

The I-81 Challenge
May 2012 Public Meeting
Appendix C – Publicity Materials

Prepared for: Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council

August 2012

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www.smtcmpo.org

Appendix C: Publicity Materials

1. Meeting flyer
2. Placard placed on Centro buses
3. SMTC press release
4. Print ad (Post-Standard, Eagle Newspapers, and Syracuse New Times)
5. Online banner ads (YNN.com)

Stay involved in *The I-81 Challenge*!

Join us for the second public meeting for *The I-81 Challenge*

Drop in any time that is convenient for you:

Wednesday, May 9th
from 2 pm - 8 pm

Location: Oncenter Ballroom (lower level)
800 South State Street
Syracuse, NY

The Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council and the New York State Department of Transportation need your help in planning the future of I-81 through Syracuse. Be part of the process for determining what options for the highway are best for our region.

At this meeting, you will be able to:

- Review materials from the May 2011 workshop
- See the feedback received in May 2011 and learn how this feedback was developed into initial strategies for I-81
- Provide feedback on the initial strategies before NYSDOT begins further analysis
- Learn how strategies will be evaluated
- Learn about potential long-term improvements to our transit system and provide your thoughts

Need more information?

Free parking will be provided in the Oncenter garage and parking lot. For directions and additional information, visit www.thei81challenge.org.

Can't make the meeting in person?

Participate online in our virtual meeting at www.thei81challenge.org/virtual starting May 9.

Need special accommodations?

The meeting facility is handicapped accessible. To request special accommodations, please contact the SMTC at 315-422-5716 or contactus@thei81challenge.org.

Need language assistance?

American Sign Language and Spanish interpreters will be available at the meeting. For more information, please contact the SMTC at 315-422-5716 or contactus@thei81challenge.org.

¿Habla usted español?

Usted tendrá intérpretes disponibles en español en la reunión. Para más ayuda por favor llame al 315-944-2014 (debe marcar el código de área).

Quý vị có nói tiếng Việt không?

Thông dịch viên nói tiếng Việt sẽ sẵn sàng theo yêu cầu. Xin vui lòng gọi số (315) 944-2014 (quý vị phải quay số khu vực) và để lại lời nhắn yêu cầu xin thông dịch viên. Xin bao gồm cả tên và số điện thoại quý vị. Các yêu cầu xin thông dịch viên phải được nhận trước ngày 2 Tháng Năm, 2012.



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Quý vị có nói tiếng Việt không?

Để biết thêm tin tức, gọi 315-944-2014.

Can't make the meeting in person?

Participate online in our virtual meeting at www.thei81challenge.org/virtual starting May 9, 2012.

Free parking will be provided.

For directions and additional information, visit www.thei81challenge.org or call us at (315) 422-5716.



NEWS

RE: I-81 Challenge May 9 Public Meeting

April 30, 2012

FOR MORE INFORMATION Contact:

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The I-81 Challenge Begins Evaluating Options for Highway's Future

*May 9 Oncenter Public Meeting to Give Community
Another Chance to Make Comments Prior to Start of Extensive Studies*

SYRACUSE, NY -- The study to determine the future of I-81 in Central New York is entering a new phase involving a comparative analysis of the five optional "master strategies" that will ultimately govern the road's fate. The findings will shape the final decision.

Before the analysis begins, the community will have one more opportunity to review the five strategies and offer its input at a public meeting being held from 2 pm to 8 pm on May 9, 2012 at the Oncenter located at 800 South State Street in downtown Syracuse. Attendees will be offered either free (validated) parking in the Oncenter garage or lot, or two single-use transit passes at the meeting.

Following the public meeting, the New York State Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) will begin to develop more details for each master strategy. Each of these strategies will then undergo analysis, considering its potential impact on costs, traffic, land use, pedestrians, transit, the environment and future economic development.

"This is a very hefty menu of work to get done," said Bill Egloff, NYSDOT's Project Manager. "Our team expects that examining seven or more factors for up to a dozen options will require at least six months or more. We want people to understand what's required for a project like this so they don't become impatient."

"Federal and state environmental laws and regulations require that all reasonable options be evaluated for their impacts," explained Egloff. "While we know that a 'no-build' scenario is not a realistic option given the condition of the viaduct, in the end we are required to fully evaluate it in order to establish it as the baseline. A 'no-build' scenario would include only routine maintenance of the existing structure without any significant changes to address long-term issues. Every other strategy will be compared to this 'no-build' scenario."

THE FIVE MASTER STRATEGIES FOR I-81 THROUGH SYRACUSE:

- 1. No-build (routine maintenance only)**
- 2. Rehabilitate road and bridges**
- 3. Reconstruct road and replace bridges**
- 4. Depress or tunnel**
- 5. Replace with an urban boulevard**

MORE

“Keep in mind that I-81 is an Interstate highway and therefore must comply with a long list of federal regulations and requirements,” said James D’Agostino, Director of the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council [SMTC]. “It’s expected that the federal government will fund a significant portion of the cost of whatever is decided. So ultimately, we must meet their requirements.”

SMTC is in charge of managing the overall public input process for NYSDOT, who ultimately must prove to federal highway officials that public input from all interested stakeholders was sufficiently gathered and properly considered during the planning and project development. In order to meet these requirements, the public input process occurs in several stages.

“Fortunately, we have a pretty good idea of what the community wants and what its priorities are,” said Meghan Vitale, SMTC Principal Transportation Planner. “From our May 2011 Workshops and online forums, we gathered comments, suggestions, and ideas from nearly a thousand people. These were all reviewed by SMTC and NYSDOT staff and used to develop the strategies that we will present at the May 9 meeting.”

Community concern focuses on the overhead “viaduct” portion of I-81 running along the eastern edge of downtown Syracuse. Nearing the end of its designed service life, it will require significant repair, reconstruction or replacement if it is to remain in use.

Traffic studies indicate only 12% of the vehicles currently using I-81 south of the City of Syracuse travel through the region without stopping, making the I-81 viaduct predominantly a local traffic and commuter route. This information suggests that diverting regional interstate through traffic to an alternative route will have little impact on traffic volumes or operations on I-81.

The current structure, consisting of 124 separate bridge spans, fails to conform to current highway design standards. This is particularly true near downtown, where physical constraints forced 1960s engineers to design the highway with tight curves, narrow lanes, short weaving distances and minimal shoulders. These sections of I-81 generally coincide with areas of increased congestion and high accident rates.

Any decisions affecting the Interstate Highway System must adhere to the Federal Highway Administration [FHWA] rules and regulations. FHWA oversees the adherence to numerous federal transportation planning and design requirements.

In addition, because NYSDOT will likely bear a portion of the ultimate cost as the owner of the road and is responsible for managing the overall project, it must also comply with New York’s State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) process for a major public project.

NEPA and SEQRA established two powerful sets of regulations designed to ensure that potential impacts to human and natural environments are considered throughout the planning and project development process. Under both NEPA and SEQRA, the formal environmental review process requires official public hearings to be held. These hearings will occur at a later time in the project cycle. These laws were not in place when decisions about the original construction of I-81 were made.

Currently, NYSDOT is undertaking an *I-81 Corridor Study* consisting of a technical analysis of the road’s physical conditions, identification of viable future strategies, and analysis of the potential

impacts of those future strategies. *Travel Demand Modeling*, a technical tool that uses computer simulation to see how future strategies affect the region's overall transportation network, is also underway.

"We know that many people wonder 'Why must this take so long?'" D'Agostino acknowledged. "The short answer is – it's an Interstate highway and ultimately federal law dictates the process."

"But let's remember our history. Back in the 1960s, decisions about the original construction were made hurriedly, largely behind closed doors without public involvement. Re-doing I-81 will probably be our most important infrastructure project of the 21st century, so having ample time to 'get it right' this time is really in the best interest of our community."

"We don't have a gun to our heads," added Egloff. "The projected 50-year life span of I-81 doesn't end until 2017. That's why we began work as early as 2009, so there would be time for all the work to get done properly. Every one of the required steps is a pretty significant undertaking by itself."

"We want the public to be sure we are studying all the relevant issues they want us to study," D'Agostino said. "The May 9 public meeting will serve as a critical interim checkpoint for Central New Yorkers to make sure that we heard everything they said... and got everything right."

The I-81 Challenge is a joint effort between the SMTC and NYSDOT to plan the future of I-81 in Central New York.

Public participation in *The I-81 Challenge* is always encouraged. For information on ways to get involved in the process, along with complete information regarding the project, visit www.thei81challenge.org

--END--

Print ad

What's the Future of I-81?

I-81 represents one of the most important projects in Central New York history. Now it's time to begin evaluating options for the highway's future. Before the exhaustive formal analysis begins, our community — and you — have another opportunity to review the potential strategies and offer your input. Come to the May 9th public meeting at the OnCenter.

You have a stake in your community. Share your ideas. Be part of the process of deciding the future of I-81 in Central New York.



Public Meeting

Wednesday, May 9

2 pm to 8 pm

Drop in anytime... stay as long as you like.

OnCenter Ballroom / Downtown Syracuse

Free Parking



Engaging the community in the future of I-81.

The I-81 Challenge is the joint effort of the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council and the New York State Department of Transportation to plan the future of Interstate 81.


All meetings will be handicapped accessible. Spanish and ASL interpreters will be provided. To request special accommodations, please contact the SMTC at 422-5716 or contact us at thei81challenge.org.

For directions and additional information, visit www.thei81challenge.org/meeting


Can't make a meeting in person? Participate online after May 9 in our virtual meeting at www.thei81challenge.org/virtual

Online banner ads

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the
Future
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OnCenter

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Click for details,
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