

# *The I-81 Challenge*

## May 2012 Public Meeting

### Appendix D – Meeting Evaluation

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*For further information contact:*

*James D'Agostino, Director*

*Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council*

*126 N. Salina St., 100 Clinton Square, Suite 100, Syracuse, NY 13202*

*PHONE: (315) 422-5716 FAX: (315) 422-7753*

[www.smtcmpo.org](http://www.smtcmpo.org)

## Appendix D: Meeting Evaluation

### Meeting Evaluation Results

#### 1. I learned something useful about The I-81 Challenge today.

1 = Strongly Agree, 6 = Strongly Disagree

Average rating: 1.78

#### Comments

---

well laid out and presented

---

info very well presented - very thorough

---

learned more about the 5 options and their good & bad points

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it was good to have so many people very interested in listening to ideas and more than willing to talk about how my ideas fit/do not fit with the directions p

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I came to last year's meeting, so a lot of it was repeated information. I should also point out that a short-cut was pointed out to me

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good education about options & where the project starts

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I was disappointed that construction feasibility and cost estimates of the 5 options were not presented.

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The process is too slow.

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The breakdown of options was good.

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The presentation of each area explained to me what was going on. It helped me learn history and possibilities of the I-81 corridor.

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I learned that a city that is dying economically for the last 30+ years is trying to construct a state of the art system and at the same time can't maintain its infrastructure (war memorial, Oncenter, Hotel Syracuse)

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various options, process

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I learned "you guys" are dragging "your" feet on making decisions on something important

---

amazing presentation

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Really like the poster-to-poster layout. I'm also glad to know all available on web.

---

good format, knowledgeable staff

---

neat process

---

like being shown the different problems with each possible answer

---

attributes of the alternatives categories were well developed and had new info

---

all the "presenters" were very helpful

---

Exhibit was very thorough and informative

---

good info

---

info on signs was very concise + easy to understand

---

not very different from last year

---

like how the stations were laid out with the history & the solutions so far

---

Glad to see consolidated feedback from last meeting & downsize of options with pro/con's

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Great presentation. Very informative.

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Getting public opinion is good but when the decisions are made...who gets to vote?

---

informative

The reconstruction of a new I-81 is obviously an addition wholeheartedly wanted and needed along with other renovations, buildings and etc.

---

excellent and easy to understand display boards

---

was at meeting last year

---

too much detail to be absorbed by the public at one "standing"

---

I felt everyone was knowledgeable. Good job.

---

enjoyed the public comments "sticky notes" at each station

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nice visuals w/ easy to digest info

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It was great to see the alternative designs elaborated upon and more thoroughly explored. I learned about the corridor plans.

## 2. I was able to provide meaningful input about The I-81 Challenge today.

1 = Strongly Agree, 6 = Strongly Disagree

Average rating: 2.4

### Comments

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I'm not sure how meaningfully the input will be received

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I did not give feedback yet, but I will turn in a form/comment sheet later. The post-it method felt not private enough.

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It's nice to be able to comment on each individual proposal

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there was so much good information available that I will need to process this before I can respond in a more thought out manner

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certainly my input was well received making me feel it was meaningful

---

not sure input today will actually go anywhere, but this was a good education opportunity

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?

---

very easy to provide input at each post

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If I had a blank check I would have the input. At the end of the day whoever pitched the genius idea year ago was an epic fail. Regardless, anything different from the current system will be better.

---

just starting to pay attention to this project

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N/A

---

sticky notes on boards, access to web sites, various conversations with personnel

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what good will it do this time if I did it last time + no major decisions were made

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I'll add input via your website

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I appreciate the effort to involve the community in this process

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I didn't have any input but I felt free to contribute if I had had any!

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we turned in a couple of ideas for consideration

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but will do so online

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I like the way it was divided into sections & the opportunity to comment on each one

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It's tough to provide much thoughtful comment in a short period of review

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I have my preference based on solutions seen in other countries (Germany) and other cities San Francisco, Boston, Ft. Worth. I would prefer a tunnel.

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Monitors were friendly and accessible. I would prefer more group interaction

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I've only been a resident of Syracuse for a short while + I don't drive much, so I don't think I have such a useful perspective

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How will the post-its be used?

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Although sticky notes make this input process easy it does not allow for proper dialog & feedback from

all affected. It also does not allow for more in-depth input

today was a learning session - thank you

The post-its remind me of F.O.C.U.S.'s "community brainstorming" sessions. Will you please let us know if, as with those, some ideas bubble to the top? Thanks!

the problem is me - too tired from working today to provide useful input

helpful spokesmen/women at stations

Hope so. Hard to know.

Doing reconstruction + making the highway wider would be best. I travel it all the time.

reconstruct viaduct & redesign ramp system

only know it is meaningful if incorporated

many post-it spaces already had the comments I would add

plethora of post it notes makes it easy to comment

Our input is solicited, but "meaningful is a shifting target! Still, I welcome the opportunity of hearing, reading about it, and opining.

You need to decide this!

I was just here to listen

N/A

It's nice to fill out post-its - but will anyone actually listen/read them

tunneling costs too much money and safety issues

Not sure! It's not like we got to vote on a solution today, but I know if I thought of something new I could bring it up via post-its...

The opportunity was there, but didn't comment. More interested in seeing proposals.

**3. As compared to other meetings I have attended this event was:**

1 = Much better than average, 6 = Much worse than average

Average rating: 2.02

**Comments**

too "wordy" - could have been more condensed

all stations had knowledgeable people to ask/answer questions

I wouldn't change a thing

I liked it - but almost too much information to absorb

What has impressed me the most is the people at each station that answer questions. Their information has made it easier for me to understand many of the issues that affect this project. Keep up the good work.

the all-inclusiveness about ideas being considered

having people at each station to answer questions

I liked all the experts available to answer questions. I even had questions answered listening to other people's questions being answered.

The concepts insightful, however impractical in regards to our city.

good information - clear, concise, pictures, data, etc.

N/A

1st meeting

maybe a tape recorder so instead of writing people could let the message out better

A very nice waste of time. (Because no real decisions were made.) The people who answered questions were very nice.

I liked the straightforward and honest treatment to the history, the challenges and the options. It's a lot of information to absorb at once, but this is a real complex issue.

I had little idea how much information would be provided so did not plan for a long stay - I will look at website. It was overwhelming but I hope to become more knowledgeable as process proceeds.

Good. But not much of a speaker on hand explaining some of the lit. Thank you!

wonderful synthesis of a lot of info

nice done/presentation very effective & clear, as it was last year

Have never attended anything like this before. This presentation came off a very professional

it was about the same but the information was shown better

great info - well presented - especially given how complicated this is

It was evident that a lot of time and effort went into the presentation. Thanks.

Excellent posters & plenty of people to answer questions.

you can go at your own pace

Information was well presented and lots of assistance available to give explanations

Liked the opportunity to ask questions & make comments in person

like most every thing

Great info. I prefer more people interaction.

Lots of personal attention from lots of people in each section. People willing to answer questions + explain things were very useful.

The public comments from the last meeting should have been processed to be easily readable and grouped in similar areas of concern (if they weren't) To expect anyone to take the time to decipher the comments as written is ridiculous.

Same as previous I-81 challenge but w/ consolidated info from the inputs. Good.

Don't know if the guides were better than last year or I was better prepared for the format. Got a lot more out of communicating with them and other attendees this year.

incredible amount of information

It showed what's being done, but there's a lot of wheel spinning (pun intended!)

I liked the boards and the post it notes available at each section. There was a lot of information to digest.

great presentation of materials - history, data, useful info

?

each station was laid out well and provided answers to my questions

people @ every station able to answer questions

this was my first event

Loved having people around to answer questions and talk about the I81 challenge

I liked the displays of everything and how they showed the comparison from both previous years (transportation) in addition the examples of the type of highways another city decided to use

spokespersons were well informed

free parking - a plus

seeing the variations of what other states did

well laid out, easy to follow

Like - display board information, solutions used in other cities, representatives were helpful

not much new information

I liked all of it. Very informative.

first meeting attended

very informative

everyone very useful

Good follow-up to last year's meeting. The availability and friendliness/candor of staff was refreshing.

see question #1

I saw that you did listen last year and incorporated our thoughts. Thank you.

1) Set-up was easy to follow. 2) Would like to have another similar opportunity to see plans again - a lot of info for one day

very organized and pleasant

the boards and being able to talk to

posters were helpful

Whichever solution is selected, it should be very acceptable - if the standard set today is followed. Well done.

have not attended other meetings on this project

I have only been to this one

So much more work went into this! Wow. Super organized.

I liked the information about the city and the information on the I81 viaduct. I thought there would be more information on how each solution to the I-81 Challenge could be met so I was a bit disappointed.

Still too many option - we need to start eliminating some - so we can concentrate on 1, 2 or 3!

Liked the format and presentation. Easy to understand.

#### **4. I believe that *The I-81 Challenge* process is being structured in a transparent and accessible manner.**

1 = Strongly Agree, 6 = Strongly Disagree

Average rating: 1.71

#### **Comments**

I receive a ton of info about the process in many types of media consistently. Well done.

My hope is that the information keeps flowing to the public!

I love that the public is asked for opinions & is involved in the plan

Too much transparency. 1st time meeting was enough. Make a decision already.

I think this kind of meeting is essential. Thank you for putting so much effort into it.

not sure - sometimes too much info is daunting

Based on what you have presented, the process appears transparent...we'll see what the final product reflects!

Nice to see public input meetings where extends into evening so working folks can get there

I

yes, but I don't have confidence in transparency at the decision-making/funding stage down the road (check was placed on the line between #3 and #4

Let's get it right bottom line

there should have been more than one meeting

I hope this continues

That's how it seems from here. Though perhaps doing smaller, focused groups would help, too.

Why is there a modeling study, corridor study, and public outreach? Why 2 agencies and multiple consultants? One agency, one prime consultant, one project, and one clear chain of command where we can see how decisions are made!

Wish people out there who think our input doesn't make any difference could be convinced otherwise. I read comments on the boards of ALL 5 visions. The Boulevard has 99% positive rating while the other

visions got 99% negative feedback. If your conclusions and final plans don't go in the direction of the boulevard I will no longer believe that our opinion mattered.

presentation speaks for itself

This might be for show - who votes?

I'll wait till the final decision is made

I have been getting updates via mail and e-mail all year - wonderful

we'll see when there are some plans put forward

as much as I can tell

Very impressed w/ the boards where the comments were presented from the last meeting

we'll see

Thank you for sharing as you proceed

better community input than last time

NYS has so long been a "smoke filled back room" type of government, that I have residual skepticism

It would be important to start looking at cost sooner even if no single plan is yet decided until 4-5 yrs.

Economic conditions of the State/Fed gov't need to be evaluated now not 2017 - i.e. the debt we owe as tax payers.

Thank you for our input

hope final decisions will be conducted in the same manner

nice clear presentation + helpful staff

Yes. The public has a right to know.

People have had a lot of opportunities to participate, and there is so much information available about the planning and decision process.

**5. Where did you hear about this meeting?**

<b>Response</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Newspaper	60	36%
Word of Mouth	38	23%
TV	52	31%
Community Meetings	11	7%
Radio	37	22%
E-mail	57	34%
Internet	17	10%
Other	34	20%

**6. Any other comments you wish to share?**

**Comments:**

some good ideas have come up

Hopefully decisions are coming soon. At what point and by whom will be the final decision be made. (SMTc, State DOT, Federal)?

Keep it up!

Whatever happens will not please everyone. My hope is that it improves a lot of the transportation shortfalls of the area, encourages growth & development in the city and is better to look at than what we have now. I think the tunnel would be best, but it carries a big price tag.

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keep up the good work

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It would be good to have a sign outside on center and/or outside the parking lot to say parking in the garage will be validated

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Super job!

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thank you

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It would be helpful to have a synopsis of the info - e.g. enclosed in folder - prior to attending. One needs an overview of the choices before going thru them. Visual presentation were very good. Staff was knowledgeable & helpful.

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I think the visuals could be clearer - my main interest was station 4 - thank you for asking

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NOT WHEELCHAIR FRIENDLY

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Keep having these types of presentations all the way to completion of the I-81 Challenge.

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There are neighborhoods in the S. West and Westside of Syracuse that are decaying at an incredible rate. With this being said, "knock out two birds with one stone." The issue is redirecting traffic in the most efficient manner, not reinventing our city into a state of the art transportation system. It's simple! Address the real issue at hand the money.

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Exciting that info is getting out! :)

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Thank you for providing this

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a lot to digest at one time, but very helpful

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Make a decision then accept input then make appropriate modifications. I expected to review one design model + give input or "vote" on. There was no reason to post signs of nonviable ideas for input. (ex - relocation of 81)

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great start to great challenge

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It isn't clear how the comments will be used. They range from pure knee-jerk opinion to reasoned + careful arguments.

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Thank you1

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Looking forward to the next meeting which eliminates unrealistic concepts.

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Don't get rid of an interstate through the middle of Syracuse!

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Great job in presenting info as well as inviting comments!

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Whatever choice is agreed upon will be inconvenient, expensive, & disruptive. My primary concern is access to the university area hospitals from the north, east, and west sides of Syracuse and to St. Joes from the south

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Exceeded my expectations. I was pleased.

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great to see is happening

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GOOD JOB!

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it was very interesting to walk through the site

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Make starting at noon so people can attend during their lunch break. I know people that would have come but it started too late.

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The cookies and free parking were a nice touch :)

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People who want to tear down 81 & build the neighborhoods back - will not happen. Most of neighborhoods we tore down were "slums." We did eminent domain then & should keep current location but wider. Build a bridge across Onondaga Lake.

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You are not asking the public which approach they favor?

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Appreciate the opportunity to review & comment. I think more public education is still necessary to convey the fact that the current elevated highway cannot just be "maintained." Whatever takes its place - if still elevated -- will be much bigger, uglier, & will have fewer exits/entrances. Most who favor keeping it "as is" don't understand that it CAN'T!



a surface solution w/ traffic feathered out north of Brighton to Colvin/to State/To Salina/to west to divert traffic before it gets down town & to feather out the traffic that must come downtown.

It's good to have such a public information & feedback event that uses posters & people to display the information/options objectively.

After spending all this effort to involve the community I do hope we look for the optimal, long term solutions rather than the "cheapest". This city and area are on an upward momentum and have much to offer to future generations. Let's do it RIGHT this time. Thanks for the opportunity to give input.

Looking forward to the next meeting(s)!

I love that the community is being brought into the process. I feel this plan can have a major impact on the development of the core (Syracuse) in turn the whole area. I still can't believe they built the baseball stadium on the same swamp land that the built Municipal Stadium in 1935. Instead of downtown, I hope this project brings us into the 21st Century.

Good use of videos, too, but the sound was a challenge - hard to hear.

This might be a good thing to do at the NYS Fair. Many more people.

Should have better signs old info (from last year) & alternative breakdowns. Should have puts signs on the other 2 Oncenter bldgs. so we knew exactly where to go

I am glad that the city/state is taking the time necessary to make this decision

keep elevated portion through city as is, with improvements, etc.

Everyone did a great job. Very informative & accessible. Those staffing the meeting were friendly & informative.

Just get to it!

thank you for letting the public be involved in this decision

This is very informative & helpful. Nicely run. The people standing around to answer questions, etc. were great. I am impressed. I hope we don't just end up doing nothing because that's all we can afford!

NYS DOT, SMTC and all of the consultants that have been involved have done a great job w/ organizing the events

organized, well presented, non-biased

please continue to keep us informed

When I was a teen-ager I knew one of the men who designed the original elevated portion of I-81. It's weird to be middle aged now and hoping it will come down soon. I feel very proud of this community and how it is seeking input from ordinary citizens

please get on with it, management by committee is very expensive & time consuming both

I'm glad community input is being considered. I wish the process could be done for much less than \$6.5 million

really helpful

I am glad the public is having an input. We are the ones who travel the highway all the time.

Clearly, the final decision should be one that results in Syracuse becoming among that group of American cities that are increasingly attractive, livable and focused on "people culture." This means to be healthier, more livable, more sustainable designed for lungs, legs, life. Think Europe for example, where bicycles and physical fitness and people-centric ideas thrive. People in 2050 should be able to say they really made the right choice back in 2010-2018.

Good effort. I appreciate the work that went into the presentations. Thank you.

Local jobs - displace as few people as possible; compensate fairly if moved

please do tunnel

The people placed at each station to answer questions were very helpful and well informed.

I fully support the rehabilitation & reconstruction strategies as well as the concept for the western

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bypass

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good effort

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glad the dialogue is happening and especially that transit is included as an important component

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More on comment sheet.

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The interchange of 81 N and 690 West MUST be addressed before anything else. The safety issues of traffic trying not just to merge but cross 690 traffic and exit at West St. is worth one's life. Signals and overhead warning lights asking motorists to slow & yield are essential. PLEASE!

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thank you

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It's important not to waste this opportunity - it is important that it just is NOT DIFFERENT - BUT BETTER. We have an opportunity to improve the situation and I hope we optimize it. No lateral moves. And yes, air quality is very important.

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Like to see a more specific meeting involving the groups impacted talking about how this will impact them, i.e. businesses vs. Syracuse U., taxpayers vs. Syracuse U., groups exchanging pros & cons of plans, \$, length of time to complete vs. just DOT/gov't making decisions

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We all realize something needs to be done. The steel and abutments need desperate repair and the overall design needs to be changed. This is an excellent forum to discuss the needs and provides lots of information. I look forward to the next one.

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Please go with the boulevard option. It is more sustainable\* and will be much better for the aesthetics of downtown

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\* meaning less money to maintain long run

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I hope everything works out and hopefully the boulevard will be the winner.

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provide time frames on the 5 case studies

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I didn't really see people watching videos - are they available online?

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Please make videos available on the website!

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Biggest concern: will there be a delay in travel times? If I81 traffic is diverted to I481 there could be an increased chance of gridlock.

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Roundabouts, roundabouts, etc. Build them at Lyndon, Wymans, 481 junctions on Rte. 5 in DeWitt (and many other places)!

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"boards" well put together

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Excellent job!

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Nice job with info and visuals

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So much work on the planning - I really hope we have the money to build something when decision time comes around!

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I'm interested in these kinds of things as I used to be a planning director for a small county in Pennsylvania for a short time. We were dealing with zoning issues.

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Best idea, reconstruct or new bypass free flowing of traffic. Thru or around city. Do not let traffic from Rt. 81-481 North, Cicero, to 481-690 or 81-481 south, city, take all the traffic

### Comment Form Results

Comments
<p>The entire public review is an excellent idea, and very well executed - the exhibits, personnel, etc. are excellent! 1. My principal thought about solving the situation? Shift I81 to the east along the existing 481 ROW, including parking off from the Onondaga Nation intersection (and gaining their support...?). Keep/enhance "feeders" into/out of the city. 2. Redesign &amp; rehabilitate the region where the existing (elevated) I81 splits Pioneer home in two - and involve these residents in discussions about rehabilitation of the community.</p>
<p>Please build the western half of 481. That would solve a lot.</p>
<p>Good to keep us informed. Nice layout, but challenges get more complicated as we progress!!</p>
<p>(no comment)</p>
<p>Very good job presenting pros &amp; cons of the workable options. Very clear presentations.</p>
<p>Too much construction is going up on the hill. This will sabotage any improvements the SMTC can make. The meeting was informative and manned with sufficient &amp; knowledgeable people. Unfortunately, I do not have the answers, I hope someone does - GOOD LUCK</p>
<p>Preferences may change dramatically when costs and disruption time are considered with the various options. Evaluation of each option's true value will depend on how much improvement is realized for the cost incurred. It's no surprise that accident rates are higher near interchanges - especially interchanges of unorthodox design. Standardize interchange design so drivers know what to expect and you quickly reduce accidents. --- Elevated highways are not necessarily a negative - they actually cause less "neighborhood division" than at-grade or sunken highways. --- Encouraging through traffic to use I481 is an easy and low cost way to alleviate downtown traffic volumes and should be implemented regardless of other reconstruction options ultimately chosen. --- Moving I81 around in Syracuse beyond what would be necessary to standardize interchange design would only shift the problems to new areas and leave high and dry those businesses and hospitals who located themselves to take advantage of I81 access. P.S. Nicely presented. I look forward to future exhibits that will include cost estimates, proposed designs, and estimates of "disruption times" for the various options.</p>
<p>This is a much needed opportunity to get rid of something that divides our city and interferes with growth between viable areas. Re-route 81 traffic to Rt. 481 and allow for downtown and the university/meds areas to grow and make our city more vibrant! (and desirable! and livable!)</p>
<p>Great presentation. Extremely friendly and helpful staff. "Challenge" isn't quite strong enough. I would eliminate tunnel option - Syracuse is built on a salt marsh and subject to flooding. Onondaga Creek would have been another finger lake.</p>

<p>Our opinions should count. The information is excellent. Railroad and Transit - not necessary at this time.</p>
<p>I like the idea of changing 481 to 81 and the old 81 route thru downtown turn back to street level. Also, I would like to see return of a rail transit to downtown Syracuse. A more upgrade than OnTrack was for the system could easily tie in large sections together by rail.</p>
<p>Last fall I walked on an old unused elevated railroad bridge in NYC that had been converted to a park. It seemed very pie in the sky to suggest that anything similar could happen in Syracuse with I81. I was so pleased to see the hanging gardens/trails suggested by someone else when I walked through the public comments section. Even if it is not feasible, thank you for including the idea. I am thrilled that through my involvement with TNT I was able to take part in the early public comment meetings and have been receiving SMTC mailings. I am glad to see that you included public transportation here today. In other cities, it's easier to get around due to trains as an additional option. Thanks for allowing us to dream!</p>
<p>(Sketched drawing with his ideas in PDF of comments)</p>
<p>Boulevard option appears the best possible, considering cost and a real improvement. Keep on fixing up - least attractive option.</p>
<p>I would suggest a two-part approach to the I-81 challenge. 1.) Keep the elevated portion (viaduct) of I-81 between the university area and I-690 and create a park or community garden in it in the vein of High Park in New York City, as it has already been recommended in a post-it note by other person. Evaluate the economic benefit of this in terms of becoming a touristic attraction. The New York Times had a story in 2010 or 2011 about many cities in the nation that have turned elevated sections of highways into parks and how this has benefitted the communities living there such as NYC, Atlanta, etc. This is worth getting a closer look and doing a comparative analysis. 2.) Use the existing median between the northbound and southbound lanes of I-81 to create a pedestrian and bike lanes between the university area (UA) and downtown. Keeping the elevated section of I-81 between the UA and I-690 will keep the walkers and bike riders protected from the rain and snow. Then the workers and bike riders can continue their way to downtown going under the elevated section of I-690. I actually tested this idea by walking in the middle of a rainstorm between the UA and downtown and I barely got wet.</p>
<p>This is too much to process/digest - BUT...The siting of Rt. 81 through this city destroyed one of our most stable/prosperous neighborhoods. The Near Westside is just now coming back into its own. I see a very bright future for our neighborhood!! Please don't route I-81 traffic down/up West Street. It's already a very pedestrian unfriendly speedway!!</p>

An alternative product should be found to use the new roadway during the winter to melt the snow & ice. Salt is the main reason the highway is in the condition it is. The salt laden moisture and runoff penetrates the concrete and destroys the reinforcement rods which in turn degrades the concrete from within. Stainless steel re-bar should also be used in the new project to further prevent degradation of the concrete. There is a steel mill out by Onondaga Lake that has the capability of producing stainless re-rod. The extra business would help create jobs in addition to increasing the longevity of any new project. --- Who is preparing your environmental impact statements?

Great meeting! Make it earlier, maybe starting at noon, for people on lunch break! Took a late lunch so I could attend.

Show the buildings that have to come down!

I'm quite impressed by the way in which you've been able to instill so many different forms of data into a series of meaningful narratives while still keeping the complexity of the data and the many stories they tell reasonably intact. I think any attendee from prior workshops would be able to see something of themselves in the presentation because you have not gravitated to an average answer - KUDOS. --- The other thing that I note is that the first workshop really had an implicit bias toward the City of Syracuse. When I asked facilitators last May to talk about I-81 in regional perspective, the only thing that many of them could really verbalize on was the license plate based pass through study on I-81 proper. Not a single person I spoke to could address cross-commuting issues for folks who might be moving from west to east. This presentation, while still largely emphasizing zones of concern on I-81 within the city limits, has broadened its scale to focus and seems to be taking concerns outside the N-S corridor into account. It also seems to acknowledge the rationality of greater Syracuse in a way that might allow inter-jurisdictional dialogue to take place. In other words, not so threatening to the outlying towns and MCDs. More Kudos. --- I am, however, deeply troubled by any discussion of pushing an 81 or boulevard arterial west of the CBD. It would effectively separate the Near Westside from the CBD in the same way that the current I-81 supposedly ghettoizes the Southside & separates the Hill from the CBD. That by the way - and I base this on 75 cognitive mapping interviews with Syracusans between 2003 and 2005 - is a contrivance...a narrative that was not universally believed or even vocalized by city residents until proponents of Hill/downtown/New Urbanism started publicizing it. In fact, for those born before 1960, the greater divide has always been 690 & the NYC RR elevation. I still think you guys did a great job with this workshop.

Bury the highway! Go see Boston. It is the most quiet, lush big city in the country. Our section is nowhere near as big or complicated as Boston's. The minor inconvenience for the folks driving all the way "through" via 481 pales to the improvement to the quality of life and business development our city will enjoy. Bury it!

<p>Any new concrete work should incorporate stainless steel re-bar. If anyone looks closely to the deteriorated portions of the highway, they will see exposed, corroded re-bar. Once the dissolved salt penetrates the concrete it attacks the re-bar which then delaminates and forces cracks in the concrete. From then, it's just a matter of time before the concrete "spalls" and chunks fall out. Stainless steel reinforcement bar would prolong the life of the new installation considerably. There is a steel mill next to the state fair grounds that may be interested in providing the re-bar for the project, they need the potential business and it would provide more jobs for the community.</p>
<p>I believe the boulevard concept should be seriously considered!</p>
<p>Rt. 81 overpass should come down. The new boulevard should have roundabouts at key intersections with pedestrian crossover bridges. The railroad area to the west should be connected and 481 be the main highway around downtown. Also, people moving transportation should be done with cable car/gondolas to get buses and light rail off the surface.</p>
<p>Do not extend 481 to 695 through Fairmount-Camillus. My parents' house is there and when my grandparents first moved in the early 1960s to Fairmount, they were told to be prepared for a new highway through their neighborhood. It didn't happen and I don't think the residents of Westvale/Fairmount would allow it now unless it was pushed farther to the west through Camillus near West Genny High School! ---Overall, I support light rail/trolley/alternative transportation and I support the street level/depressed road with urban walkway (a tunnel like B'more is cool too) - name the tunnel after my boss, Magnarelli Tunnel!!</p>
<p>From all I've seen so far, the boulevard option seems the best. Using 481E as the main 81 route makes sense. Enhancing that for thru traffic is best - local city traffic using existing 81 -690 lower the roads. Slow down. Enhance transit system - focus on reducing car traffic into city.</p>
<p>Nice meeting. Be bold.</p>
<p>Very well planned out and very informative. Liked the ability to give feedback at each station. Thanks for providing water &amp; food. Definitely made me stay longer!</p>
<p>I don't think the public in this area has ever been asked for insight like this before! - Well documented, well researched.</p>
<p>1. Eliminating 81 through city will adversely affect east/west accessibility for commercial traffic and make commuting difficult. Getting through the city is bad enough without 690 &amp; 81. 2. Redesign existing viaduct for better exit strategy at 81N/690East &amp; West. 3. Redesign 81 South to access 690 west. 4. Redesign 81 South off ramp at SU/Hospital to ease miles long backups. 5. Rebuild viaduct.</p>

<p>Unfortunately, I didn't have a lot of time to absorb all of the thought and hard work you have put into this effort. I moved to Syracuse a week ago although I am somewhat familiar with it having gone to school in Ithaca. I would like to see the viaduct stay, but improve upon it structurally, aesthetically, etc. Once you are under it, there is a black hole kind of sensation. So let's improve that aspect. A "big dig" would be great but didn't that project bankrupt like three contractors? That might just be a rumor, regardless, it's expensive. What are the over-the-top-that-will-never-work ideas? The ideas that push and innovate? There is a good chance I just missed them tonight. Keep up the good work.</p>
<p>At each of the alternative stations it would be very helpful to have a 1-2 page summary of each alternative. Something that the average commuter can take home to compare the alternatives. As it stands, I think the average person drowns in information.</p>
<p>We have an opportunity to optimize a situation. Let's not waste it. While I think that involving the public is important, I want some visionary-types making this the best of all possible outcomes...environmentally, fiscally and all other considerations. We should view this as an opportunity to contribute to the sustainability of Syracuse and its inhabitants. Don't let's blow it!</p>
<p>It is an amazing amount of information to take in &amp; consider! I plan to follow-up w/looking "on-line" to understand better. Maps/visuals of possible alternatives were helpful, and it was great to have folks to answer questions. It's wonderful to have such a thoughtful process for public input on something that has a significant impact on our community.</p>
<p>My choice is the boulevard system and I really like dedicated bus lanes or queue jumper turnouts/lanes. Boulevard should include bike lanes.</p>
<p>I strongly prefer the boulevard option - Please don't spend any more money repairing the viaduct.</p>
<p>I thought the boards and stations were very effective. Thank you! I learned a lot.</p>
<p>As much as I would support maintenance of the current viaduct configuration (since the alternatives have economic, traffic circulation, or environmental drawbacks), I see a perverse dilemma that is being confronted here. Any expenditure of money to support the current fossil fuel consuming modes of transit is ill-advised, given the uncertainty of where transportation (and our society) will be 30 or 40 years out (or even ten years from now). Succumbing to current engineering paradigms is dangerous. Also optimism about extended fossil fuel supplies is misplaced (fracking for natural gas, as an example, will not be as lucrative as imagined - supplies are far less than projected and well costs are grossly underestimated.) The need is to focus on futuristic solutions.</p>
<p>Non-standard practice, ought to be: mapping for icing &amp; snow drift including sun effects on road surface OCT-April to include overlays composite and gamated layers for temperature calls of day lighted surface. Shadows, wind effects of likely road X-s effecting icing. Also providing potential drainage area maps correlated for sun-induced/warming induce black-ice.</p>

<p>Great Presentation. Put the highway back up, exactly as it is today, only higher (so it's not in your face so much from ground level), and bigger (to accommodate the ever increasing volume of traffic).</p>
<p>I like relocation to west - with fewer exit entrance.</p>
<p>Take it down; it would spur in center of Syracuse. Thanks for the hard work.</p>
<p>Thank you for engaging the public and soliciting our feedback. Please listen to the public's voice &amp; not those of special interests.</p>
<p>Really liked the circulation staff/volunteers that were eager to help. Great forum for public opinion, if these ideas are truly taken into consideration.</p>
<p>Great job. Lots of facts. Keep up the studies.</p>
<p>I am in favor of a complete re-do with the newest &amp; most high-tech options available, since it won't be addressed again until it expires 50? Years from now to be outdated by then. I am NOT in favor of a boulevard. If I want to go through downtown, I'll get off an exit. I need a quick route with no stops to &amp; from work PLEASE. Thank you.</p>
<p>1. I suggest a tunnel under Tipp Hill &amp; Burnet Park west portion entering from Armory Square Area (W. Fayette) using old RR depot (docks for car dealers on W. Gen.) space to angle north ~ 175' north of W. Fayette St. for underground entry to widen Grand Ave. at exit to use for 3/4 mile &amp; going west. 2.) More tie-in multimodal for waterway canalling/boaters at/near Inner Harbor Onondaga Lake.</p>
<p>Well presented. Professional. No shouting - minimal negativity. Longer hours would be nice but I understand, I work odd hours. GRACIAS!</p>
<p>I believe the emphasis has to be on elimination or at least mitigating neighborhood barrier (81, 690 &amp; West St.). Do not make worse. One focus should be on improving mass transit to university hill &amp; downtown. Need to focus development of existing urban curb &amp; neighborhoods; not greater sprawl. I like the boulevard approach with a RRT option.</p>



I like the idea of a spur encircling the city; using the Park and Ride system more (make it more viable and accessible) and replacing the downtown stretches of I-81 and I-690 and connecting them into the downtown grid. I-481 could be a circular route going around the city bringing traffic to all parts of the city. If you wanted to go downtown, you could park your car @ the Park and Rides and use some form of public transportation to venture downtown.

This is one of the most important projects for upstate New York, so this is a unique opportunity to consider a solution that addresses mobility issues, good design principles --and has the potential to be a transformative economic catalyst.

Improving access between the univ. hill area and downtown was not addressed in the alternatives. While this may not be a personal issue for the majority of the public, I think it is a major issue, even though it does not impact me. Over the long term the public will demand it as more development occurs on the downtown side of Rt. 81.

I'm concerned about the consideration of using West St. as a connection for I-81. The present effort is to reduce traffic flow on West St. to better enable people to get to Armory Square/SU Warehouse and to better connect the Near Westside with downtown.

I am happy to see that so many ideas from last year have been considered even though some have already been scratched. I think a boulevard along Almond St. should be a primary part of the finished plan with underground express lanes from Adams St. to at least Butternut St. with access to nothing but I-690 (3 connections). \*The possible connection at Hiawatha should be reconsidered (formerly called option 6). I also think option 4 to/from 695 & 81 should be included in the final plan. The most important transit idea to be worked on is the former OnTrack route. Ideas for pull-offs for buses and other ideas to let traffic flow past stopped buses should only be considered if the drivers will buy into the ideas.

Next public event - drag in the city, county & regional planning to do a joint effort! CNY has planning fatigue!!!

I am interested in learning more about potential health impacts of the 5 options. This is more health-specific and addresses different issues than the environmental impact. Great materials!

Of all the options presented I like the "reconstruction" option the most and the "boulevard" option the least. Reconstruction: Most economical - least disruptive to current traffic patterns and economic build/structure (i.e. Location of exit 25 Hotels). Still opportunity to improve "connection" and dreariness of Adams St. area and reduce congestion at 81/690 interchange. Boulevard: (selfish point of view here) Removes highway traffic away from my family's 4 hotels at Exit 25 - HUGE economic impact to our family business! HUGE!

I feel that its possibly more beneficial for the entire highway should be torn down. Maybe we could benefit more from the highway to be reconstructed beneath. The boulevard definitely should be cleared of any and all remaining abandoned buildings and lots. Maybe we could have a smaller version of a factory outlet like the one in Waterloo. It'd be more accessible for those who don't have cars in addition to the convenience of out of towners either visiting/conventions etc.

Nice flow of information.

Overall, great. Excellent presentations that was informative. My main concern is clarity. Basically, some random guy can suggest "monorail" over and over again in the comments. Does that mean that idea will be taken seriously? That being said, in regards to the serious considerations, (BRT, mass transit, etc.) I think they could have been given some more exposure. Also, the boulevard concept - I like it (I'm a downtown resident and am really pulling for it) but I thought after other options could have been pictured (Take Comm. Ave in Boston) I think a lot of people here hear "boulevard" and think Erie Blvd. when that idea probably scares them.

A surface solution with traffic feathered out north of Brighton to Colvin (for \_\_\_ & hospitals) to State & Salina to revitalize South Salina to West State to divert traffic from downtown. Feather out the traffic helps it get all the way downtown.

A large factor in my moving here over 40 years ago as opposed to Rochester was the easy access from the suburbs to the University Hill/Hospitals area. Over the years there is more and more traffic in that area during rush hours AM & PM due to increased building/population rates; in particular getting on and off I-81 & I-690. Please don't make permanent changes that make the rush hour traffic even worse. P.S. I live south of the City off I-81 and there is already an electronic sign on Northbound lane between Nedrow and I-481. It would be helpful NOW to flash what the east Adams northbound exit delay is in real time so I could take city streets instead by getting off I-81 sooner.

I did not see this idea -> piggyback I-81 on Erie-Lackawanna Right of Way. 1. Large exit/interchanges just north of Oakwood Cemetery. 2. I-81 then follows rail tracks thru Syracuse west with interchanges at Erie Blvd with E. Genesee St. and I-690 W. 3. I-81 follows tracks by destiny mall with interchange just north of regional transportation/ and McArthur Stadium back to I-81N. This makes use of an existing right-of-way while maintaining travel time through city. It also solves downtown beautification.

1.) The viaduct must go. 2.) Boulevard is best solution. 3.) West bypass may be crucial. 4.) Why is a decompressive role for 481 not being given more consideration? 5.) I-690 through downtown should go too; but, this is tough - if it remains, Syracuse would still be divided N/S. I walk from 725 Irving Ave. to the Civic Center two-five times per week. The viaduct must go!!!

As Chief of the Syracuse Fire Dept by MAJOR concern with any plan will be the impact on RESPONSE TIMES FOR FIRE EMERGENCIES and how response routes for the entire city will be effected. Existing fire station locations were chosen based on the existing highway. Any plan that increases response times or alters fire apparatus response routes would have far reaching negative impact on excellent service that the public currently enjoys. Access to the highway from Fire Station One presently offers outstanding city-wide response times, especially since it carries the "jaws of life". I hope we are able to be officially included every step of the way.

Some remediation MUST take place at the 81N and 690W interchange before any other construction takes place. This interchange is deadly to enter let alone cross in order to exit at West St. Please add overhead flashing lights and signs that signal SLOW DOWN & YIELD!!! This is urgent. This can't wait for any other improvements or solutions.

I liked the cookies! The water was also very helpful. (I don't drink coffee.)

Boulevard! We need an option that's fun, clean, and beautiful. The rest will follow!

No info on OCC Campus needs. Need to have exits and roads to OCC Campus included in study.

I am a 50ish - middle class professional who recently moved to NWS. I was attracted by the burgeoning arts/culture & the diverse neighborhood. I enjoy walking to downtown businesses but find West St. to be a barrier. I would like to see a more connected west side. I had a choice to move to Syracuse - I grew up in Portland OR. There seems to be a fragile community development going on in the NWS and everything should be done to nurture that. Make the west side more connected!

1.) Close 81 somewhere near Seneca Turnpike. 2.) Use 481 around the City. 3.) Close 81 near Sears Center. 4.) Allow 81 to be a double parkway with mall from Sears (near) to just beyond where 481 cuts in on the south. 5.) Turn present 81 into a parkway with low speed limit to accommodate bicycles, walkers, and slow moving cars into the City. NO trucks (big). Have park median in center. 6.) Have X-streets cross at grade with lights to control traffic & protect pedestrians. 7.) Build a pool, skating rink, etc. where 690 crosses 81. 8.) Build pool and small park for residents on a green space in downtown where old 81 comes down. Make it inside a big circle on or near Genesee St. 9.) Improve downtown parking area near the parkway. Free parking for 2 or 3 hours would help. 10.) Block off minor X streets by using State St. on the west and Irving Ave. on east for thru traffic to Syracuse University. 11.) Use 481 as the main road with a few improvements and a big exit-entrance near Sears. 12.) Continue 81 beyond Sears as is. 13.) This idea would save millions of dollars as few reconstructions are needed. 14.) Improvement of around the area roads would cost much less.

The process is transparent and excellent. The decision making is thorough and careful and rational. But it is hard to make the wisest choices for projects of this scale and importance. Best case existing examples of cities that have done it right, created enhanced people-center living zones, transportation links, park space, etc. should be the constant benchmark. People in 20, 30, 40 years should believe that Syracuse made the best choice - one which enhanced human scale living and made Syracuse even more of the type of city that more people see as a destination place to live.

I can't emphasize enough that the tunnel is an extremely bad idea.

Need to evaluate each option in terms of potential disasters & risk avoidance & costs.

Rt. 81 should be kept approximately the same as it is. Too many commuters depend on it to get to and from work. Widen it, improve it, improve and even add on/off ramps but don't move it or worse, eliminate the part through the city! 45,000 a day get on or off I-81 at Harrison or Adams St. Forcing all that traffic to enter or leave the area on surface streets is ridiculous. A surface boulevard couldn't possibly handle it. A pedestrian was killed this week trying to cross Erie Blvd. E. It's too wide, too busy and it divides parts of the city. A viaduct DOES NOT because you can walk or drive under it. However, the present and the future improved viaduct need improved lighting underneath so the traffic already at street level can better see the pedestrians under this NON-BARRIER. (The start and finish times at my job vary each day. Public transport is NOT an option.) I have not seen estimates on how much extra gas will be burned by traffic being diverted around Syracuse. How much extra air pollution will it create for Onondaga County? This is part of the cost of removing I-81 through the city and it should be addressed.

This is all a great idea but before you start this project, start with correcting a few problems. 481 S from 81 N between 7-9am traffic is heavy. Exits Northern Blvd, Kirkville, Thruway & Bridgeport. The state would have to build another lane. The speed limit is 65 left lanes you go 75 to stay with the flow, right lane 45 mph because all on traffic pulls on the highway. So having 3 or 4 lanes would be the best. Left lane thru traffic, right lanes on and off traffic. Like the Que in Canada going into Toronto. The highway that goes from Lakeland to Fairmount - continue the road to 695? That passes next to Burnet Park & continues to 81 south. The state forced all these people to sell their houses and they nix the project. The state must still have the right of way. The WIBC Bowlers said the biggest problem was the bad condition of the roads in Syracuse. When I travel from Liverpool to the hospitals when there are problems on the highway to 81 S, cut through Franklin Square then Armory Square to Adams St. to the hospitals, all roads are horrendous. Let's get this right this time. Do not have the NYS Engineers have the final say. Look at Carrier circle, GM Circle, nixing the 695 project 30 years ago. They're not the smartest & 481 should have 3 or 4 lanes when they built it. I would like to know if someone read this & give me some answers. One more thing, everyone at SU & the hospitals who want this road removed, I'll bet they live on the hill. Dewitt, Manlius, Cazenovia, Jamesville, they don't travel this road. I travelled to Myrtle Beach this past winter. There are more Canadians then Americans there. They don't know about 481 instead of 81. Someone should let the word out in Canada. Thank you. Yes the road needs to be removed but I hope the only portion is from 690 to Adams St. make that the on ramp. Sorry about the writing, do not tell my teacher. Next time maybe have a tape recorder so people could speak.

A lot of options to consider. Great to let public see progress plans. I'm interested in the reconstruction idea.

Very polite, helpful people. I left my thoughts for rehabilitation. Rt. 81 has served Syracuse wonderfully for all of these years. There are safety in some lanes and entrance/exits that are mentioned to rehabilitate. Should improve and make 81 through Syracuse be a great compliment and convenience to all living and traveling in our area.

<p>I feel like the options proposed are focused on maintaining the status quo, and are not challenging Syracuse to become a unique city full of economic development and culture. Be radical!</p>
<p>Please keep having these public meetings as the project continues. It was very informative. I was able to learn a lot. I learned a lot about the history of I-81 I didn't know about and I've lived in Syracuse all my life. I also learned a lot about the possible solutions and the way modeling is used to study traffic flow &amp; patterns.</p>
<p>This country and stat need to invest in infrastructure. This includes better and in the case of Onondaga County, more highways. It also seems like a simple light rail system to the city and SU would be used and solve a lot of problems. I'm in favor of keeping 81 in the city but improving the highway as shown in the example illustrations of other cities. Don't sell Syracuse short. It's a great place to live - traffic jams will change that.</p>
<p>I really appreciate all the planning and background info presentation that has gone into this event. I'm glad you've included pluses and minuses of each approach. I'm a supporter of the boulevard concept but need to see more info about its impact/connections, etc. I also am a strong supporter of mass/alternate transit.</p>
<p>Received a lot of good information. I would like to see I-81 taken down.</p>
<p>Lots of good information about the city and the problems with I-81. Good presentation on the options on what to do with I-81. I felt there could have been more presented specifically about how each option would affect Syracuse because it felt like this session didn't have much new to say from the session in May.</p>
<p>I'm really concerned about still being able to get around Syracuse quickly after the I-81 challenge is resolved! As it is, my commute to work would take 10 minutes with no traffic congestion - because I can use the highway. With traffic, that increases to about 20 minutes. If I had to take the local streets, I think it would take 45 minutes to get to work. I've had it take that long during emergency closures, detours and snowstorms. The local road network is just not designed for the 60,000+ commuters trying to get to and from work! During implementation of whatever solution - construction - I expect to have an awful few years of driving. Hopefully at the end, the solution will not make that permanent!</p>

<p>Wow! Thanks for all the great info. I feel a lot more confident that a good decision will be made now that I've seen how thoroughly the options are being considered and contemplated. Thanks also for asking ME for my opinion.</p>
<p>Well done.</p>
<p>I would suggest public lighting under the bridges, plus street names and the traffic signals as well. Make sure the signs with the names of streets are visible both for pedestrians and drivers. Touch up the traffic lines/lanes on the roads. The new I-81 should go through the city to promote tourism and economic growth.</p>
<p>People need to understand that there are no perfect options - SMTC/Stantec, etc. are doing a good job so far of getting that point across. Every solution comes with its own subsequent problems. In general, I find the boulevard option to be the best, but I have concerns that it won't turn out as attractive as the examples shown. No offense, DOT, but your record on context-sensitive, urban-neighborhood-friendly projects isn't stellar. In the boulevard option, my biggest concern is the effect on speculative land development east of the city. I don't want the solution to produce more sprawl. No perfect solutions though, right?</p>
<p>Very good, clear, informative exhibit - if I didn't understand always someone to explain, discuss. I feel the viaduct should come down. This helped me understand options, consider problems, possibilities.</p>
<p>I have experienced the traffic on Rt. 481 when Rt. 81 was shut down through the city. The most recent was last fall when the train rollover caused it to be closed. 481 was a mess! There was bumper to bumper traffic. What would have happened if there was an accident on 481 or a lane closure? The best option is to rebuild what is already there. Make the necessary design changes to improve the current problems. I was also involved with an accident that occurred on 481 N around 1998 or 1999. Rt. 81 N was closed for repairs and all northbound traffic was sent to 481. Due to the accident on 481, it was shut down at E. Genesee St. Traffic was reported backed up to Lafayette!! Reducing the flow of traffic through the city is a very bad idea and will not work.</p>
<p>This is a good process. The displays are informative. I have a preference - and I voiced it at every station. To me the boulevard option is optimal. Since only 12% of I-81 traffic is through traffic, I-481 could easily absorb it. That means that 88% of the traffic on I-81 is going to Syracuse. The boulevard option would leave the current access roads (the current I-81 south to @West St from the north &amp; north to @ Oakwood cemetery from the south.) So drivers coming into downtown would mostly use their current route. Then the boulevard, if properly designed, will give quick access to the center of town &amp; to the Eds/Meds complex. It allows for economic development along its corridor and gets rid of an ugly and unsafe viaduct.</p>

A lot of information was provided, but the +s and -s of the options were clearly set forth. It makes sense to have eliminated some options. I think that until rough estimates of the cost of the remaining options are made, it will be difficult to sort those options out. The other thing people will want to know is how eliminating the viaduct will affect their travel times. I am more of a 690 user than an 81 user and so am inclined to favor tearing down the viaduct & moving 81 to 481.

Love the idea of a boulevard replacing the viaduct with 695 --> 481 bypass. Could the West St. corridor option be made without further isolating the rear west side from downtown? Let's make 481 the new I-81. This option should result in more use of public transit IF it is expanded & made more user friendly.

The decision that the city/state is making will affect us for decades to come. I thus, do not fully agree that fiscal issues should be given a lot of weight because the costs could be spread over decades. It would be waste if we selected a "cheaper" option that did not quite work & then has to be done again 50 years from now. We must THINK LONG TERM & select the solution that best benefits the great rehabilitation efforts that are taking place in the city. We are at a truly crucial period in the history of our city when a lot of good things are happening we should thus make sure that the solution will positively support what we have accomplished so far. I strongly believe that a tunnel is the best solution. It will eliminate completely the division with downtown, avoid jeopardizing pedestrians being put in danger by having to cross a multilane boulevard & will close the gap instead of widening it with a boulevard. It also allows for the continuous flow of traffic that is essential for passing cars south of the city. I know, from reading the comments that many people favor the boulevard but I am afraid that they are looking at the solution in the short term simply because they don't want the expense.

This initiative strikes me as necessary, timely, well-intentioned, well-managed, and ultimately unlikely of real success. The real question shouldn't be what do we do about I-81. There was a City of Syracuse (indeed, a larger city than the current incarnation) before there was an I-81, and there can be a larger, more vibrant, more attractive City of Syracuse after I-81 has gone away (or been re-conceptualized). The high incidence of local trips on I-81 (origin and destination both within the metro area) indicates that the highway is being used primarily to facilitate local transit. Every city in the world has demand for local transit. No city in the world has an efficient local transit system (defined broadly) based on SOVs. Small buses, streetcars, trolley-buses, bikeways, pedestrian malls as central attractions/transfer points reach out into the suburbs for now, but make the central city more attractive by public transit so that families and businesses move back into the city and passenger mile demand levels per capita actually decrease.

I believe there are several positive as well as negative aspects to this project. Positive outcome of a beautiful city being cleaned up and polished. Negative traffic, even with mild construction that is going on now, people's lives are disrupted. I am for the project & hope to see the completion in a timely matter.



Generally this seems to be the same material presented last year, possibly in a little more detail. Since only 11-12% of the traffic on I-81 is through traffic, traffic studies should be done to evaluate how the local community is using 81-690 and evaluate how that traffic could be dispersed in a way to relieve 81-690. The boulevard solution should be removed from the options. It does not improve community/pedestrian & street integration. I like the depressed solution; however, the example in Cincinnati is not anything like the one here in Syracuse. Find a better example or present a solution that fits the city infrastructure.

Do better identification of existing streets & features such as new creekways.

I am submitting a paper and GIS map that I worked on for a class I took at SU this past semester on the highway infrastructure in Syracuse between then (1950s) and now. The GIS map contains my proposed routing for the western bypass. Please see comments on map for more information. (SEE ATTACHED PAPER in pdf file)