ride the bus if it ran at times that made sense. If you work a 9 to 5 job, the bus toward Tully leaves before we get out of work! So, I guess what I am saying is that current ridership data paints a story of low suburban demand when that may not be the case. Weakest calculus in your presentation thus far!
I live in Liverpool, work in DeWitt. Takes almost 2 hours on the bus!
I think for the most part the transit system works well; we just need to change the culture and outlook on CENTRO.
I think more frequent buses would be a good thing and an upgrade on the buses should be put to work.
I would like to see buses taking more-direct routes to their destinations. Bus stops should be less-frequent and spaced out farther (maybe once every 2 or 3 blocks rather than at every single corner). I'd also like to see more areas served and extended hours for bus service.
As a career advisor for a local employment center, a frequent complaint from some of my unemployed customers is that buses don't serve their home neighborhood late enough to secure a job which might require evening/night hours. Or in some cases, bus service is only once every 1-2 hours, so these people are forced to leave for work very early, or they get home very late after work, simply because bus service wasn't frequent enough to provide a more optimal time for travel.
I would love to see an integrated public transit system, such as that in Seattle, where riders can easily transfer between buses and street cars and light rail. Increased bus frequency would be a wonderful short-term solution, but the region needs to look at alternatives as well. Light rail stations would be my top choice. This would be great in winter weather, too. More bike-friendly routes are also important.
In Europe, buses have signals that cause bollards to retract into the ground, so only buses can use certain roadways (and bikes and peds).
Increase frequency! Open data! Apps! Consolidate stops!
Increase public transit! Color code routes!
Issue commuter stickers and enforce it. Red stickers use James Street. Green stickers use Erie Blvd, etc.
It would be cool to see real-time arrivals for buses.
It's really too bad that Centro funding was cut when it doesn't receive enough in the first place.
Light rail - along 81 and 690.
Monorail.
More 4 way flashers and stop signs instead of traffic lights
More covered bus shelters, possibly even heated bus shelters. The challenge of waiting at a cold snowy or rained-on bus-stop is a major impediment to my using buses, during times when I would not be willing to bicycle.
More info at bus stops like the messages that say when the next bus is arriving, route maps to show what buses go where/stop where, etc. Maybe smaller buses for less traveled routes. Maybe some buses that run the circumference of the area - not just spokes in and out.
Need considerable buy in by residents to make it work. Will only promote congestion during non-peak hours if lanes are not dynamic.
Need extended hour service on weekends or for event traffic.
Need more "smart" traffic controls so you're not waiting for the light to change when no traffic is present.

Need more bus shelters so you're not standing in the rain/snow.
Need more buses connecting all parts of Syracuse alike. Thanks!
Need more frequent buses. Would take to work but wait for bus is too long.
One mistake in all of the current planning would be to assume motor vehicles 40 years from now would bear any resemblance to the current models in any aspect: if they exist they will not be fossil fueled. Individual mobility as exists today is in no way guaranteed in the future. All of the current engineering standards and economic considerations will be obsolete. Gauge any expenditures accordingly.
Please please please fix our bus system. Simple things like putting bus route numbers on bus stop sign and times that the bus comes by would help tremendously. Don't fall into the trap of expecting people to look it up on their non-existent smart phone! If only the people who own smart phones can ride buses, you have lost.
Public transit is essential regardless of the I81 solution. There are not enough buses and routes in the city. Instead of cutting routes, they should be increased!
Resolve land use issues so that transit will work.
Restore the trolley system with rails already still in roads.
Reverse the service cutting trend.
Schedule to the suburbs is a problem. Usage is low because the experience is horrible. Low frequency combined with travel times 5+ times what the same trip would be by car make no sense to a car owner.
Park and ride? Why? I'm already in my car and could be at my destination in less time. Even for express routes, the frequency must be high enough where I can just show up, and always expect a bus to show up in a few minutes.
I like the "light is always green for Centro" idea. A LOT.
Shared-bike stations like Silver Spring, MD.
Smaller buses for suburban low level usage?
Smart phone app so you can see where your bus is.
Synchronize lights please to save fuel and reduce air pollution.
Syracuse needs more buses and public transportation options. I think I-81 should remain elevated along the same route as it is now.
The system needs more buses and undercover cops on the bus at peak times.
The white bike lanes on Meadow Brook need repainting. Thanks.
These are interesting ideas. Bus pull offs would alleviate a lot of the congestion we currently have due to buses making stops along major downtown streets. Bus-only and or signal priority strategies are possibilities but warrant careful study.
Trains to the Dome and S.U. Light rail is the only acceptable public transportation.
Use light rail or maybe existing RR infrastructure, along with buses. Use rail to connect to regional cities, as trolleys once did.
Utilize a second fleet of smaller buses for lighter traveled route.
Consider monorail system for S.U. Hill/Medical, Carousel/RTC, and Downtown: quiet, no delays, vehicles off road, convenient. I would use it over a bus.
Where are the bike boxes? Nowhere on anywhere.

Transit Amenities
A couple of rest stop on the Creekwalk
All of these amenities are good ideas. Also would like to see easier-to-use and/or more bike racks on busses. What about a bus (or two) that only carried cyclists, i.e., an east-west route or a north-south route (or both)? Would require an entirely new bus design, but could be used year-round.
Better bus shelters! Pull offs More way finding/signage for bus routes
Centro need to prioritize user-friendliness! Web/mobile tracking of buses, fewer stops to improve timeliness are a couple. Reduced fares on weekends also!
Down sized vehicles for suburban routes
Easy to use & understand route maps and schedules
Free smartphone apps that allow users to identify the locations of buses traveling various routes.
Grid-connected buses, streetcars (less noise, no fumes, less GHG)
Habitual criminals and known gang members should be arrested for loitering or trespassing on sight by the SPD. I don't care if they are "only" selling weed.
How about triple-decker buses?
I agree that knowing whether the bus is on schedule and when to expect the next bus is a good idea; a call-in number would be nice for those who are not up-to-date on technology.
I might be more likely to use Centro if I knew which routes served the neighborhood, where the routes go, and how often they arrive. Presently, this information is only available online or at the "major" stops. In bigger cities like NYC, each bus stop sign indicates the route(s) served at that stop, and in many cases, the destination(s) of those routes. Some bus stop signs have a "cube" lower on the pole, at eye level, which include a full schedule and even a map of the route. These would be handy so riders don't have to obtain their own copies -- or for casual riders who don't ride often enough to "know" the schedule or the system that well.
I think involving the arts groups in Syracuse to provide live entertainment on the buses would draw riders.
It's about time that technology gets put into this issue.
Many people do not have smart phones (!) so while that is an OK idea for notification, it should by no means be considered as the primary means.
Many of these ideas are used in European cities to great effect. Also consider carnets of tickets that for example students and elderly can buy at a discount (e.g., 10 tickets for the cost of 8). Philadelphia has the Philly Flash. You buy one ticket that allows you to ride certain lines all day. You can get on and off the buses as many times as you want within the proscribed time allotment. (Carousel to the baseball stadium to armory square to the zoo, etc.)
Market to suburban riders. Consider fleet of smaller buses. Amenities: Wi-Fi, music, NPR
More customer friendly stops, perhaps better lighting at stops, and climate control, as the winters are quite frigid.
Not worth the cost of it if you don't expand routes. Will not offset the cost to support proposed amenities unless you plan to soak the tax payers for more money!!
Real time transit info at the bus corner. Waiting and waiting for a late bus is frustrating. Would it be quicker to walk? Should I call home for a ride? If we had an idea when the late bus would arrive, it

would really help with those decisions.
Also. The tip of the spear, the face of Centro the person in the Kiosk. It is important that this person represents Centro in a positive light. This person should be friendly, professional and cooperative. Typically, this is not the case. You should have management travel incognito and see for yourself. Hire a secret shopper or something.
Real-time info on when buses will arrive on bus shelters. Phone apps too
Reduction in pollution. Reduction in noise. Pedestrian friendly, bike friendly. Necessities not amenities
Refillable fare transit cards to swipe per ride rather than always using cash/exact change.
Safe, dry shelter. Safety on bus (perception). Cleanliness on bus. Like trolley idea. Digital payment.
Safety, bike trails, more bus routes, aesthetics
Schedules posted at bus stops. Route maps posted at bus stops.
Syracuse needs more buses and public transportation options. I think I-81 should remain elevated along the same route as it is now.
There needs to be enough buses so they can depart on time. When 20 or 30 people need to load because they have been queuing for 45 minutes.
Toll-free help telephone number for routes and schedules. Also email help.
Wi-Fi
Wi-Fi definitely. Bus shelters that actually shelter you from the weather.
Wi-Fi would be good. Most important - short wait times.
Would like to see something like the "On Track" train we had

Bus Rapid Transit	
Likes	Dislikes
Anything that enhances public transit is good for the future	Smaller jitney buses should be considered for neighborhoods to downtown routes.
Less expensive.	The rails are already in place joining Jamesville to Syracuse Univ. to Armory Square to Transportation Center to Carousel Mall to Baseball Stadium and beyond. Take a train to the ball game. Have a beer in Armory Square after the game - and you won't have to drive afterwards.
It has the ability to effectively move large amounts of people, while helping the environment.	Currently our streets don't have room for added lanes for BRT. Centro seems to be handling the busing situation just fine. If they're coming out with their new real-time busing app thing, then they have it all under control.
Better than nothing.	Light rail will attract TOD and higher ridership; it won't be easy to get Central New Yorkers out of their cars and onto buses. Light rail is a better option; might as well make the higher investment in order to see a great return.
Could be implemented with transit policy changes and improved over time.	Light rail option could tie together Franklin Sq., expanded St. Joe's, downtown with condos, S.U., Upstate, VA, University neighborhoods.
It seems efficient in getting people from point A to	People are providing what they want, not what the

point B faster while utilizing jumps and can be used in mixed traffic	rest need.
Cheaper to implement than LRT.	We have a chance to do LRT. We won't have this chance again. We can do BRT anytime. LRT is the wave of the future (as it should have been back in the 1930s-1960s).
I like BRT, but this area doesn't have the capacity problems that justify adopting it.	Personal freedom is lost. If you can't get a nice commuter light rail it will not be a popular choice
I like Health Link	Stigma doesn't address car culture.
BRT on Erie Blvd. would be great. BRT will spur business/housing development because routes are fixed	It is fossil fuel dependent. Need high speed rail or solar rail.
It offers a very clear travel path to riders - making them more likely to understand and utilize it and it is a good step towards rail.	Not very attractive.
This is the 1st I've heard of BRT. It sounds great and I could see this working in SYR	Reduces transit time, but it costs more to start up. Doubt it would be successful in Syracuse. SMSA #s are going down here each census count - not up. Need higher population increase each census count to work.
Lessens the need for more and more roads	We need monorail!
Since BRT appears to be successful in Albany - we should study their plan and determine commonalities with Syracuse	While the startup cost is less, it costs roughly the same to run as a light rail system. BRT does not solve the congestion problems, actually adds to them.
IT can be facilitated by means of intelligent traffic controls that favor buses & disadvantage cars. This allows a gradual increase in skew such that folks eventually volunteer not to drive	It is an OK solution to a problem we don't have (heavy traffic).
Good cheaper option for now but better planning than now.	I need to go places buses don't usually go
Need to expand routes and # of buses. Not everyone works 9 to 5, plus that reduces peak traffic.	I do not like buses or light rail, as they both take up too much surface area. A cable car system would be cheaper (run on steam, safer=camera/phones on each car, pollution free and free road surface for cars and emergency vehicles. It could run down middle of a new boulevard from 481 S to Genesee Street, turn to downtown and S.U. Make Syracuse the "Gondola City" for tourists.
We need to pay a toll to pass from Syracuse	Bus Plus Facts: Cost to maintain is too expensive and the fare is just \$5 all day with option to transfer.
This is great! Thanks for focusing on this.	Large buses result in low frequencies and long wait times. Trips that require transfers can take several hours, when they could be walked in under an hour. It would make more sense to send smaller vans down the transit corridors in Syracuse, with

	much higher frequencies.
\$\$\$ Affordable	
Much more efficient than regular bus service. Hard to justify taking the bus if you can afford to drive because it takes so much longer. I would use BRT though. Need fewer stops to make it work.	
I love BRT - especially as a pre-cursor to light rail. Designated Transit Way!	
Speed and efficiency. Flexibility in route	
Most feasible new transit option for us. Will help rally us back to transit	

Light Rail Transit	
Likes	Dislikes
Took the subway all the time when I lived in NYC and loved it. Light rail would be great here.	Any mass transit change should be incorporating alternatives to fossil fuels.
Definitely the way to go for some corridors in Syracuse. Agree with reason quoted. Don't know why this was not part of Connective Corridor, but could also be viable on South Salina, James, Carousel, West Onondaga, South Ave, Grant/Butternut, and SU routes.	Cost is unrealistic.
Syracuse already has a serviceable light-rail line passing through its center (the OnTrack rail line), which should immensely reduce initial costs.	Coupled with a boulevard for I-81 (and western bypass). Consider a light rail for the airport, downtown SU with spurs to Liverpool and Fayetteville.
Every place that I've ever seen has had significant economic impacts directly from LRT	Don't like it because it's costly in the short-term (but do like it because it's truly worth it in the long-term).
More attractive. Street car adds character to a city.	Expensive, ouch!
As a railfan, I'd love to see LRT here in Syracuse. I sometimes imagine how I'd plan the routes if I were to build an LRT or subway system here. But let's face it -- this city can't even support decent bus service around the clock, so how can we afford to build and maintain LRT here?	It costs more.
I like the LRT because it is proven to increase development in the area of the lines. This would be great for trips from the suburbs to downtown or SU. I think it would be more widely used than CENTRO Buses, and taxi service from downtown to the suburbs is really expensive, the LRT would probably be used widely by the weekend bar crowds!	It's expensive, but may be worth the investment.
Possibility for TOD; more attractive to potential	Limited routes and expensive.

riders. Fast and convenient way to travel moderate distances within the city. Wide rights-of-way along Salina and Genesee could allow for easy construction; grade-separated NYSW elevated would also be a good location for a line.	
I love trains.	Lower capacity and slower speed than heavy rail.
LRT is just cool in its own way, assuming its electric; it will have fewer emissions than BRT and personal vehicles. We already have track for it, although expanding it would be awesome. It's great for connecting the 'burbs with the city, and most of the suburbs around here have track. Although this project is mainly for the Syracuse Metro Area, it would a great tool to utilize for connecting neighboring cities to the north and south.	LRT - insufficient population density in Syracuse for this concept to work.
We need options to reduce our 'need' for individual vehicles. Also, it will make it easier for those who do not own automobiles to commute on days when the weather is not conducive to bicycling and/or walking for long distances. Lastly, Syracuse/CNY was once known as a major center for unique modes of transportation. We can reclaim that identity.	LRT does provide alternatives.
Light rail transit.	This is why the high speed (60mph) interurbans in the 1920's died out here in NY. Geddes Street on the boulevard and Rt. 174, were once the right of way for high speed trolleys.
It offers the clearest route (potential riders can see tracks around town and understand they are connected) unlike a bus. It adds a level of desirability to the corridor as well. Rail? Yes please!	Transition is only efficient when it has its own row - and has limited street running. It is energy intensive (not good for our global warming Kool Aid drinking folks), overhead wiring can be ugly and high in maintenance. Poor in snowy and icy conditions - has to be subsidized which equals high taxes. Also, need to have the population density to make sense.
LRT should only be used if our land use is supportive. Many streets aren't wide enough, are they?	Yes, anything but underground.
Yes, light rail is great. Reducing the number of cars in the city should be a priority.	
Obviously more costly than BRT - but worthwhile to look at smaller light rail system - predictable quarters for transit.	
One of the options should be use of the "Pod" or PRT.	
Most folks here that are pro LRT do not know	

anything about transportation. I would hope they would learn something.	
LRT appears as old streetcar style - back to old Syracuse - I like it!	
Rail would be a great addition to public transportation options, if affordable. Street cars would be great too. Whatever could enhance options, reduce auto travel within the city.	
With the existing network of rail-line (spurs) in all various directions, incorporate light rail with several park-n-ride lots to compliment current and/or future expanded CENTRO bus service.	
LRT - I would support this! Buffalo has it, people use it.	
Light rail great idea - along 81 and 690.	
Sense of place. Destination and heritage.	
Addresses stigma of bus. Brings T.O.D. and money.	
A LTR from eastern burbs to city/hospitals/university would be great.	
Utilized LRT in Portland. Works great! Might work great here also.	
Better than cars.	
I like the streetcars. I agree also renewable energy sources, electric, solar.	
Streetcar option could be a good segue into LRT.	
I think this is great. Syracuse was a streetcar city in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Best way to promote a denser urban form and combat sprawl; recreate the initial streetcar pattern/network.	
If the commute for me, let's say from Fayetteville Town Center, were faster than by car, I would seriously consider it. Otherwise no.	

Locations where transit enhancements are needed
Major villages in the area. Transit enhancements would revitalize struggling village commercial centers.
Need ongoing renovation of downtown with emphasis on arts and cultural activities that would draw permanent residents to downtown area
Restoring OnTrack train service between Syracuse University, Armory Square, and Destiny USA should be a top priority. This service should eventually be extended to the Regional Transit Center, and then to the Airport. A key in making this system work is to increase the frequency of trains, to approximately 3 per hour, and extending operating hours, to at least midnight on weekdays and 2 a.m. on weekends. The main users of this system, at least initially, are likely to be University students living in dormitories, rather than commuting workers. The trains should be scheduled for these most-likely initial users, not for taxpayers who won't actually use them.
I'd like to see suburbanites ride public transit. I also like to see a futuristic high speed rail linking SU with Armory Square and/or Destiny USA.

I would like to see more support for bicycles. Syracuse has already done a wonderful job with adding some bike lanes in the area, but it's been a very slow process, and there's plenty of room for improvement.

There also needs to be a major campaign educating both drivers and bicyclists alike on the proper rules of the road... I seem to be among the few people who observe the rules.

As a driver, I often see bicyclists doing illegal things -- like riding on the wrong side of the road, riding in sidewalks, ignoring traffic lights or stop signs, or riding at night without a headlight and taillight. I also see plenty of kids on bikes without helmets, though they're supposedly required by law under the age of 14.

As a bicyclist, I often see drivers failing to understand that I have just as much right to the road as they do. Just recently, while biking along Onondaga Lake Parkway, I was nearly taken out by a driver who wanted to use the Buckley Road off-ramp. She cut sharply in front of me to make the exit, as I was already crossing the exit lane. Some drivers don't understand how dangerous it can be to turn right without being observant of bicycles that they might be cutting-off when they make that turn.

As a bicyclist, you also notice something you don't always see as a driver -- many of the area's major roads don't have shoulders for bicyclists to use. Erie Boulevard heading out towards and through DeWitt is a prime example. Route 92 through Manlius is another. Route 11 in North Syracuse. As a cyclist, I often avoid these roads when I can, but that's not always possible... and it can be nerve-racking to stick as close to the curb as possible, hoping that the drivers are paying attention and will give me enough clearance. Because many of these roads have drainage grates along the shoulder, right next to the curb, I'm forced to ride further into the lane, so as not to ride over these drainage grates... since they're often not level with the pavement, or the grating is too wide to safely ride a bike tire across.

From the suburbs to the downtown/university area. Make it desirable to take public transit to the city from the suburbs; after all, there are roughly 320,000 residents in the county to the city's 145,000.

It'd be nice to go all-in and invest in heavy rail; I realize that that probably wouldn't survive the federal DOT's cost-benefit analysis.

Try light rail. A DeWitt-Fairmount line and some sort of north-south line that connects the airport, Amtrak station, and downtown would probably attract a good number of riders. We'd get a significant number of cars off the streets and attract infill TOD while maintaining quick commute times.

This, of course, assumes that train service is frequent and quick and the lines are fairly direct (On Track's limited hours, slow speeds, and meandering route doomed it).

yes, I think it would greatly enhance the appeal of downtown

Living off of James street, rush hour is just a nightmare. I would like to see enhancement's in the Eastwood area even heading into East Syracuse.

EASTWOOD!!!! (Check out CENTRO's estimated time of travel by bus from Teall Avenue to University Hill by bus...I can walk it just as fast, or bike it at least twice in the same amount of time).

It seems that a more creative use could be made of the existing rail lines that intersect through downtown, the old Ontrack corridor. Better connections at the at the University end coupled with a potential Park & Ride system along the tracks north of Liverpool. The old Ontrack system did not go far enough, physically and financially (needed ongoing government subsidy such as CENTRO receives)

Most public transportation around the world is publicly funded

A transit option bigger than a car but smaller than existing buses.
Bike racks. Accessibility for individuals with disabilities. Employer incentives for using public transit. Safe places to store bikes. Lockers and showers to accommodate more bike and pedestrian commutes.
Public transit needs to be a viable option for intra-city and city/suburb travel. It must be affordable and rapid. It should offer intra-downtown free zones. Routes need to be changed to include cross-neighborhood travel. Buses on heavily traveled routes (eastside) should do eastside loop and not be impacted by Westside (Camillus) obstacles - accidents, weather. New bus facility will make extra-neighborhood transferring easy, facilitating loops on all sides of town. Need more park and ride options for commuters. Enhanced transit must be part of plan.
Trolley cars - Euclid, Genesee St, Salina St, Erie Blvd, Crouse
Bike lanes everywhere. Q-jumps for bikes. Parking
LRT
Revive the passenger rail from Jamesville/SU to Carousel and extend to Regional Transportation Facility and Airport.
Public transportation to the airport
Solar roads on rebuilding of all roads. Give solar energy to city and residents. See federal study by going to google.com and put in "solar roads" or "solar roadways"
Finish On Track RR line from C. Mall to Transportation Center and baseball park. Bridge and track are next to Park Street!
I would like to see a public transit system from Airport to Destiny to Downtown to University area. Park and ride could help cut down on car traffic in the city.
See current good sections of the city better connected to each other. Like Strathmore to the near west side to Tipp Hill to downtown. We need to find a way to get rid of the blight that separates these areas.
If it is possible to use the old On Track rail lines there should be a spur that reaches closer to the SU campus that continues to the train station on the north side all the way to the airport.
It must provide a frequent schedule that takes less travel time from key points than car. I would consider a Fayetteville Town Center to downtown route if (and only if) it was faster than car.

Station 6: Evaluating future options

Evaluating Future Options
The criterion of "enhance connectivity between University Hill and downtown" is pathetically nebulous, and the proposed metrics are a bunch of ridiculous gobbledy-gook. What the hell is the "barrier effect" and how do you propose to "qualitatively" measure it? If you want to take a survey and ask people living downtown whether each proposed solution will make them feel more connected to the University Hill area, this would be an acceptable measurement method. What you have written now is pure garbage.
The interchanges, onramps, and off-ramps, and weave areas in the county seem to make more sense and are better planned than those in the city, it is nice that so much thought is being put into improving this.
Don't cheap out!
Add green park in front of justice center, former police station, co. Power plant to new court building (missing now).
Separated bike lanes, paths, etc. On existing lanes, continue the path to/through the intersection. Bike boxes etc. etc. etc. Go to bikeportland.org and copenhagenize.com

Bike lanes (continuous) don't "dead end," then sidewalks with green between curb and sidewalk.
Include bicycle lanes in all concepts.
Who are we trying to help here? The people who live and work in the city or the interests of those who choose to live elsewhere?
Note that this type of forecast can be self-fulfilling. If you build it, they will drive on it (especially if there's not alternative).
Were the traffic counts on 81 done in April? They should be done during summer months due to recreational traffic. - Comment heard
Having information at state fair - Center of Progress would get significant exposure. - Comment discussed
Be sure to include economic impact to businesses at 81/ 90 interchange, especially several hotels at exit 25.
Perhaps the most logical alternative is to do nothing on the assumption that by the time 81 collapses, there will be no gasoline (oil) available to power vehicles.
A large factor in me moving here over 40 years ago as opposed to Rochester was the easy access from the suburbs to the University Hill/ hospitals area. There is more and more traffic in that area due to increased building etc. causing congestion getting off 81 and 690. Please don't make permanent changes to make the rush hours traffic even worse.
Additional assessment evaluation details potential risks associated with each of the proposed strategies. Each proposed project involves significant pros/cons - please conduct functional analysis with detailed evaluation of potential risks thereby associated with project activities. Considerations are important to share; however, an estimate of functional relevance should not be over looked. Project plan documentation when appropriate; detailed scope, requirements, work, resources required etc.
Consider the residents (and attracting residents) of the areas adjacent to 81, and their quality of life (as opposed to commuters). If we want to revitalize downtown with lofts, hotels, etc., a radical rethinking is fundamental.
Dissemination of data calculation/ collection methodologies for traffic/ transit usage projections? Census data? NY's Department of Labor demographics? Historical data has obvious sources for calculations; I would be interested to learn how prediction data were determined.
For all strategies - would have been helpful to have estimated time frame for completion i.e. how long would area be under construction and therefore out of commission for travel?
We should be designing forward not reflecting on existing design or existing fuel sources.
Please add Creek Walk green to tall community resources map (now missing).
Syracuse needs more buses and public transportation options. I think I-81 should remain elevated along the same route as it is now.