

The I-81 Challenge

May 2013 Public Meeting

Appendix A – Participant Comments

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Appendix A: Meeting Participant Comments

Station 4: Strategies for the future of I-81
<p>Improving Our Transit System and making it more accessible especially outside the City and at the City Limits would be a help in reducing traffic on I-81 or in the proposed Boulevard, whichever is decided. Unfortunately to have a better Transit System than what we have now without a steep rise in fares depends on funding which has not been easy over the years.</p>
<p>Light rail seems too expensive and permanent an option for a town with no population growth and for a time when technology is changing rapidly, making bus transit a potentially lower environmental impact and cost in the near future. (i.e. driverless electric buses might only be a decade away) Let's go with the best BRT system feasible for our size. Two additions to service not mentioned are also desirable: Can we add a bus between Cortland and Syracuse? Can we add a bus between Onondaga Hill and University Hill? With so much interaction between OCC and SU on the one hand and the Onondaga Hill medical facilities with the University Hill medical facilities, it seems ridiculous that someone has to switch buses downtown and spend a l-o-o-o-n-g time to get back and forth between the two hills.</p>
<p>I think we should rehabilitate the highway and keep it as it is.</p>
<p>I'm in favor of the boulevard strategy. The current situation splits the city in half.</p>
<p>I think the boulevard is a much more appealing concept when you understand the re-route via 481 to the east, which was obvious, but the addition of a bypass on the west side, utilizing West Street.</p>
<p>The Boulevard idea is sound. It would be fantastic for our city to not be divided physically and economically by I-81. A boulevard would be less of a barrier than an elevated highway and has the potential to increase local connectivity, commerce and beauty.</p>
<p>I prefer the reconstruction idea over the boulevard idea due to the fact that it allows unimpeded access to downtown from the heavily populated areas north of the city. I feel the boulevard would require traffic intersections with lights that would slow commuters. The idea that the raised viaduct is a barrier to economic or community development is absurd. The community west of the viaduct does not prosper because of the lack of capital and crime. If the bridge were really preventing the area from gaining Syracuse University campus money, the north side of campus would be a better area. The highway system is vital to downtown and rerouting it to 481 could cripple the fragile progress.</p>
<p>I think the public needs more detailed information on the tunnel strategy before declaring it not feasible. The boards displayed at the 2012 and 2013 I-81 Challenge meetings say that the "tunnel strategy meets regional transportation needs through 2040 and that its "maintenance issues are drainage, ventilation, and fire and emergency systems." Moreover, the boards say that the "cost range is \$ 1.6-1.8; Roadway: \$120-150 million, Bridges: \$480-550, Tunnel: \$1.1 billion." Thus, it is implied that the lifespan of the tunnel is estimated as being 23 years but the calculations done to arrive at this figure are not disclosed to the public. Also, it is not specified whether the cost range is in nominal values or in present values (after adjusting nominal values with the discount rate). There is no disclosure of maintenance costs for the tunnel itself and for drainage, ventilation, fire and emergency systems, etc. Furthermore, it is not explained how do you compare the total cost of strategies with expenditures spread over life cycles of different lengths in terms of years, what procedures have you done to account for this. Finally, the cost of the tunnel will vary depending on the type of soil but no soil analysis is presented to the public.</p>

<p>I would prefer that the viaduct be replaced with another viaduct. It more or less worked for 50 years. A Tunnel or a Depressed highway would flood. (Gravity always works!) A Boulevard will not be able to handle the volume of traffic.</p> <p>In recent years, there have been plenty of problems when I-81 was closed (flooding, bricks falling on the highway, etc.)</p> <p>I've heard a few "old timers" that talked about what traffic was like before I-81. It was very slow! Yes, I know that I-481 wasn't there at that time, but I rode a Centro bus north on Salina Street when I-81 was flooded during rush hour and it moved very slowly.</p>
<p>I am very concerned about the impact on tractor trailer traffic with the Boulevard strategy. If tractor trailers feel there is a benefit in traveling through Skaneateles to cut a corner. What will making that trip even farther do? I live in the Valley and enjoy the convenience of 81 going to downtown, the mall, and the airport.</p> <p>I think that the appearance of the highway could be improved by raising the highway downtown. There are beautiful, inspirational bridges. Let's build some.</p> <p>Almond Street divides the University and Downtown more than the highway. That is a scary street to cross on foot.</p>
<p>Good turn out and after reviewing the materials/displays, I feel redevelopment or boulevard is best option to keep aesthetics and connectivity.</p>
<p>I favor progressing the boulevard and reconstruction concepts, and dismissing the tunnel and depressed. The impacts to existing businesses and neighborhoods for the tunnel and depressed would be too great and there would be minimal community enhancements.</p> <p>The concepts for the boulevard look too wide – realize these are not developed designs.</p>
<p>It seems to me that the reconstruction of I-81 would be my top pick at this point. We have the footprint already. Tear down the existing infrastructure and rebuild an elevated roadway that is iconic and puts Syracuse on the map. Make it higher and use the space beneath to reconnect the East and West. Make it safe as well as usable public space. Use lots of parks and hills and it would be an attractor in itself. My second thought is the knock it down; make it a boulevard and reroute traffic onto 481. You would also need a West bypass. This would create a "Big City" scenario like Charlotte, DC, etc.</p>
<p>Well organized, very informative, clear presentation, analysis appears thorough. Keep it up. My personal vote was reconstruction but boulevard appears practical. Living outside the city, anything that slows or jams traffic is undesirable. Seeing time model changes was surprising. I was expecting gridlock. I also liked how reconstruction would include artistically pleasing construction with modern code updates.</p> <p>I think people against reconstruction have an image of the current worn structure and don't see how nice it can be, and not a wall. Putting pedestrian walks, bike lanes and other features as shown on the poster of other cities (London, Seattle, Rte. 83, TX) may change people's minds for this and not a boulevard.</p> <p>I personally am for reconstruction done right but have no hatred for a boulevard done right.</p>
<p>Thank you for the presentation. The reconstruction option with a more aesthetically pleasing bridge design provides the best balance between the interests of these people that live in the city with those that commute to and through the city.</p>
<p>If only two options are being carried forward, then I believe it will boil down to cost and cost only. The redirect option (boulevard) will force traffic to areas not used to that impact. The rebuild option will keep with what people are used to since the conception of 81. Keep the status quo (rebuild) but make the modern adjustments architecturally acceptable.</p>

<p>While the Boulevard looks better, reconstruction is probably the most utilitarian. The highway is meant to serve the entire community, not just downtown businesses, or artistic types of the University. A major health concern is accessibility to the hospitals for emergency vehicles. A jam-packed Boulevard with many stoplights is going to take extra time, sometimes when every second counts, particularly for upstate being a Level-I Trauma Center.</p>
<p>Please rebuild I-81 through downtown Syracuse. I believe the elevated option is the best option. Keep Syracuse a twenty-minute city.</p>
<p>Overall, I think the biggest part of this whole process is connectivity. How can we best connect University Hill and downtown Syracuse through walking, biking, and transit in a safe manner, while also allowing commuters and travelers to connect to major hotels, restaurants, Destiny USA etc? And it must be done in a way that will best serve the people of CNY and business. I think that maintaining an elevated I-81 while designing it differently where people can safely walk, bike, or ride transit between downtown and University Hill is the most viable solution. Also, I think research should be places on OnTrack and the rail that meanders through Syracuse. It can be useful again for passenger rail.</p>
<p>Every road needs repair from time to time. As it stands now, traffic can run under the highway when needed. What happens when there is no “under”? The city hopes that eliminating the highway and forcing drive through at street level would hopefully cause drivers to take a look and stay around. However, highways were invented because people “don’t like” to be held up and at some intersections that could be “literally”! If the goal is to interest the public in downtown, why not get the OnTrack back on track. It bombed before but now we have Destiny and a revitalized downtown.</p>
<p>I would like I-81 to stay where it is. Make lanes widen and use concrete to make roads and shoulders.</p>
<p>Since I-81 works very works very well at present, it should be rebuilt in the present location. Remove the streets under and adjacent to I-81 and build up a roadway just like I-690. The shoulders of the earth embankment can be landscaped to present a pleasing appearance. A pleasing low wall and walkway can be placed along each side of the elevated roadway – place a large open underpass at Adams, Genesee, and perhaps Fayette Street – relocate the traffic presently under the roadway to other parallel streets. Put truck/commercial traffic on I-481.</p>
<p>After review of the options – I now support reconstruct option. It appears it would be a major enhancement for trucks and much brighter and “open air” than currently exists. 81 is for transportation versus boulevard options would favor social aspect. Some factors, if possible, might be added – like bike paths, etc... (Possibly extra lanes due to less bridge work; from drawing?) Hopefully air quality/pollution, noise pollution, snow removal, and storm water drainage will be factored in to whatever option is chosen. A general additional concept, if feasible, could be home hybrid factors added to increase “win-win” results for more “camps”; reconstruct with street-level changes (if possible) to include some boulevard concepts.</p>
<p>Great public participation event! Easily accessible to all, no matter their means of transportation, education level, etc. The staff has been very helpful in answering questions and being available. As a Masters of Urban/Regional Planning candidate and Syracuse native, this is a hot issue across New York state. Reconstruction seems to be a feasible strategy which provides Syracuse with a great opportunity to start new and “fix” the problems caused by the original construction of I-81!</p>
<p>Reconstruction with added ramps on I-690 and the missing link between eastbound I-690 to northbound I-81 are excellent. This option is the best for Onondaga Country, the regional area and commerce.</p>

I appreciate the opportunity to attend the public meeting on I-81. The location of the meeting, time of the meeting and free parking really made attending the meeting easy and accessible. The amount of information to read on the various printed boards was a bit overwhelming but I appreciate the effort that was made to give facts, history and various opinions.

For me, one of the best quality of life issues in Syracuse is the ease of driving from one end of the city to the other. I can get from my house in the outer edge of the valley to the airport in 10 minutes. I use the elevated I-81 almost every day and I would like this portion of I-81 reconstructed. I do think that pedestrians crossing under the elevated portion of Route 81 is dangerous and unattractive. I would like to see the problem solved with a pedestrian bridge similar to the bridge (with escalators) that brings people into the new section of Destiny from the parking lots on Hiawatha Blvd and Solar Street. I think the same problem exists under Rt 81 at the Regional Market and Transportation Center. It is dangerous to try to go from the Regional Market or Railroad/Bus Station to Destiny. Another pedestrian bridge is needed in that location.

Rebuild the bridge. When you see news reported from Boston or Tampa, they now report in front of their famous bridges.

Make it a contest between SU and OCC architect students to come up with a feasible bridge that is beautiful and functional. So it can be an asset to Syracuse, not an eyesore.

Keep 81 the way it is! Rebuild and reconstruct as required. We live in Liverpool – it is so “easy” to get to any point in Syracuse using the 81-690 highways. It was easy to get here today. There would be major congestion to get to places and events in Syracuse without 81.

Other major cities, such as Richmond (VA), Cleveland (OH), and Minneapolis (MN) use interstates to go through the cities – this is with good reason and they work well.

I am 66 years old and have lived here almost all my life. I recall getting to downtown Syracuse from the northern suburbs was quite a challenge before I-81. I strongly urge you to keep I-81 where it is with any necessary improvements. We constantly use it to get to and through Syracuse with ease and convenience. I feel downtown Syracuse would significantly decline without this artery which serves as a significant lifeline.

Downtown interstate works for such cities as Richmond (VA), Jacksonville (FL), Cleveland (OH), and Minneapolis/ St. Paul. We have travelled these routes many times. I see no reason why Syracuse cannot configure to have I-81 in its present location.

Ease of access to medical care is essential.

We need to keep 81 through city for access to SU, hospitals and downtown businesses and housing. Open up SU area to downtown by creating an open corridor I-81 and side roads at one elevation and pedestrian and bike in another. Add some green – this going on in Utica and otherwise you will have a non-passable boulevard.

After spending many winters in Florida in the Tampa Bay area, we have observed many unique suspension bridges. A low level suspension bridge could replace the bridge area of I-81 through Syracuse. This would eliminate the division of the city. There would be sufficient room for cross streets.

<p>(1.) Fix up and maintain! Forever!</p> <p>(2.) Add: safety shoulder on both north and south lanes, which would be a widened space clipped onto existing structure (new metal/ steel supports, etc.).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Duty: Safety and arrest(s); b) This safety shoulder would give emergency vehicles a “fast” lane of their own to reach accidents; this safety shoulder would allow all the speeders to be ticketed by POLICE! That action is underdone for the last 15 years! Tickets need issuing to drunk/ drugged drivers as well as “texting” drivers, per laws! c) Provides “surcharge” income to state/ county? d) Why no general public person on the non-voting member, such as Red Cross or volunteer from downtown residents? e) Unpublished needs of military and National Guard use of Rte. 81 is and always will be primary.
<p>Not sure how we’re supposed to leave our final vote so I’m leaving it here. Voting for Reconstruction.</p>
<p>Best to reconstruct the elevated highway – perhaps with more visual appeal. Otherwise, how will people get to the hospitals? Or to downtown businesses? Or to Destiny? People who want to eliminate the overpass should drive south through Ithaca!</p>
<p>The reconstruction strategy provides the best balance of interests between people who live in the city and people commuting to and through the city.</p>
<p>DOT’s conclusion that the reconstruction and boulevard options are the two feasible options for further study is correct. I prefer the reconstruction but with the viaduct higher and entrance/ exit ramps pushed further north of Harrison and South of Adams. Boulevard scheme serves narrow institutional interests to the detriment of the 88% city origin/ destination traffic that uses the viaduct and closes streets under I-690, further isolating the North Side. Away from the viaduct corridor, reconnect streets to mitigate interrupted grid.</p>
<p>I support the depressed highway option. It will provide good through traffic passage and reconnect University Hill/ hospitals with downtown. The tunnel would be nice but too costly. The boulevard would be beautiful but the traffic and convenience respect is too great.</p>
<p>Either reconstruction or a boulevard would be acceptable to me. The boulevard is more 21st century and forward thinking. But reconstruction could be made to look almost as nice with good lighting underneath and artist murals. Bridge pedestals and abutments eliminate parking lots under roadway. People will not walk under current I-81 because it is dark and dingy. Elevate the roadway another 10 feet. Possibly eliminate vehicle traffic directly under the roadway. I don’t think you could convince enough people in Syracuse that the Boulevard is the way to go.</p>
<p>The options have been well represented. I would like to see a computer simulation of the Boulevard versus Reconstruction system. The boulevard approach is a nice concept. I would need to see a huge improvement in surroundings. This is not quite the heart of small shops. If we change the land use to shops and entertainment, then I approve. As the current land use, I strongly support reconstruction. However, a strong attention to aesthetics is a must.</p>

<p>I do not think that the Boulevard and Reconstruction ideas are mutually exclusive. We can have an attractive elevated highway to ensure a high flow of traffic and a very attractive boulevard below, inclusive of park, bikeway, shops, and new businesses. (The elevation could also be increased.) The buildings along Almond Street divide the community as much or more so than the highway. We need to consider all these elements to address the sense that the thoroughfare divides a community. There is something wrong with your statistics of which a Boulevard width both lights will be just as effective as a limited access highway.</p> <p>Lastly, truck traffic which is considerable is not to go through downtown Syracuse if they are willing to go through Skaneateles to cut off a few minutes. Truck traffic will go from 81 down Seneca Turnpike, the S. Salina St. or Valley Drive. I don't think we want that.</p>
<p>Do not take down 81. Besides my pedestrian opinions, I am also concerned about two more points. 1) Property values to those in Dewitt. 2) Soliciting and including opinions of certain segments of the population who make no intention of making Syracuse their home, i.e. college students. I am well aware that we need and want people to make their home in Syracuse and welcome new ideas. Nonetheless, residents (and perhaps the majority) will remain. Is 81 the only way to save Syracuse?</p>
<p>I honestly feel that the benefits of a boulevard are overrated. Without 81, there would be so much congestion that people would not want to travel if they didn't have to. Pollution from traffic would be terrible. To avoid gridlock, smaller residential streets will get more traffic. With its miles, there are not very good alternative paths. How different would it be to cross the boulevard? How long would the lights have to be to permit someone to cross?</p>
<p>I found the "viaduct priority strategy comparison" to be grossly skewed and substantially lacking consideration of established businesses, which would be severely affected by any disconnection between the city and suburbs. (Boulevard option.) Conclusions seem to already be drawn. Presentation is more of a sales process, leading audience to desired conclusions.</p>
<p>In regards to addressing the concern that I-81 "divides the city," constructing a boulevard would only worsen the problem. Even if a new surface-level multi-lane and multiple-vehicle type travel way is able to support the volume that an existing elevated highway can under ideal conditions (of which I am quite skeptical having lived in both Denver, CO and Tampa, FL), during periods of high traffic a boulevard becomes an impenetrable wall of vehicles. Drivers' ability to negotiate pedestrians and bicycles crossing the same roadway that travels at highway speeds is more limited than some planners may realize. Likewise, making maneuvers across several lanes of densely packed traffic simply does not happen when stop-and-go ripple effect is introduced. Which divides a city more? Elevated roadway or a wall of cars, trucks, and buses?</p>
<p>The northwest quadrant of Onondaga County is the area that will be most adversely impacted by elimination of the viaduct segment of I-81, both in terms of travel time and distance. This is true for passenger traffic and trucking firms based in that quadrant or with major clients in that area that send large numbers of trucks south.</p> <p>Also, the barrier that began as the viaduct has morphed over the years into large parking garages, state health facilities, and more that create a far greater visual barrier than the viaduct ever did.</p>
<p>Much of the same information as previous public meetings.</p> <p>Heavy emphasis on "Boulevard" concept shown without full regional impact addressed – i.e.: Town of Salina, Skaneateles, Dewitt, etc. The Boulevard concept showed only impacts in the viaduct priority area – not regionally! The Boulevard concept would have several major negative impacts on a regional basis.</p>

<p>Going with a Boulevard option will have a negative impact economically on the region as a whole. The north suburbs will be cut off to through traffic, which will now use 481 and leave businesses out in the cold.</p> <p>Business has been built around the existing I-81 for over 50 years. Not just in the city but north, south, east, and west. Their survival should be considered. Not to mention getting to the airport, Syracuse games, 2018 Bowling Congress, etc., would be a nightmare to out of town guests/ visitors. This all should be considered not just what the impact to the city of Syracuse would be. It's a regional issue!</p>
<p>Taking down this roadway will have no positive effect on Syracuse City ...for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Surface streets can barely handle traffic during busy times; (2) Cost to infrastructure heavier use will increase as roads, sewers, etc. – the city is currently in financial distress; (3) It is not safe to drive through Syracuse after dark; (4) Tremendous increase in pollution because of increased traffic on surface streets; (5) Businesses will not want to move back into Central City area because public will not tolerate traffic congestion. 6) During winter months with heavier traffic – commuter time will greatly increase 7) Accessibility to hospitals and health centers – during any emergencies will be delayed drastically.
<p>I am very much against any decision that would involve re-routing traffic onto Rte. 481. There is substantially more traffic each year on this route as it is. To send more traffic each day through our area, which is residential, will cause more accidents and delays – not to mention more exhaust in our yards. We now find it especially noisy when traffic is going to work each morning and again late afternoon/ early evenings when they return home. To add more cars, trucks, motorcycles, buses, etc. – will make our noise level even worse. There are many times now during the day when we can hardly hear ourselves think in our own backyard. I can't imagine how awful for us this will become. Please don't do this to our neighborhood.</p>
<p>The major difference between the "Boulevard" proposal and all the other case studies is that the "Boulevard" proposal involves CONSIDERABLE dislocation by taking traffic to the bypass routes. In all the other case studies (except San Francisco), the original route remained intact with improved volume. This "Boulevard" proposal requires a major route change with REDUCED volume and increased travel times. Providence, Boston, Marquette all got to keep their route and capacities. They were not asked to bypass! Syracuse would have to.</p>
<p>Do not take down 81. The pedestrian connection from SU to Armory Square would be very uninviting/ and grossly exaggerated. Suppose one starts at the University. Will one walk down Adams, Harrison... Past...parking lots (Upstate, Oncenter) which is as good as "dead space" and scary past sunset, Past...the low cost housing – or more people, Past...Hutchings again. After sunset – "dead space", Past...coal burning, / energy steam station. Okay, then considering crossing...the multiple lanes to get to the other side. This is not a cute promenade through the city.</p>
<p>Before using the micro model to evaluate the two major options, there should be bench marking to actual deviations from current steady state. There should be actual data from the upcoming 370 bridge closure to compare with and tune the model. I question downgrading 81 to a Boulevard. Besides being an artery to Destiny, the Regional Transportation Center and NBT there are also plans to put about 210 apartments and a hotel in the inner harbor. You can't address that with rerouting traffic. Where do you reroute Onondaga Lake Parkway traffic? There is a building boom on the Syracuse University hill and the viaduct is already at capacity. You take it down and you get miles of stop-and-go traffic. Is that livable? And are the emissions NEPA legal?</p>

I feel the depressed roadway was not properly designed and modeled, and that is impacting the representation of it as a valid option. A downtown exit is necessary and feasible. I feel the boulevard solution is not modeled correctly, from a traffic standpoint. It will not reduce travel time. I feel this process is biased and the design and planners are trying to funnel the two options of rebuild or boulevard and skewing it to boulevard to meet the demands of the “University Elite” and politicians that are following their lead instead of listening to others in the communities.

As a Realtor, I have concerns about how relocating traffic will effect surrounding neighborhoods. The original highway devastated areas. We need to make sure this does not happen again. Areas that are not near the highway will be impacted just by increased traffic. I would like to know what routes people would take to avoid the boulevard if it is built.

I think these meetings to inform the community are great. I wish more people outside of the Downtown and University areas would be involved.

If the boulevard proposal advances, I’d like to hear from business owners and residents of the other cities where it has been implemented as a replacement to a highway. What was their reaction? Has it increased downtown quality/accessibility? Did they implement bike lanes and/or other supplemental transportation options?

A lot of one-dimension posters with descriptions of what is going to happen. Hard for me to visualize! I do know having 81 go toward west side and not through downtown would help – but what happens to ramps near upstate hospital? Going underground is still a bridge system which will go bad in another 40 years!

I currently am studying community organization and program planning at Syracuse University. In my opinion, the two most viable options for the city of Syracuse would be the removing the highway or the underground system. Removing the highway would increase tourism by making I-81 S a less of a “death trap” that people are afraid of. Also, with the increase of boulevard space more events for city purposes would be held (i.e. marathons, new places to hold events etc.). The underground system would eliminate upkeep due to protection of the natural snowy climate Syracuse is known for and may reduce cost in the long run.

If boulevard option is chosen, before anything is done, 81 N should be closed at Adams St. and 81 S at Clinton St. for all traffic, including emergency traffic. The pictures shown for boulevard lanes are too few in each direction. Find out how much longer it will take emergency traffic to get through boulevard onto the 2 hospitals.

~Boulevard concept needs full traffic analysis (as all concepts).

~Boulevard renderings do not indicate a “pedestrian friendly” crossing of Boulevard. Large expanse to cross. Current crossing under 81 and Almond St. at Erie Blvd., Water St., Fayette St., and Genesee St. are more pedestrian friendly than Boulevard concept.

~Light rail does not connect to Southside and North side (other than James St.)

~Engineering studies should assess similar regional projects such as: (1) Rochester: is looking to fill in its depressed Inner Loop. We should look at reasons for wanting to fill it in. (2) Utica has been an at-grade arterial (Routes 5, 8, 12) through the city. This arterial has several stop lights near downtown. Pedestrian crossing of the arterial at stop lights is not pedestrian friendly due to high vehicle speeds, traffic volume, and drivers not wanting to stop. If the Boulevard option resulted in a road similar to the Utica arterial, this would be a big step backward. //

In-depth traffic studies should indicate best option, along with cost and feasibility of options.

Thanks!

<p>Good meeting (first one I have attended). It's surprising how much information was provided. It seemed like maybe it was too much! But the point is that there is a lot of information being considered – as it should be. One thing I want to say is that "EJ" (as it was explained to me) I feel has no bearing on the decision. The existing Rte. 81 on the south side of the city runs alongside railroad tracks and Oakwood cemetery. Changing it to a boulevard will not change that at all. Whatever occurred during the original construction may be unfortunate but it is history. The neighborhoods are completely different now. Considering EJ for the boulevard option attaches false benefits to it.</p>
<p>Boulevard concerns: There would have to be many lights at intersections. How long would the lights be? Could a pedestrian cross on one turn of the light? What about the air quality produced by all the traffic idling at the lights?</p>
<p>More boulevard concerns. I live in the "Valley" section of the city and have always enjoyed the fact that I can get almost anywhere in the city in 15 minutes. I'm not sure what a boulevard would do to my quality of life.</p>
<p>I support the boulevard concept. It might encourage people to get off the highway to check out the city if it wasn't elevated over the city. Hopefully, the boulevard concept would also make east/west passage for pedestrians easier.</p>
<p>I'm so glad the public has been included. The boulevard by your criteria seems to be the obvious choice. Although I am always weary of something that looks so obvious. Rebuilding would be a mistake, but I'm disappointed that rerouting and taking it out has been taken off the table. Mostly seeming because of suburbanites complaining.</p>
<p>I think there are biases in your scores. You give a "good" to the Boulevard option but a "fair" to the viaduct with exact the same criteria. Viaduct in Seattle is wonderful. It serves as a gathering spot for people for flea markets and bikes, but still maintains neighborhood and traffic flow. I would like to see an unbiased comparison of the two.</p>
<p>I am very concerned that the transportation impact for reconstruction and boulevard are both shown as very good in the viaduct priority area strategy comparison. In the boulevard strategy modeling results it clearly states congestion may increase at local intersections. I cannot believe this gross understatement. This defies common sense!</p>

The Boulevard Plan, let's call it Park Boulevard, offers a potential Renaissance for Syracuse and central New York if the development potential of the right away portion not needed for Boulevard construction is combined with some limited acquisition of surface level parking lots adjacent to the right-of-way. The easy way to visualize this is to take a section of Park Avenue in New York City which has an approximately 140 foot right-of-way, and place it as the Park Boulevard. Park Avenue is some of the most expensive real estate in the world and, properly done, there might be room to have say 4,000 new residence living on the Park Boulevard. About 20,000 or more people work within walking distance of the Boulevard either at downtown or the hospital University area. The hospital University area, surprisingly enough, has presently no apartment buildings within walking distance. Residential high-rises are about 70 feet wide and this is the one area in Syracuse that already has a number of 20 story plus residential buildings, so it is logical that the highest possible density be promoted here. If there are 4000 new residents, that would support a city type supermarket, an elementary school, and all the little service stores that provide residential and people support goods. These could go on the 1st floor. I visualize a Boulevard looking almost exactly like Park Avenue in New York with planting, 3 lanes of traffic, a parking/loading lane, a 3 foot separator, a 5 foot bike lane, and 12 foot sidewalk to the right away with a 20 foot wide center planted area; overall with 140 feet maximum. Anymore with seriously compromises the development potential of the adjacent property. Some of the adjacent property on Almond street is presently surface level parking for New York State employees at the hospital and the psychiatric center. It is absolutely essential that this property be obtained for development of housing so there are no missing keys so to speak on the Boulevard. Upstate has a huge new garage which is not fully utilized. Those employees can park there and maybe pay like everybody else does. Of course, many of those employees may decide to move into the Park Boulevard Apartments. Transportation wise, the Connective Corridor free buses could loop down the boulevard and instead of 1 for 1 parking for the apartments, there could be say 30% plus an additional amount for his Zip or Cuse Cars in new garages. The ideal way this would be developed is almost identical to the methodology used at the Inner Harbor where \$300 million of development is now underway. The combination of public and private land could be put into a major RFP and advertised in national newspapers. In order for this to happen, the transportation folks need to partner with the City County Planning Agency's to facilitate a new land-use plan which can lead up to a major RFP. My rough calculations indicate this could be a project totaling over \$1 billion in construction, tens of thousands of construction jobs, a huge increase in the city's real estate tax base, a bonanza for downtown Syracuse and in general a Renaissance for the Syracuse Central New York area. I say, let's do it.

I appreciate having this information presented to the public. As someone who commuted from north of Syracuse into the city five days a week for work for about 15 years, I support the tunnel concept. I worry that making the highway into boulevard would cause congestion, but at the same time, I understand how, at street level, the overpasses bisect the city. Thank you.

This presentation was incredibly informational for me. I learned that there are many options to consider while deciding what to do about I-81. I think the decision making process is being done in a transparent matter and is laid out so that the public can understand the options. I believe the Boulevard option is the best option we have on the table.

Presentation of options is well done. It would make sense to do a better job of explaining to folks that the existing configuration, if rebuilt, would drastically change – as noted in the no-build and renovation options but not necessarily clearly. A lot of folks don't understand that reconstruction would be substantially disruptive altogether.

The tunnel exhibit similarly underscored a major component – the unfeasibility of Harrison/Adams access under that model – which would drastically affect the public opinion as well. Overall very well done once again. Love the details on the boulevard option!

<p>Go boulevard! If dedicated bus routes could be added into the idea, the city would become less congested and easier flow. Bus lanes provided a quick means of transportation around the city without doing something expensive, like railway idea. Less congestion and ease of getting around without cars and less pollution.</p>
<p>I feel a boulevard design appears to be the most feasible of options.</p>
<p>Suggestion Solutions Re: Rt. 81</p> <p>Good afternoon everyone. I'm from Liverpool and I previously owned and operated businesses in Syracuse for a number of years.</p> <p>It's pretty obvious that the final decision regarding Rt. 81 through downtown Syracuse will affect many people in and out of this area. So, let's make it as painless and positive as possible.</p> <p>To that end, I support the proposal that the current path of Rt. 81 through Syracuse be maintained, that the bridges be removed and that Rt. 81 be dropped below city street grade level (NOT as a tunnel but as an open air depression similar to the inner loop around Rochester) thus putting it out of sight. Then, design and build strategically placed on and off ramps for easy accessibility and exit. Over recessed Rt. 81 and at city street level above it, build level bridges over Rt. 81 to accommodate key city streets such as E. Adams, Harrison, Madison, James, N. State and N. Salina.</p> <p>This approach would provide many benefits, such as:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Removing the physical and mental eye sore "Rt. 81 wall" now dividing downtown Syracuse from University Hill; (2) Maintaining "business as usual" for businesses, hotels, Destiny etc. along the route; (3) Accommodating commuters into and out of the city with few, if any, changes; (4) Providing the fastest route for emergency vehicles, particularly ambulances going to hospitals; (5) Facilitating easy flow of north/ south interstate traffic with minimum disruption to downtown Syracuse; (6) Finally, the side walls of a depressed Rt. 81 could be constructed to absorb or even eliminate much of the traffic noise now encountered in the city center by Rt. 81 thus improving the quality of life of downtown. <p>In summary, I urge the final decision makers to keep Rt. 81 on the same (or similar) route but drop it out-of-site below grade level. Thank you.</p>
<p>Thank you for the information. With a project of this magnitude and impact, this type of deliberation is essential, with a focus on long-term public good. Too often we err on the side of short-term considerations and hear the loudest voices screaming too much about current concerns and have difficulty thinking 5, 10 or 15 years into the future. Make the boulevard.</p>
<p>I like the idea of bringing in LRT past like old OnTrack to help move people in downtown area. I like best, as before, the boulevard idea as the replacement for I-81 of today.</p>
<p>SMTC and its partners do a great job with these public information sessions – very informative. I am supporting the boulevard concept for all the reasons you list. It would greatly improve the livability of the city. Fostering pedestrians needs at a time when urban residents are giving up on cars and a car-centric society (IMO) is a giant leap into the future – a major step in sustainability. The change to operating costs for the freight carriers is negligible. Instead of dividing the city, it is time to enhance the city from urban to suburban. Congratulations on another successful session.</p>
<p>I'd like more information on on-going maintenance costs associated with each option in addition to more mock-ups and design plans.</p> <p>How would a redesigned aqueduct be maintained? The current one is poorly painted and dingy. Would the new one be up kept better?</p>

<p>Very exciting project and process. I favor the boulevard option. It seems that the objections of northern suburbanites should be satisfied by the continuation of the “old” 81 South from the I-481 Interchange to I-690.</p>
<p>Good presentation, thanks. For whatever it’s worth, I favor a 3-pronged solution: 1) Convert 481 to 81, re-route thru traffic onto it.2) Connect West Street artery with 81 at south and 690 at north. Make it a viable connective artery to handle more traffic. 3) And do the boulevard option.</p>
<p>I agree about the boulevard, It is a good option.</p>
<p>I like the boulevard concept. I overheard many people talking about the “death of business” north of the city. I reject this idea because of the GPS age you will easily be able to find a hotel near where you are visiting. Also, people plan ahead, they do no drive until they see a hotel and pull over for the night anymore.</p>
<p>Well done I think, but some plan descriptions are unclear. For example, in “reconstruction”, “geometric” changes to an elevated highway means bigger and wider, I think. More clarity about that might be helpful. I’m for the boulevard.</p>
<p>An exhaustive study, well presented. Thank you for the coordination and outreach to the public. The opportunity to be part of this important decision means a lot to me. Having read a great deal of the information, my feeling is that the boulevard option represents our best hope for a sustainable alternative to reconstructing or doing nothing. It also is the option that best positions Syracuse to grow and develop in a way that promotes communities as well as business. Hoping other modes of public transportation, such as Light Rail, will be a byproduct of this option as well.</p>
<p>All traffic changes are for the worst. I-81 cars through city. Solution is bypass/ ring road. If viaduct is taken down, make Salina 4 lanes. Don’t use diagonal parking. Problem with Salina, State, and Butternut Streets. I like the boulevard concept with sequenced green lights with ROW for N/ S Boulevard.</p>
<p>I want to start by saying these have been the best run public meetings I have ever been to. Great displays and plenty of people with knowledge to answer any questions that come up. I have been a bit put off by certain political bodies putting forth their vote without going through this process. It makes these feel less essential. However, I was encouraged by the turnout here and the conversation that is happening. My thoughts on what final plan should go through: In my opinion, the boulevard is the best option not just for today but down the line. The boulevard will be for less costly to maintain over the years.</p>
<p>Where is the input from students who attend classes on an East side of I-81 and then walk to their dorms on the West side of I-81? I wonder how many people have walked from Syracuse stage area over to the Everson or OnCenter? The current layout doesn’t invite summertime strolls. A boulevard might generate lots of foot traffic. Could the boulevard accommodate space for the food trucks on a parallel service street?</p>
<p>OK process, but disappointed that smaller neighborhood oriented committee role dropped. City voices must take precedence. This is our inner city and replacement should be park-like parkway – ecofriendly space with trees, bike, and pedestrian paths, recreational activities, and small-scale commercial bordered by residential. Bring back 15th ward in ecofriendly manner. Make this our central park. Upgrade mass transit – Light Rail, more and improved bus routes with adequate park-and-ride looping neighborhoods and areas (not going from end of county to the other). Large employers should subsidize public transit fares for their employees and get rid of chain-link barbed wire fenced parking lots.</p>

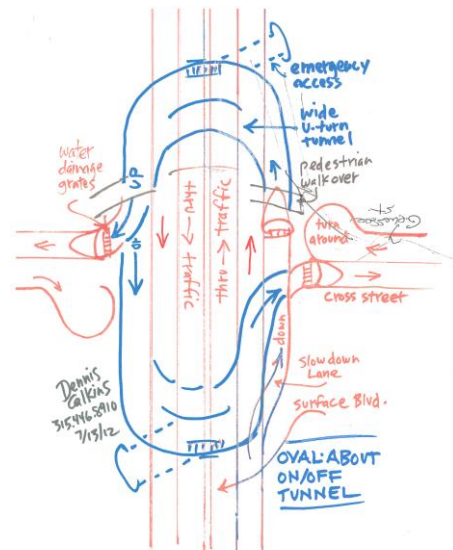
<p>Overall concern is congestion of travel into city, increasing commute time and thus gas costs. Need to ensure access to town of Salina and Onondaga Lake Park is not interrupted. From what I could understand, it appears to me that the boulevard plan would be best.</p>
<p>Boulevard is the best of the options presented based on cost, effectiveness, and removal of the ugly, divisive viaduct. It should also be much safer by lowering speeds to near normal city street speeds. It is also the most pedestrian/bicycle/transit-friendly approach.</p>
<p>Boulevard strategy is the best option. It has the best score on comparison strategy. Change 481 to I-81. Change existing I-81 to highway. Change existing I-81 through town to 6-lane highway with bike lanes. Will trees survive with all the concrete? I noticed that several died during the drought last year.</p>
<p>Boulevard Option: I feel this is the best option because of feasibility, cost, and consideration for the city of Syracuse. We are currently in an exciting time when a critical mass of successful development is happening downtown. (Quite a bit has happened since the 2010 statistics cited in the current display.) I am confident that folks can be transported to their destination with relative efficiency. I believe people will be pleasantly surprised by the boulevard option. Often it is hard for us to imagine a complete re-design, reconfiguration.</p>
<p>I feel that reconstruction of Highway 81 is the best option. It can't be ignored. Burying it would be hugely expensive. Putting all the traffic onto Highway 481 risks huge gridlock. A new beltway highway to the west would be ideal, but probably isn't feasible. The boulevard idea is very popular with the University, but would bog traffic down. Stop lights? To keep the best traffic flow, rebuild 81 using the best design ideas for traffic flow and safety. Make it pretty to please the city.</p>
<p>Lights need to be synchronized both on the proposed boulevard and all side streets. I feel this is very important to move traffic. It will also encourage drivers to take alternate routes (Townsend/ Walnut/ Erie.) West St. --> E. Adams connection is important.</p>
<p>I like the boulevard concept. I want pedestrian-friendly accommodation – i.e. walk signals, walkways, as well as bicycle friendly accommodations – bike lanes. If the reconstruction route is chosen, I hope that these provisions for safe walking and bicycling will be made.</p>
<p>As a young adult that has lived in other major cities, let me tell you of Syracuse wants ANY chance of not just being a “fall back” city for locals and people staying put because of family, it will be PROACTIVE about revitalizing the downtown area. The boulevard is a step in the right direction. If your business can't survive a reroute of the highway, let's be serious, your business isn't very viable. Supply and demand.</p>
<p>I like the idea of tearing down I-81 (elevated portion through downtown) and replacing with a boulevard. We have too long done things in the same old way and as a result, are stuck in the past while other, more progressive cities have moved ahead of us. The only way Syracuse can become a great city is to be creative and try some new strategies – the old ways are not working! We need to end our total focus on the car and become more pedestrians and bike friendly. We also need to give more support to the city center – it is the heart and soul of the County. Suburbanites may not realize it, but if Syracuse goes down – the whole area is going to go!</p>
<p>Consideration: From I-481/I-81 Nedrow start a trolley system to Mattydale exit along with the Boulevard option to move people. If trolley not feasible, add a bus lane only or maybe add both trolley and bus lanes!!</p>

<p>I am impressed by the amount of effort that has gone into this project. The presentation has provided me with pictures and words to define sound bites I have been hearing.</p> <p>Syracuse needs to show all citizens that it is able to think outside the box. These various ideas make it clear that thinking is actually taking place. So far, the general comments I hear from those against doing anything or keeping things the same seem to be based on someone's idea of being inconvenienced!</p>
<p>Great format for which to conduct public vetting sessions, to provide opportunities for feedback and interaction was numerous. Streaming video constant provides a much-needed solution to the dreaded death by PowerPoint issue that often serves as the central focus of such a forum.</p>
<p>Pretty impressive. I generally like the "future" look, what comes after. As someone who works under the shadow of I-81 (Adams and Almond St.), I would love to see a clear sky and a diminishing of traffic in that area. Yes, it would be inconvenient, but I think that would less over time.</p>
<p>I was disappointed in the proposal to make Water and Erie Boulevard into a one-way pair. Close Water Street at Almond and create an iconic ped/bike bridge for the Erie Canalway Trail (which utilizes Water Street). Erie Boulevard East can handle added traffic. I was also disappointed that the Comstock Avenue exit to 690, and the impacts of West Street, were not clearly highlighted. Please put a direct connection from I-81 and West Street (or at least West Northbound to I-81 Northbound). In this way, you can remove the Herald Place ramp!</p>
<p>1) Dismiss tunneled and depressed highway; 2) The boulevard strategy is the only good solution.</p>
<p>Too many folks asking if I need help! Pedestrian experience/impacts not discussed enough. Potential for money incentives for infill development around highway/boulevard not mentioned at all. Nice meeting, too few cookies.</p>
<p>The exhibit is informative. It suggests the boulevard is the way we are going.</p> <p>I grew up in the pioneer homes so I remember first-hand the construction process. How long will it take to tear 81 down would be my question.</p>
<p>Changes to I-81 have more of an impact than on downtown. If traffic is diverted to I-481, significant improvements between Genesee Street to I-90 will be needed. During rush hours, between I-690 and I-90, it is as busy as any highway stretch in CNY. Also, how would development around the exits be handled? Would suburban growth come at the cost of other areas like 7th North street.</p>
<p>A boulevard makes the most economic, aesthetic, future potential, logical sense. It would do wonders for opening up prime real estate for development and better connect east and west. Although 6 lanes seems rather excessive – 4 would suffice. I believe the inclusion of BRT / light rail to be key, not only to improve connectivity within the city, but also to allow for suburban park-and-ride options. Designated, visible routes would quell some of the fears people in this region have towards mass transit. I think a university-downtown N. Salina line would be the most effective first step.</p> <p>Excited for the future!</p>
<p>This was a lot of fun and also interesting. I look forward to the end results and also future meetings. Everything was well done.</p>
<p>This has been great! I think the primary driver should be reinforcing urban Syracuse as the primary driver to a better economy. The boulevard option opens up the most pathways to urban expansion and should be pursued on that basis. It also appears to be the most cost effective.</p> <p>Improved public transit, either BRT or light rail, would provide enormous incentive for affluent people to move back into the city.</p>
<p>Must have long-term goals in mind even if they are not the most economical in the short-term.</p>

The “Boulevard” option is very similar to the conclusion I have known on my own as this has progressed. While nothing is going to please everyone, the Boulevard option seems the most practical considering the other options.
Great job SMTC for bringing this all together.

I am happy to see this process starting now.

I propose taking down the section of Rt. 81 (1.3 miles) between Adams St. and Erie Blvd. and make the Interstate highway a surface boulevard. This may seem a problem for the cross streets, between the university/ hospitals and downtown, But roundabouts are successful all over the world. They are safer, less maintenance, and less pollution, because traffic is continuous. The new trick is the roundabouts will be underground!!! They will be an underground oval under the boulevard overhead. An off ramp would go down into the oval on one side and come up on the other side to complete a cross street (as Genessee St.) This would allow continuous motion on the highway above and the traffic using the underground roundabout.



See attached graphic (to the right):

- 1) Future of the auto is not enough under discussion.
- 2) “The Master Plan” of Syracuse’s adjacent sub-communities to I-81 project is ill defined or undefined, e.g. the lack of business impact numbers attached to alternate choices equals a blank. Numerical complexities not correlated equals left unknown and unconsidered. Thus, I see an infrastructure plan for transportation in a silo (Center states, chamber, etc.).
- 3) Smallest possible passenger carriage with a light rail would use frequency (high frequency) to use the rail in time, i.e. carriages every 45 seconds or carriages employed to be loaded on demand). Lightest carriages, about four people. Would cut to the bone the time and cost of rail system build out.

The Tunnel idea – too expensive.
Boulevard – keep campus and city together.
Employment – getting better, needs improvement.
The City itself – not safe.
Syracuse is technically a swamp.
Potholes on viaduct need repair.

Could be a bit more open, the event felt very narrow and restrictive. More refreshments should be available next time. Name The I-81 Challenge is a bit intimidating, perhaps try The I-81 Opportunity Summit. The end.

It is refreshing to see that the community was heard. The boulevard is clearly the most viable option. The idea of a light rail system in Syracuse is so exciting – the map showing proposed routes and stops inspires a whole image of genuine urbanity – a real 21st century metropolitan character. The trains should also run to the airport and suburbs and the dome.
Nicely done!
Those voices in the community advocating to retain the viaduct represent outdated regressive views that do not reflect the future vision of this community.

<p>Tunnel! Creating a tunnel will make our streets safer and less congested. Sure, the construction will cause congestion of our streets, but the result will be awesome! I was very pleased with the meeting.</p>
<p>I live in the Sherman Park neighborhood and use the viaduct at least once a week. I strongly prefer the boulevard option. It will improve the quality of life in many ways, especially when it is paired with improvements to the bicycle and transit system. It will inconvenience me and the vast majority of county residents very little. It is cost effective. Let's do it! Don't listen to the vocal minority that is afraid of change.</p>
<p>I think you are looking for reasons to dismiss the tunnel option on account of what it would cost. I think it is the best option as far as maintaining highway functionality, eliminating the "barrier effect" of the current elevated section between University Hill and Downtown, and increasing property values downtown, which should spur more development and revitalization there. I have heard supposed design difficulties, but any alternative that requires construction is going to require some new solutions and over-coming some design hurdles.</p>
<p>I liked how each option was considered and evaluated, no matter how silly or unfeasible. The numbers clearly point to a boulevard as the best option, so I'll be interested to see the reaction – even if the Onondaga County legislature already jumped the gun.</p>
<p>I saw a statement saying that the NYS Thruway right of way was not usable because it handled freight. My idea is to piggyback this over the right of way not on it. Working south to north: Interchange I-81 near Syracuse hospitals turn West over tracks to interchange W Genesee Street/ Erie Boulevard west (fix train bridge so semi-trucks can use underpass). Follow over tracks to turn north by lake and Destiny to interchange in vicinity of transportation center, Destiny and I-81 northbound. 1) Provide access to Syracuse University and Hospitals; 2) Eliminates bridge through city; 3) Takes advantage of existing right of way; 4) Provides beneath access to baseball stadium, transportation center and Destiny; 5) City transit time slightly longer than now.</p>
<p>We have an opportunity to really improve our city and to correct one of the worst urban design decisions ever. The Boulevard strategy needs to be designed but it is the best and most logical solution. Many people in CNY (especially suburban commuter) are afraid, that the boulevard option will increase traffic problems and hurt business. I believe that those issues will be resolved and that there will be a net positive influence on both business and the livability of the city. We need to think long term and not be afraid of change in the future. I commute to downtown every day from the western suburbs, and I welcome the day when Rte. 81 no longer cuts our city in half. Syracuse is on the way up. This should help all of us...a lot!</p>
<p>I need to take back what I have learned to my family and friends so they and I can better understand the options being considered. It is evident that a lot of thought and effort has already gone into what needs to be done.</p>
<p>As a city (Northside) resident, the impact that the final decision will have is of great concern. I am all for the Boulevard idea and think when combined with more options for public transportation, it will be the most beneficial option for us and the environment. Syracuse needs to add a light rail service to the outer reaches of the country. If it were available in a modern and affordable form, more people would use it instead of each individual driving and parking downtown. For those that are just passing through, taking 481 as a bypass is a more than reasonable solution.</p>
<p>Civil engineers know the Erie Canal and tributaries are below this city. The Everson Museum took much planning and cost to go below level, so roads would be embarrassing. Either plan (eliminate high road or keep and renovate) shows similar results, so I will be glad to encourage you to keep moving ahead – with only two choices. Thank you.</p>

<p>Do not take down 81. The pedestrian crossing from "The Hill" to downtown is grossly exaggerated. You will not find most people walking past parking lots or tear down upstate lots (Oncenter, Everson) after sunset, low cost housing or relocate people, Hutchings or relocate needy people, energy steam stations. Then consider crossing the multiple lanes, some turning lanes this way and that in order to allow traffic flow. Crossing multiple traffic lanes is difficult. Why not encourage people toward Genesee St. (theatres, restaurants) and then downtown. Leave 81 up.</p>
<p>Thanks for the labor intensive information summary. Best and cheapest/ solution – Boulevard to replace I-81 with rerouting with 690 and 481.</p>
<p>Something to consider: I-81 S exit to I-481 N needs to have better lighting. A sharp curve to the left without lighting is scary, especially with these cue lights on East Brighton Avenue – way above the turn. Please consider this! Light along Rte. 81 South disappears after the Brighton Avenue exit – and I-81 was going into the country. I have not heard about aqueduct lighting.</p>
<p>I was a child when I-81 was built and I lived in Liverpool. The I-81 highway terminated at Salina and Clinton Streets in the city. When the last section was built, it was a tremendous boon to travel and easy passage to destinations in the city and beyond. I would really hate to see us go back to stop-and-go traffic through the city. My car gets 34 MPG at highway speeds and 26 MPG in the stop-and-go traffic. How is it "green" to reduce the mileage/gallon on thousands of cars passing through the city? I am all for rebuilding I-81 viaduct with improvements. It makes the most sense.</p>
<p>I am in favor of boulevard option. I live 2 miles from downtown and it takes me 12 minutes to get there in peak times. That is crazy for an urban area to allow movement like that. I could double my commute time and it would have NO effect on my life.</p>
<p>By 4pm it was very crowded. Please make it a two day event next time.</p>
<p>I don't like the Boulevard plan, I want reconstruction. Erie Boulevard is terrible and hated. It is so reviled. Major Roy Bernardi thought nothing of cutting it in two so an ugly polluted fountain could be built. The parallels are telling - stupid transit decision made to try to fix history...</p>
<p>Apparently the two most viable choices are rehabilitation or the boulevard. If the money can be found, surely the boulevard is the most attractive option.</p>
<p>Please make sure this information, including the maps and diagrams, is online so we can review it closely.</p>
<p>We cannot stay the same. A concept known as a gompertz curve: as time goes on, the more it will cost and maintain or replace. Eventually it will boil down to social, economic, and cultural advantage. The trends that would argue for a Boulevard is civic pride, decreased auto use, influx from the suburbs (they are treading to property), the original mistake of running a super highway through a city. Trend in mega cities (China breaks ground next month).</p>
<p>Rebuild what you have! Put basketball courts. Handball courts and other sport courts under a rebuilt 81. No boulevard! No one will take care of it! It will look like hell in a very few years.</p>
<p>Clearly, I-81 should skirt the city of Syracuse. The cost of access ramps would probably be the same as restoration of the current set up.</p>
<p>Whatever option that is chosen should include something to restore some sections of the old Erie Canal. Bringing the town and county together will continue Chancellor Cantor's legacy. I am so appreciative that the Syracuse public is allowed to contribute. Hopefully a variety of the professed options is implemented: tunnel through downtown, lowered roadways as you radiate out from city. I also think SU should move Dome to Skytop/ outer Comstock area. This would reduce traffic and open a large footprint on main campus that could house visual and performing arts in its entirety. Maybe this changes dynamic for I-81?</p>

<p>As a resident born and raised in the Syracuse area, I remember the turmoil created by the original I-81 project. I moved back to the area five years ago and decided to move into the city and invest over \$40,000 in my home. I know it was the best decision for me. As a city resident, I have always felt the viaduct was dark, damp and cut an ugly path through town. I personally love the boulevard concept and realize this would only increase travel times in and out of downtown and the University area by a few minutes at most during rush hours. As a building contractor in remodeling, I have seen a 75% increase in business in the city from young (under 30) couples looking to reinvest/rebuild Syracuse's neighborhoods. Many of these young couples ask me why is this highway through the city like it does. As a cross town driver who drives everywhere in the city, this removal of viaduct is inconsequential to driving but great on the eyes. Thank you.</p>
<p>Very informational, learned a lot. I'm not at all in favor of a boulevard. Reconstruction seems best to me and best for our community and for those who travel the length of 81, say PA to Canada. I use 81 every day and would not want to have to take 481 or a boulevard with stoplights. I think a highway that is like a thruway should function that way, go through in the quickest way possible. No boulevard! I vote for reconstruction!</p>
<p>After careful review of all options, the boulevard appears most attractive in every way. Care must be taken to promote bicycle commuting, and allow easy pedestrian crossing. -Bike Lanes; -Pedestrian scrambles; -Low speed limit (25-30); -Trees?</p>
<p>Enormous amount of research and planning for a major project which will impact our community in many ways for generations to come. You guys are doing a great job researching history and predicting the future. All-important considerations for the success our community deserves. I would like to contribute to this project in some way.</p>
<p>The pictures are nice but the people are so opinionated that I doubt it will matter. You appear to have a bias toward a new elevated roadway as you measure social and environmental impacts. Rebuilding is the status quo and your subjective comments support keeping what we have, a newer version of the same thing. Doing the same thing and expecting a different outcome is the definition of insanity. Syracuse will not improve at all if all you do is replace the viaduct. The costs of the Boulevard vs. the benefits creates opportunity. I was in Portland, Oregon where they removed an interstate - huge boon to the city.</p>
<p>I found this loaded with one-sided opinion. Telling us that a great design is a division. That quick travel for fire, police, EMT's, and everyone (north, south, east, and west) is really not that important. Problems yes the 45MPH sign is posted once. The crossover to 481 along with an I-81 entrance is bad. The elevated sections of I-81 are less than 20ft above road. I have a ladder and I can paint. I will volunteer doing repairs with paid professionals if needed. Not doing repairs is wrong. Not doing repairs is a crime.</p>
<p>The boulevard option is the best option for Syracuse and the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Must address gridlock issues. Ambulances need to get to the hospitals/ people don't want to be sitting in traffic while their workplace is 2 blocks away. -Eliminate big trucks from boulevard as much as possible. -Must have bike lanes. Maybe even a bus lane. -Must have traffic signs that are driver friendly. I should know what lane to get in to get to a street well before the intersection of that street. -Have signs on boulevard directing people to downtown destinations – like the Most, Everson, Erie Canal Museum, Armory Square, SU, hospitals, etc.

<p>With regards to boulevard and reconstruction models, both need to connect to West Street – not a bypass. Just allow traffic to get from the 81/481 area up to the Armory and Franklin Square areas. Use the extra surface streets as much as possible. There is nothing of value down there (Southside) that cannot be relocated or replaced.</p>
<p>I prefer the boulevard option. Please do not rebuild the viaduct.</p>
<p>I do not support the boulevard option, despite being very pro-downtown. In my opinion, let's face it - we are not NYC. We do not have mass transit like major urban areas, we are majorly dependent on the auto, and therefore roads, highways, etc. I do not like the interruption I would face going 81 North from say, Rock Cut ramp to get on 690 West. There has been very little in the media about how current 81 North would go into the city. (Perhaps along Van Buren?) What about getting off the thruway? Would you go to 690 to 81 South to go home? Favor rebuilding current 81 strongly.</p>
<p>The Boulevard plan is made the best. Very important to access it with reference to the many vigorous developments in Downtown. Binding Downtown with hospitals and SU is essential to ask attractive urban center and life. Do not let Destiny interests shape this city's future. They have done their good work, with a great deal of help from the city and county!</p>
<p>We need to create commuting options within the city that do not involve buses. Nothing on any boards in regards to changes options would present to people with different types of disabilities. That was a major gap. Existing boulevard will be nightmare to people with visual impairments. Outreach to people who are low income and to those who are black and Latino requires more than just publicity through customary modes. Further outreach to these communities in these communities is necessary in NEPA process before public comment. Perception in black and Latino communities is that the only opportunity for meaningful input will be a one shot deal at a massive public hearing.</p>
<p>I believe no interstate highway should go through a city or urban area. The boulevard solution is the best we can do at this time. 690 should also be considered for elimination.</p>
<p>I currently live on the South side of the city and commute easily to work and to see my family – both of which take place in Liverpool. A quick and easy commute is very important to me and would be a significant deciding factor in deciding where I live in the future. I would like very much to stay in the city and therefore, I am a supporter of the reconstruction option. I loathe the idea of a boulevard through the city. That would make me very sad.</p>

<p>I think the boulevard option could be divided into two sub-options: 1) Sub-option A: Constructing a boulevard and demolishing the viaduct. 2) Sub-option B: Constructing a boulevard and repurposing the elevation portion of I-81. The repurposing will consist in turning the viaduct into an aerial green space, an elevated greenway, modeled after High Line park in Manhattan, New York City, and similar public parks and community gardens in Paris, Chicago, Philadelphia, etc. NYC Mayor Michael Bloomberg has said that the repurposing of High Line has created 20,000 jobs: 8,000 of which are in construction and 12,000 in other sectors of the city’s economy. Additionally, it has brought in two billion dollars in private investment in the immediate vicinity of the High Line, which is now known as the High Line neighborhood. The monetary benefits of the High Line are too numerous to detail in this sheet but also include dollars coming in to the city economy as a result of the High Line turning into a tourist attraction. High Line has food vendors, coffee shops, trails, art exhibits, and other amenities. More information about the High Line can be found on its web site: http://www.thehighline.org. “The New York Times” also has published several articles on the High Line, for example one describing it as an “economic dynamo” of NYC (June 5, 2011). Wikipedia also has an entry on the High Line, in which you can find even more sources of information.</p> <p>I suggest that in your next public meeting on The I-81 Challenge, you include a display on Sub-option B, probably describing how other cities are managing their elevated green spaces. Currently, the High Line is one mile long but soon another section will be added to it.</p>
<p>Two options left – reconstruction and boulevard are very different from each other. How do long-range city and country plans figure in? What about S.U. and Upstate? How about existing roads – Ainsley Drive and Thurber Street? Will they become conduits for northbound truck traffic if boulevard option is selected?</p>
<p>Syracuse has made its fair share of planning mistakes in the past. Let’s not make another one. The concept of the elevated urban highway is a thing of the past. Tear it down, place it with an urban boulevard that will accommodate all modes of traffic: pedestrian, bicycle, bus, and car.</p>
<p>Reconstruct! Only good option for future.</p>
<p>Boulevard!! But hoping for significant beautification efforts and significant bike lane and sidewalk improvements.</p>
<p>I liked depressed highway idea but now understand reasons why it won’t be selected. I think the Erie/Water Boulevard with Almond Boulevard is an interesting idea. Pedestrian/ bicycle traffic will require long red lights at intersections. For example, it is very slow on Erie Boulevard at Teall Avenue to go through a full cycle of light changes. This should be evaluated, especially at the Adams Street interchange where there are a lot of ambulances. Side note: I work on Court Street and totally agree with changing that exit to I-81. Also, the State Street on ramp. Overall, this is an interesting process.</p>
<p>The most important issue to me is a healthy and vibrant city of Syracuse, something that must come from its heart and grow outward. Replacing I-81 with a boulevard is the option that best promotes that path. Urban residency is growing and we must be ahead of the curve in our decision-making. Choosing to rebuild the highway would be a decision based on past trends that are dwindling and would see us on the wrong side of history. City-centric decisions should not be based on maintaining the standard of living for its suburbs. Syracuse is the economic life blood of the region and as Syracuse goes, so does the area. The vitality of the city core should take precedence. The boulevard option makes the most sense, financially (cost-wise), socially, aesthetically, and economically (future development potential). Please do not get this one wrong.</p>

<p>Reconstruction is only viable option with recommended improvements. Boulevard would extend travel time and increase congestion of traffic. Reconstruction of existing highway is the best option in my opinion.</p>
<p>Yes – concentrate on Reconstruction and Boulevard. I favor Boulevard, but a referendum vote should be held.</p>
<p>This was an excellent presentation. I support the boulevard concept and have confidence that ways can be found to accommodate it. The rehabilitation (reconstruction?) concept would still leave an elevated super highway, cutting through our city – noise, pollution, and something walkway and streets under the highway. The concerns of those who don't want to tear it down should not be dismissed, but we have to consider the greater good. Everyone has to give something. Right now, those in the city, especially people living right next to 81, carry the largest burden.</p>
<p>Reconstruction is the better option over a boulevard. What about building new bridge over Almond Street etc. and then removing old one? Most important: we still need quick access to hospitals from outside the city for ambulances, etc. Diverting non-local traffic to I-481 is a really good idea that will prevent future damage to the bridges, etc.</p>
<p>Merge better mass transit and a safe bike route around the city with the Boulevard idea. Work on less cars coming into the city. Parking is costly.</p>
<p>I love that the potential solutions and feasibility were presented today. I would love to see yet another solution which combines the bike lanes and occupy-able space from the reconstruction scheme into the scheme for the boulevard to reduce the number of lanes in the boulevard but still reroute primary I-81 traffic volume around the city.</p>
<p>Please give the city a chance, tear it down and build a boulevard!</p>
<p>Rebuild! We live in the Outer Comstock neighborhood. We go north on I-81 from Colvin Street and return home via Exit 17. We're at the airport in 15 minutes. We're at the regional market, the ballpark, and Destiny in 15 minutes. We're at the Civic Center in 10 minutes. We're at the ER at University Hospital (should we need it) in 5-8 minutes. We're at Armory Square (via I-81, I-690, West Street) in 10 minutes. A boulevard would be an obstacle to all of the above. The notion that an elevated I-81 "divides the community" is a myth. There is no problem with east-west flow. I'll grant that elevated highway at present is unattractive, but beautifying it is a small detail.</p>
<p>I am very upset that the county legislature voted prematurely to reject looking at all feasible options. It seems that they have concern only for suburban commuters and northern retail outlets. All interests must be considered and priority must be given to enhancing our urban core. What a missed opportunity it will be for our city to miss the chance to revitalize downtown, increase pedestrian and bike traffic, unite the city. A boulevard, if thoughtfully planned and implemented, could do these things.</p>
<p>Very informative. Thank you.</p>
<p>Use the boulevard concept. Do not rebuild I-81 as elevated.</p>
<p>Reconstruct! The boulevard poses an increased risk for accidents. The boulevard will increase driving time for ambulances and other emergency vehicles, putting peoples' lives in danger (when every minute counts). Also, what will happen to all of the people living in the housing projects?</p>
<p>As a student of landscape architecture, I am excited to see highly robust and engaged public process for the future of our city. As a student of Upstate Medical University, I've lived in Jefferson for the past few years and have traversed the highway every day. I would recommend engaging with Upstate students to talk about crossing 81 and how in the future it can be a 'health corridor.'</p>

<p>I like the boulevard idea now that I see it. Before I liked the depressed highway. I do not care for the raised highway as it is now. Thanks – job well done.</p>
<p>While it seems to have been well thought out at first glance, when you dig deeper into the study, it looks like there are actually only two options on the table instead of the five that have been advertised about in the media.</p> <p>While I’m not a fan of either one per se, I would select the reconstruction plan over a boulevard. One only needs to look below at Erie Boulevard exit to see the folly in that plan. Navigating through there, especially at certain peak hours, is an utter nightmare and some parts of it are in worse shape than I-81 itself.</p> <p>As a wheelchair van driver, I have enough problems with traffic. Turning the downtown section of I-81 into a boulevard would only worsen things exponentially.</p>
<p>I wonder how many people attending were from the surrounding neighborhood. What kind of outreach was done locally in Syracuse? It seems the people living in the areas most impacted by the designs should be given more of a say about what is happening and be more included in the process. Are there any neighborhood specific focus groups planned as the project goes further?</p>
<p>Please tear it down and replace it with street level development that connects downtown and university. That could add jobs and make our city more desirable to keep young people from leaving. If I-690 and I-481 are left intact (and I-81 north of downtown), then we would only see 10 minutes added to highway commutes and access would still be there.</p>
<p>The ripple effect of a boulevard through Syracuse hasn’t been factored into the equation. Trucks going up Route 41 and 41A next to Skaneateles will endanger the water source for Syracuse – they won’t go around 481 and back to get to Seneca Meadow Landfill.</p> <p>Please use the reconstruction plan! Consider traffic flow from north and south, as well as all the businesses between 690 and 481 (Northside) – they’re in a panic.</p> <p>I don’t have the time this afternoon to enumerate all the negative consequences of the boulevard. I do leave fine to list the advantages – o – all illusionary!</p>
<p>We have no argument that the highway needs “work” our biggest concern is viable access to the hospitals. All 4 of our major hospitals are accessible from all directions now.</p> <p>**How would Emergency vehicles and staff get there in a reasonable way and time (Hospital)</p> <p>Our hospitals are superb and regional treatment centers should be a priority.</p>
<p>Do not reconstruct! Boulevard option!</p>
<p>I believe that the reconstruction option should be the only option considered from this point onward. The boulevard option should not receive any further consideration. The boulevard option would not improve traffic patterns in the area generally and would significantly impact the commuter population (who you claim represents the majority of the users of I-81). Commute times would increase significantly and traffic congestion would increase significantly. We do not want a boulevard!!</p>
<p>Please don’t choose options that would chop up or gut existing neighborhood communities. The goal is reconnection. Remember major needs and access to medical facilities, universities, and downtown businesses.</p> <p>Communities of the 21st century will require more public transit, less addiction to individual automobile travel. This is our own opportunity to change.</p> <p>Include the hallmarks of a strong and user-friendly rail/ bus/ bike trail system for healthy resident life. Do not harm air quality. Consider keeping low the impermeable surface % increase.</p>

<p>I think that I-81 should be rebuilt. As an employee at Upstate...be eliminating the highway the entrance and exit traffic would be a nightmare. As it is now, between 3 pm and 5 pm the outgoing traffic is congested. I have the impression that this decision is already decided and I am wasting my time.</p> <p>My main concern for health and safety is emergency needs to hospitals. If the powers to be think that a boulevard (like Erie Blvd.) will be easier to access, they do not travel around Syracuse.</p>
<p>My only question at this time is: If the boulevard is built, which will "increase property values in that area," where will be low income people who live there go?</p> <p>There is not a fear they will move towards me, I don't live in Syracuse although I do a lot of work here. There will always be the poor, but what will be done for them?</p>
<p>Interstate 81 is extremely important to my business. My business is located north of Syracuse in Buckley Rd. and 7th N Street. To remove I-81 would devastate my business. Reconstruct the highway to keep the I-81 designation exactly where it is.</p>
<p>Keep I-81 the way it is. Fix the problems as they come.</p>
<p>2 very real concerns:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Healthcare – for northern areas/ counties, it would appear to reroute traffic 481 S to 81 Southside. Should not be an option. 2) Any decision should be what will help utilize downtown Syracuse again. Rerouting traffic will be a death knell the downtown area. <p>Replace existing – Dress it up as Denver did with their Interstate.</p>
<p>~Should take a progressive approach with small cities of similar size on west coast as a model (i.e. Portland);</p> <p>~Connection to greater metro areas is also necessary (i.e. NYC, Boston, Philadelphia, Toronto, etc.);</p> <p>~Urban greenway will have domino positive effects (i.e. highline (NYC));</p> <p>~Light rail will solve congestion issues.</p>
<p>I can't see a boulevard being a quick way through downtown. Erie Blvd. is very difficult to cross. A new elevated 81 where 81 is now will allow speedy access to all hospitals from any direction. No other option provides that.</p>

Dear DOT and Syracuse MTC,

Please tear down the elevated portion of I-81 and keep it down. Syracuse and the county overall would greatly benefit from a boulevard or something similar instead.

I moved to NYC in the late 1970's and watched how the tearing down of the West Side Highway revitalized NYC and the West side. I also bought a large loft on the west side in what was supposedly a blighted and dangerous area and doubled my money. The same rejuvenation is possible for Syracuse.

As a Syracuse city resident, I ask that you please tear down I-81.

PS Below is one of my letters to the editor of the Syracuse Post Standard.

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http://blog.syracuse.com/opinion/2013/05/more_on_interstate_81_onondaga.html#incart_river
"Onondaga County Legislature needs to get with the times "; May 17, 2013 at 9:03 AM

To the Editor:

The decision of the Onondaga County Legislature to abruptly dismiss the proposal to dismantle the elevated portion of Interstate 81 shows that they are out of step and living in a 1950s commuter model. Living patterns and preferences are changing. U.S. PIRG just reported that for the first time in six decades, Americans are driving less than they did the year before and prefer public transportation. This is particularly true for the youngest.

My suggestion to legislators is to open your eyes to the changes around you. Ask a young person if they would rather have a smart phone or driver's license and you will see firsthand how preferences are changing. Go to the Downtown Living Tour this Saturday and see the excitement and vibrancy over downtown living.

Dismantling the elevated portion of I-81 and having a boulevard or something similar offers a great opportunity for the city and county to get back in step with the times. Maintaining the status quo will assure mediocrity and decline for the next 50 years.

I'm quite sure it's too soon to know, but I live behind Almond St. and I'm actually concerned about my living arrangements. Will they need to tear down 132 Stewart Court and any other property along that line in order to add those needed lanes for the Boulevard?

In my opinion...

(1) Depressed: My first choice. Look at I-676 in Philadelphia. That would be a perfect fit for Syracuse.

(2) Reconstruction: My second choice. However, the bridge should be of significant design.

Allow for art, plant-life, and comfortable conditions for pedestrians. Suggestions include:

-decorative lighting (placed vertically on columns which hold up elevated highway);

-sound dampen as possible with a sound barrier;

-running daylight bulbs (Omni-directions);

-decorative or modern light posts along the center of the elevated highway;

(3) Boulevard: Don't do this one.

Thank you!

A huge wealth of information. Glad to see so many people attend. Not a fan of viaduct area strategy comparison. Does not appear to take into consideration the economic impact of region, just city.

<p>The “justification” for the Boulevard design is weak and the design looks like it will be a traffic-jam magnet. Anyone who thinks that the boulevard will look like the artist’s version will be in for a rude awakening when they realize that it can’t handle the traffic. At that point, the money will have been spent and we’ll be stuck with a white elephant. Reconstruction can include beautification and redesign of the dangerous interchanges, which should be the top priority of any project of this sort. It can maintain the ease with which we all can reach downtown while still providing an efficient travel option to the airport, Liverpool, the Thruway, and I-690.</p>
<p>The 81 Challenge needs to consider the whole of the city, rethinking downtown traffic patterns. Rte. 81 is only part of the problem – the city has made a number of poor planning decisions over the past 50 years – now is the time to remedy them.</p>
<p>When I moved to Syracuse in the late 1960s (young) in my 20’s, Syracuse was chosen – efficient railroad system. Great for businesses, all up and down east coast. Some tweaking can be done but don’t tear it down.</p>
<p>Overall much better than last session.</p>
<p>Original plans for underpasses were part of Lady Bird Johnson Plan for beautification, but they were never followed through. Also, an arterial through city will create lots of traffic. As an example, Ithaca short arterial through the city is a mess.</p>
<p>As the boulevard option is pursued, consideration and costs might be calculated to address the negative impact it will have on Near Westside residents with great increases to West Street traffic. The West Street as it stands is already a monumental pedestrian barrier. More crossing points and/or an elevated pedestrian walkway need to be added to improve quality of life for downtown and Westside residents.</p>
<p>If I-81 going north does not connect to I-690 going west, tractor trailer traffic will travel on the city streets.</p>
<p>I would like the Light Rail to be included. Take down I-81.</p>
<p>Rebuild the bridge. To go around Syracuse will cost no more in gas plus the carbon monoxide emitted because of the extra mileage. It will also increase my work day due to the extra time spent going around the city or time spent at lights in Syracuse.</p>
<p>I’m glad to see that this glacial process has at least eliminated a couple bad options. I am still concerned that special interest groups will unduly influence the final decisions and that people in the city – who live with the deleterious effects of the urban freeways all day, every day – will have less of a voice than commuters.</p> <p>And I am very troubled that even the best option (a boulevard) involves using West St. as part of a freeway system. West St. should immediately be returned to a residential avenue – not an access point to the freeways. Take all highways out of the city!</p>
<p>Suggestion: regardless of whether we end up with a rebuilt highway or a boulevard, reroute I-81 to I-481, and re-designate old I-81 as “Business 81.” Lots of cities have two options.</p>
<p>I’m very pleased with this process. Including the public is paramount with such a high profile/ impact project.</p> <p>Those of us who live IN this city feel very strongly about the detrimental impact I-81 has had on our neighborhood viability. I look forward to the decision.</p>
<p>I-690 and I-81 interchange removing historic buildings on N. Salina is not acceptable. Extending Boulevard north of James to Bear St. would allow for more economic development potential. This could allow north buildings and Franklin Square to reconnect and be facilitated by moving the I-690/I-81 connection attempt to an improved Bear Street corridor (perhaps similar to I-195 in Providence.) Improvements to Bear Street should be explored.</p>

<p>How do you handle being force fed the agenda of others? The booklet begins with “Portions of I-81 are nearing the end of their lifespan.” If you have an agenda, start at the beginning.</p>
<p>I favor the boulevard approach. However, an intersection of 4-5 lanes is too wide for pedestrians to safely traverse. I suggest overhead bridges at these intersections for bike and pedestrian use.</p>
<p>I think that the boulevard would be an excellent way to connect the city and improve the overall well-being of the citizens of Syracuse. To live in a city that has started developing to promote public transportation and to reduce the number of cars on the road would most certainly draw in more citizens; especially into the city. To be able to improve the quality of life is critical if you want to get more people back into downtown Syracuse.</p>
<p>1. The process was open and transparent. 2. The rationale for excluding some alternatives is clear. 3. The decision should be based on the functionality of the system. It must serve the needs of the med and ed employment centers. It should also provide access to businesses like Destiny and 7th North Street on the north and Dunk & Bright on the south. It should serve the pedestrian needs of Upstate Med students and residents of Pioneer Homes, the public housing development that was divided by 81 originally.</p>
<p>I grew up in the city. I went down town all the time. First by bus with the family and by myself for school both high school and college. I did not find the elevated highway a problem. I have over the years found myself going downtown less and less. I like to drive downtown and did a lot but the change to Clinton Square cut off my access route and made it easier to go around the city and not stop. I went through about 20+ of your boards and did not find a Icon to be able to give you my remarks. My comment is if you do anything but replace the highway what happens to all the traffic coming into the city by Route 690 . Is it the intent to stop the road at the city limits as is proposed with the alternate for 81.</p> <p>A second comment is if the Route 81 divides the City East to West, doesn't Route 690 also divide the City North to South. I know the 690 route followed the old railroad but using your thinking this was not thought out well at the time. It must have also cleared out residences for the construction. It moved out of the main streets of downtown. It separates the city the same today as the 81 does.</p> <p>All of this makes the decision of doing business in the city easy. If you cannot get there, find another place to go without going into the city.</p> <p>With the boulevard option, access to Syracuse University will be good if you want to walk there. If you want the sports games the best option will be TV.</p> <p>I recently read that the City was charging the businesses along the corridor route for the enhancement project. What will the city be charging for the change of 81 to a boulevard. This would only be done for the city. They can't pay for they have now.</p>

<p>I recognize the I-81 Challenge as a regional issue but as a city resident it seems to me that many of the comments are from those seeking convenience and ways to get in and OUT of Syracuse. There was actually a piece on television this week about parking under the elevated highway and a suburbanite was in favor of rebuilding it elevated so as to preserve his parking spot! Point here being of course that city residents have more skin in this game than suburbanites leaving the city daily at 5pm and Destiny keeping a status quo of traffic from north and south.</p>
<p>I favor the boulevard model. Thru traffic can be routed around Syracuse on I-481. The only reason the volume is so great in the downtown section of I-81 now is because it is easier/quicker to go thru than it is to go around. A boulevard would make going thru less attractive, therefore reducing traffic for those vehicles with a downtown destination.</p>
<p>This community has made major errors in the past (allowing OCC to leave the city, locating the baseball stadium in the same dumb place) and now we have a once in a lifetime opportunity to reunite our city east and west. A well planned boulevard can provide a new lease on life for whole sections of the city that need it the most. A greenway through the city can replace elevated concrete. A walking/jogging/skating/biking path from north to south complimenting a modern boulevard is the 21st century solution.</p>
<p>My thoughts in brief:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Establish the current I-481 as the mainline I-81 with improved connections at the South and the North. (2) Replace the current I-81 from Colvin St to Butternut St with a SLIGHTLY below grade boulevard (2-lanes in each direction), using an underpass at the railroad. (3) provide connecting EXIT ramps to Adams and Harrison streets, which streets would bridge over the boulevard, allowing smooth traffic flow. (4) provide access (in both directions) to existing I-690 from McBride or Townsend. (5) provide access to the University hill from I-690 at University Ave, as recommended in the SDAT report of a few years ago. (6) limit traffic on the boulevard to passenger vehicles and local truck delivery only -- No tractor-trailers. <p>This may sound complicated, but it should strengthen the existing street grid; and through I-81 traffic will need to be detoured around the city during the demolition and re-construction anyway.</p>
<p>One more thought: Allow Destiny USA to have prominent directional signs on the South, East, North, and West limits of the City at appropriate locations.</p>
<p>REBUILD for the economic viability of the region!!!</p>
<p>Rebuild bridge I-81 in existing location.</p>
<p>Reconstruct I-81.</p>
<p>Many ideas, many options - I like raising highway (skyway) for through traffic and smoothing out curves and congested on/ off ramps!</p>
<p>Reconstruct.</p>
<p>Reconstruct: Make it safe, usable friendly space with the highway above in the same footprint! Make it iconic.</p>
<p>Reconstruction is the way to go!</p>

<p>Modern tech has allowed us to extend our reach past what we thought was possible 60 years ago. If we choose to rebuild, raise it by 30-40 feet. Use suspension technology to use vertical space. Then we can build and grow below.</p>
<p>Reconstruct. Make it safe, efficient. Make it attractive.</p>
<p>Reconstruction!</p>
<p>Reconstruct!</p>
<p>Reconstruction only.</p>
<p>I have attended all three public meetings for The I-81 Challenge and endorsed the reconstruction option. However, in lieu of the in-kind highway replacement configuration, I recommend that you consider a "double-deck" option. This option will reduce the footprint and allows for longer entrance/exit ramps. I believe this option improves aesthetics.</p>
<p>Reconstruct 81!</p>
<p>Keep as is.</p>
<p>Depressed highway or reconstruction.</p>
<p>Reconstruct.</p>
<p>Reconstruct 81 exactly where it is!</p>
<p>Reconstruction.</p>
<p>Reconstruct I-81. Overpasses can be beautiful!</p>
<p>Keep I-81 the way it is. Just fix the problems as they come. All other options are slow, tedious and inconvenient.</p>
<p>Reconstruction seems the way to proceed. A highway through downtown (make an efficient N-S route) is essential for local commuters as well as through traffic.</p>
<p>Rebuild it: keep Syracuse a 20 minute city; make underneath the viaduct more user friendly by moving or adding on and off ramps to alleviate congestion on Adams.</p>
<p>Rebuilding makes so much more sense, for traffic, commuting time, access, pedestrians, etc.</p>
<p>81 through Syracuse needs to be maintained. Everyone would like to see it safer, straighter.</p>
<p>Reconstruction.</p>
<p>Rebuild version using 6 foot wide overhang in stepwise fashion for plants and steps to combat air pollutions. Use West Street more to alleviate high traffic level in I-81 in City by adding a road to West Street. Pedestrians need easier way to cross Erie Boulevard. Bring back the train to SU - add a bus on campus to the train so more people can go there.</p>
<p>Save 81 - reconstruct through city.</p>
<p>Part 2! I believe we should rebuild!</p>
<p>No argument on needing change. Reconstruct same. You have a plan for University access but what about viable hospital access? How would emergency and staff get to the hospitals!?</p>
<p>Highway 81 should be reconstructed in its present location using modern design methods and with safety improvements. Make it attractive for the city.</p>
<p>Rebuild a higher highway - use the space under the highway for pedestrians, bikes, green space.</p>
<p>Rebuild with a more pleasing visual to the new bridge.</p>

<p>Rebuild!!! Don't see the Boulevard bringing SU and Downtown together. Stop and go traffic would be a nightmare.</p>
<p>Reconstruct - we need access to all hospitals from all directions.</p>
<p>Thanks for presenting the options and analyses. I favor reconstruction to address safety issues, bring structures up to current code, and to maintain traffic flow. Certainly, if this option is chosen, signage for exits and exits themselves must be improved. Lighting under the new structure in the Downtown area should be much brighter. The only thing I question is how cycling-friendly reconstruction could be made. It will be interesting to see how this plays out. It seems that concerns with the Boulevard option were downplayed (i.e. air pollution and storm water.)</p>
<p>Reconstruction with improvements.</p>
<p>Everyplace I go is N-S. I'll have to move from City to South Oswego County.</p>
<p>You can not stop or seriously impede traffic flow for the region's highest volume employers: upstate and Syracuse University. Please take those users of Interstate 81 into account, or risk turning Syracuse into Podunk, NY.</p>
<p>Be realistic - there is no safe way to do a boulevard and have emergency response times, generally and to hospitals. Tell public.</p>
<p>Replacing the viaduct with a boulevard is like replacing UPS with the Pony Express! Dumbest idea ever!!! Let's go BACKWARDS, people!!!</p>
<p>The assumption that I-81 "divides the community" is a myth. It does not. There is no obstacle to East-West flow. But if a boulevard replaces the present freeway, there will be a real impediment to North-South flow. Let's forget this nostalgia for an old ward. That was 50 years ago, and it can never return.</p>
<p>Boulevard would be safety hazard of extreme proportions to people with visual impairments.</p>
<p>Give us a realistic illustration of the boulevard with bumper to bumper traffic and trucks lined up at lights.</p>
<p>Why a Boulevard? We hate the one we have so much that we put a block right in the middle.</p>
<p>I don't understand who will be driving on this Boulevard. It doesn't seem to lead to/from anywhere! Speed limits will be slow, with lots of stop lights. If there is any sort of traffic volume, emissions will be worse. Also pedestrian safety.</p>
<p>For Boulevard option - how can you say positive impact - what about all the businesses along "old 81"?! </p>
<p>I chose to come to Syracuse 45 years ago as a physician at Upstate, Crouse, and Veterans hospitals. I checked out the other medical centers upstate but I liked the easy access to hospitals on the hill at Syracuse via Route 81 and 690 and 481 as a major plus. Please don't create a local traffic nightmare. The rush hour AM and PM are bad enough now with all the new buildings on the Hill.</p>
<p>The Boulevard concept is insane, short-sighted, unworkable. It would be a huge mistake. It would also help me make a decision about where to live - elsewhere!</p>
<p>Boulevard option would increase traffic within city and make air pollution and gridlock impossible. Gridlock results in reduced mobility and to increased transit times.</p>
<p>Boulevard bumper to bumper slow. Chaos for Dome and hospital.</p>
<p>Is a mile or more of stop and go Boulevard traffic a continuous source of increased pollution emissions? You better be sure it isn't before you go with that option.</p>
<p>Removing I-81 through Syracuse would be the worst decision the city could make.</p>
<p>Boulevard sucks.</p>

<p>We live in Outer Cornstock and are very concerned that a Boulevard will decimate the Outer Cornstock area. Ainsley Drive and Thurber Street are currently used by trucks going to Skytop and that trend will increase with the development of SU south of Ainsley and along Ainsley.</p>
<p>The whole premise of a Boulevard arrangement comes under the heading of "warm, fuzzy, feel-good." People have been acclimated to getting around as they currently do This is a newly invigorated metropolitan area where traffic needs to be moved. Boulevard will create nightmare gridlock.</p>
<p>If traffic is diverted to I-481, it would require at least one more lane in each direction from 690 to Thruway Would not like to see built up interchanges of big box stores, hotels, etc. around Kirkville Road and Northern Boulevard.</p>
<p>Before boulevard or any construction takes place, 81 north and south should be shut down for 5 days to see the mess a boulevard will create north bound close at Adams Street and south bound at Clarion.</p>
<p>The current Boulevard proposal seems to truly have very little benefits over reconstruction other than cost. It will still be a barrier.</p>
<p>IF you live in FM or JD air quality and noise will increase. Driving times to downtown will go up by 10 minutes.</p>
<p>I would like to know the assumptions behind the 6+ lane boulevard - are you over building for those peak times that occur just twice a day?</p>
<p>Concern: Boulevard plan slows traffic, in already congested areas. Not attractive for new, or existing business.</p>
<p>Bearing in mind this Boulevard idea will increase property values (this is what we're told), what will happen to the low income families that live in that area now? Will they have to find another place to live? Where will they go? This is a money driven society, it's a shame we don't have people that feel a good quality of life does not depend on dollars.</p>
<p>Moving I-81 to the 481 area makes it even more inconvenient for western Onondaga County residents to access I-81. Moving I-81 to 481, effectively cuts off western Onondaga County from N-S interstate travel. This will inhibit growth in these areas.</p>
<p>One of the reasons I have heard to make the Boulevard option is that Hospital and SU workers can go Downtown at lunch. I work in healthcare, everyone in patient care does not have that sort of leisure time at work.</p>
<p>These travel times are only to Downtown. What about increase in travel times for those who currently drive through downtown to get from one side of the city to another. Using 481 could add 10-20 minutes to a trip! (This relates to "Boulevard Strategy Modeling Results" board.)</p>
<p>If Boulevard is chosen, how will all surrounding roads and routes be enhanced to alleviate congestion?</p>
<p>Bridges across the Boulevard are not necessary - raise level to cross streets - install traffic lights - not every street needs to cross Boulevard.</p>
<p>The Boulevard concept drawing is not showing accommodation for pedestrians or businesses.</p>
<p>"Don't build a church for Easter Sunday." Why 6 lane Boulevard versus 4? Won't traffic decrease - are you including new transit options and change in behavior?</p>
<p>Where are the large trucks in any of your boulevard pictures. They are the only worthwhile use of the highway.</p>
<p>I don't see that with the boulevard traffic on 690 east of 81 goes down. I think it will go up because people who currently use 81 North to get downtown will use 690 instead. (from SE suburbs)</p>
<p>You must honestly inform public how response time for police, fire EMTs and individuals to hospitals will be impacted by Boulevard option.</p>
<p>What about snow removal for ped/ bike lanes on boulevard?</p>

No Erie Boulevard. If it's a boulevard it has to be safer and more pedestrian friendly.
Can the Boulevard be split into north and south avenues with a commercial strip in between them? 6 lanes is too wide and creates a barrier.
Proposed: Depressed Highway and Boulevard models appear to be slightly different versions of the same strategy: which seeks to replace portions of 81 with 2- and 3-lane boulevards/ interstates controlled by traffic lights and the like. Both have the potential to have a negative impact on east-west mobility and reduce the number of access points to 81 and 690 and both involve major capital reconstruction funds. Why spend more money to create more congestion? Confusion?
Work on improving the boulevard's (feasible, not so costly) environmental effects please.
Concern for potential new ramps connecting 81 and 690, in area of West Street and Butternut. Realize it may address some conflicts and time issues but will change character at entrance to Franklin Square. Am also concerned that this process will tear community apart, rather than act to unite us as it could.
Who would maintain the boulevard? The city can't afford to fix a pothole now...
The boulevard concept is actually a limited access expressway. It stifles any pedestrian activity and forestalls any retail activity. A boulevard would allow parking, would allow deliveries which would encourage businesses to locate on the boulevard and would have fewer lanes. Please look at cities that have done this! Traffic decreases and it provides opportunity. You've kept a barrier in your scheme.
Boulevard has the potential to enhance the barrier West St. is to the west side of the city. Crosswalk bridges would need to be installed west.
I hope the solutions deemed feasible will take lessons from precedent . I find the concepts of a new boulevard potentially years as bad what we have. Places like Erie Boulevard here or transit streets in Buffalo are powerful negative examples of what not to do in a boulevard.
North traffic going to University area would go down Ainsley or Brighton onto Jamesville Avenue and Comstock Avenue - unimproved residential streets would destroy the neighborhood.
Without 81, how would one easily get to Destiny, the rail and bus terminal? What about the hotels and businesses that grew up something 81?
Concern: Excessive traffic in residential areas, where roads are not designed for increased traffic.
The boulevard option is the best option, but because you have not yet collected or analyzed detailed traffic data from EACH of the individual entry and exit points throughout the city, you do not yet have the necessary information needed for appropriate planning and developing excellent design options for replacing the I81 viaduct. Without collection and analysis of detailed city traffic flows (where is traffic coming in, and going to, and leaving the city?), including pedestrian and alternative transit information, good planning is not possible - you are not there yet. Please finish the job by collecting and analyzing ALL relevant traffic data in the city, and then return to the public with high quality conceptual designs that reflect the public input that has been collected to date...we would like to see a design that reconnects neighborhoods, with pedestrian-friendly and green streets; both pleasant and efficient vehicular routes to and from city destinations and surrounding areas. This IS possible, but not if all of the data is not collected, analyzed and considered in the redesign process. This is not just highway planning. This is Urban Design. Please consult Urban Planners and Designers once all data has been collected and modelled so we don't miss this opportunity for real excellence in the evolution of the City of Syracuse.
If your business can't survive a re-routed 81, your business probably isn't viable anyway. Supply and demand will always win out, let's quit with the inane arguments and do something positive for the growth of the city for once. Boulevard!
I like the Boulevard option. Reroute non-local traffic and beautify downtown. 2 for 1.

Don't erase Syracuse from the map of relevancy!

1) **What cities erase themselves from the map?** Not Syracuse! Route 81 keeps Syracuse directly at the center of EVERYTHING in NY State. In fact, **Route 81 might be THE MOST RELEVANT highway** in New York State

- a) Route 81 links Canadians to NYC, the Jersey Shore, Florida, and all points south. Route 81 links the New York State Thruway to all points north and south.
- b) For Americans traveling to Ottawa, the St. Lawrence, western NY, Niagara Falls and Toronto, Route 81 is a commonly used pathway.
- c) Route 81 links outsiders to the core of Syracuse in a way that Route 481 could/ would never! Syracuse is introduced to travelers close up by Route 81 to people who otherwise would never see us or bother to stop.
- d) Did you know the "Canadian Traffic Study" was done in April? Seriously?

2) **Route 81 is very functional!** What other road links all the major hospitals, the airport, the Thruway, Armory Square, Syracuse University, the Oncenter, the train station, bus station, the Carrier Dome, and Destiny USA? What could be better? A boulevard with a 100 stoplights?

3) **Don't be misled by lies!** The cities of Milwaukee, Denver, and Seattle ALL have kept and will continue to keep major highways entering and traveling through their core. Those advocating a BLVD to replace route 81 are suggesting that these cities are tearing down all their vital highways and replacing them with boulevards! NOT TRUE! Look at a map yourself! This is what you will see:

- a) Milwaukee still is serviced by: 794 & 94 going east and west and 43 going north and south! They are not destroying the only artery that brings people directly in and through Milwaukee!
- b) Denver is still serviced by: four major highways, Route 25 passing north and south directly through the heart of Denver, also Routes 70, 76, and 270 going east/ west.
- c) Seattle is still serviced by: Route 5 divides Seattle north and south almost exactly like Syracuse. Downtown Seattle on one side, Capitol Hill and the University of Seattle on the other side. Route 90 goes east-west all the way to the ocean!

4) **Why build 2 new Marriott Hotels** in downtown Syracuse in downtown Syracuse if ALL the outside traffic is going to be diverted to Route 481? Why fix Hotel Syracuse if the closest highway is in Dewitt?

5) **The so called "Connective Corridor"** can now easily pass under Route 81, imagine what a 6 lane Boulevard would be like to cross! Or, would you want to be in an ambulance trying to get to Upstate on an over-crowded boulevard? **Defend Syracuse! Save Route 81!**

Love the Boulevard concept - especially with Green Infrastructure to "Save the Rain."

Boulevard...yup!

Boulevard! It's the least expensive and most sustainable: economically, socially, and environmentally! -a college student who wants to live in an economically and socially thriving city.

I'm very pleased to see the options reduced, please narrow down to one: boulevard!

Tear down 81, replace the Erie Canal on Erie Boulevard, provide public transport from suburbs to city. More public transportation!

81 is a feeder to the city and not of the city. Keep it as is to the joining with 481, than as far in from the North as seems logical, then put it on the ground through the Center.

My wife and I moved to Syracuse in 1969 and have always loved the place.

Countless times I've turned to the passenger sitting next to me and declared that one of the things I like best about living here is that having two interstates cross in the middle of town lets me drive from virtually any place in Syracuse to any other within 10-15 minutes.

I can leave my home near Nedrow, park in the OnCenter garage, and be in my seat to see an opera in the Civil Center within 20 minutes. Or Syracuse Stage. Or any of several favorite restaurants. I-81 makes this possible!

I-81 ties this city together far more than it "divides." We have grown up around it, making SU, its nearby medical complex, and downtown quickly and conveniently accessible. I-81 is how we get to virtually everything in this city. It's our route to restaurants and other businesses on the North Side or in Liverpool, Carousel (OK, I've not learned to call it "Destiny USA"), the airport, and the Transportation Center. It makes Onondaga Lake (where we like to bike) just a few minutes away. And it connects us to I-690, the Thruway, and everything west.

Sure, I can get to all these places by other routes. But those are far less convenient, far slower, and much less safe than I-81. I have had car trouble while driving through Syracuse at night, I'd *far* rather have it on I-81 than on most alternative streets! And if all traffic currently using I-81 were diverted to the city grid – especially anywhere near rush hour – it would be a hopeless mess!

The argument that we need to "tie the city together" is absolute "feel-good" nonsense! I-81 is not the impenetrable barrier some claim. Crossing under the elevated stretch to get from the University area to Downtown is easy. Most people drive. You take a CENTRO bus, or the "Connective Corridor" bus.

Another worthless argument in favor of tearing down I-81 laments the lack of consideration for (especially poor) residents when the highway was initially designed. Whether those early decisions – made a half-century ago – were regrettable or not, they're completely irrelevant and irreversible now.

Like it or not, a high-speed, high-capacity highway in its near present location is not only convenient...it's become absolutely *essential!* The idea of a "boulevard" replacement is absurd! Unfortunately, many people will be taken in by the kind of architects' drawing that appeared in our paper the other day: A handful of pedestrians strolling leisurely along a well-groomed, tree-lined parkway with one or two cars is so far-fetched as to be a downright lie! (Even taken as truthful, would that be the bustling new city some folks imagine?)

Perhaps the people most adversely affected by removal of I-81 would be those who (like us) live in the Valley area and depend on I-81 every day. Any planning being done now should carefully consider the impact on this neighborhood, one of the nicest in Syracuse.

The Boulevard Strategy is the way to go! We have a once in a lifetime opportunity to correct a horrible urban design mistake. Many are afraid of what the Boulevard will mean. It will be fine...just different. This would move Syracuse in a positive forward direction on a number of levels. Do it!

Boulevard Strategy is the best option. Change 481 to I-81. And change existing I-81 to highway. Has the best score on comparison strategy. 6 lane boulevard with bike lanes and shrubs and trees. More people friendly. Lowering speed limit to 55 MPH on major routes will decrease accidents.

<p>As a road warrior, travelling to numerous and various cities throughout the USA, I have witnessed and utilized many progressive minded projects that have significantly improved the quality of life for both residents and business travelers like me. Cincinnati, Cleveland, Albany, Portland (OR), Boston, Phoenix are just a few that come to mind...pedestrian first, bending the curve on reducing car usage, light rail and trolley systems that are easy to understand and use. And finally, when I get off the road and settle back in to Syracuse I would hope this project leads CNY in the direction of cities mentioned above. I would like to live downtown...with a boulevard!</p>
<p>The Boulevard is the best option - costs are lower, and it will look much better than the current highway.</p>
<p>A pedestrian friendly boulevard is the best option. The boulevard in Baltimore at waterfront functions for cars, people, and businesses. Then get to work converting Syracuse's other boulevards (Erie) into pedestrian (and bike) friendly roads!</p>
<p>Go with the Boulevard. Best option. People will quickly adapt to any changes.</p>
<p>Tear it down. Build a Boulevard!</p>
<p>Build a boulevard. It seems to have the most positive impact on traffic and the city, so let's tear down I-81! We need a path to a 21st Century City! Open up all that land!</p>
<p>A boulevard! Tear it down!</p>
<p>It sounds like the Boulevard option is the best in terms of financial, social, environmental, and aesthetic.</p>
<p>Choose Boulevard Strategy - make Syracuse more attractive and welcoming. (1) Be sure to include 690 W to 81 North direct access. (2) Include improved biking accessibility. (3) Make sure businesses north and south of city center have ways current customers can get to them. Reroute through traffic around city on I-481.</p>
<p>Putting a Boulevard in place of 81 does NOT mean that one can no longer utilize 81 to get downtown, which seems to be a common misconception. It will remain the most viable option. Trucks will not be re-routing to avenues and roads.</p>
<p>The Boulevard works. Do it.</p>
<p>I vote for the Boulevard.</p>
<p>Boulevard Option: I feel this is the best because of feasibility, cost, and consideration for city of Syracuse. We are currently in an exciting time when a critical mass of successful development is happening downtown. I am confident that folks can be transported to their destinations with relative efficiency. I believe people will be pleasantly surprised by the boulevard option.</p>
<p>Boulevard.</p>
<p>Boulevard would do the most to help transform the urban center of this area and help position the Syracuse area for the 21st Century and beyond. It's too late to build the stadium downtown.</p>
<p>We need a transportation system that allows all road users - including drivers, bicycle riders, and pedestrians - safe access. The Boulevard option is a step in that direction. Such a system would encourage people to walk and ride a bike more. It would also allow for multi-modal travel, such as, drive your car to a location and ride a bike (bike-share program) the last mile or two. Right now that isn't even possible. Riding in downtown Syracuse is an adventure fraught with danger. Next step - Erie Boulevard. There are lots of people who already want to walk along/ cross it or ride a bike along it. Nearly impossible!</p>

<p>I-81 going through the Downtown must be torn down and that portion to be developed as "Boulevard." Current I-481 at Exit 29 Cicero to become new I-81, bypassing downtown. Smooth traffic flow and connect to current I-81 near "Laretto." This is the most sensible alternative and will take Syracuse into the 21st Century. Don't be cowed down by Congel and their like people whose only interest is to make money for themselves. They don't care for anything else. Keep your independence.</p>
<p>The Boulevard concept is less expensive, could encourage people to walk or bike (if kept clean and safe) and creates a more attractive appearance. Syracuse NEEDS to be cleaned up. Take pride in our city!</p>
<p>Boulevard seems most promising in many respects.</p>
<p>As a college student planning for the future, if I'm thinking about the type of place I'll want to live in 20 years, then Boulevard is the best option aesthetically and environmentally.</p>
<p>Thank you for listening! The Boulevard concept is clearly the best solution.</p>
<p>Remove viaduct, maintain neighborhood integrity, promote connectivity. If I must drive and circle around to look for a parking at Point B, because I can't walk from Point A to Point B, I won't go to Downtown. If I can park in one place and walk to others, I'm more likely to experience Syracuse and visit the businesses.</p>
<p>Boulevard option: Costs are either cheaper or similar; opportunity for positive change; forward thinking.</p>
<p>At first, I was not for the "Tunnel" scenario. Now that I've seen the strategy assessments and compared them with each other, I come to the same conclusion that either the "Reconstruction" or "Boulevard" scenarios are the way to go. Of those 2, I favor the "Boulevard." I thought, way before this whole process started, that I-481 should become I-81, and eliminate those viaducts and all the incumbent obstacles they present (and represent). Providing good access to Downtown from all directions, community connective-ness, and enhancing environmental/ "Smart Growth"/ land-use patterns are the primary considerations as far as I am concerned. Go "Boulevard"!!!</p>
<p>(1) Dismiss the Tunnel and Depressed highway. (2) The Boulevard strategy is the only good solution.</p>
<p>A bus ride in today from Manlius - quite a beautiful strip on E Genesee from Westcott in until...Rte. 81. Horrible entrance to Downtown. A boulevard.</p>
<p>The more I read about the Boulevard. The more I think this is a great idea. This will be better for the people of downtown, the business and lower costs for upkeep.</p>
<p>The Boulevard method as proposed is an excellent improvement and good stewardship of the regionals transit needs.</p>
<p>Explore a roundabout at Erie Boulevard with the boulevard concept emphasize east/west pedestrian transit and bicycle movement.</p>
<p>In the long run, we will be better for having a chosen a more aesthetically-pleasing and welcoming option for our city over the "fast hi-rise" 81 that may cater to the short-term economic concerns of a few. I am very concerned about the possible undue influence of wealth/ power over public good on this process.. Boulevard!</p>
<p>The opinions that should count should be those of the people who LIVE directly around I-81!</p>
<p>The ease of a suburban commuter to get to the Carrier Dome does not trump the future potential growth of downtown Syracuse. The city does not exist to service the region. The city is the region's economic heart and its vitality should be priority number one. The I-81 boulevard option is the common sense best option for the city and its residents. It is the best, most cost-efficient way to unify, beautify, and attract new residents. (and their tax dollars.)</p>

The project scope in the public eye does not explain the required work at the two (2) current 81/ 481 interchanges. This work will be required to be done prior to the work downtown. The project timeline and the cost is not reflective of these two critical components.
Let's do the Boulevard!
Add Northbound Colvin Street exit to accommodate Dome traffic up to Manlius and Skytop parking.
Tear down this WALL! (Boulevard option)
The interchange connection between 690 East and 81 North shows historic buildings on N. Salina impacted/ demolished. This is not acceptable. Moving this connection west and upgrading the Bear St. Connection should be considered and would be akin to the Providence I-195 redevelopment. Eliminating the Townsend Street exit will increase emergency vehicle times to hospital on Northside and should be reconsidered.
I-81 is an interstate highway and its main function is not to assist commuters get to work quickly. Moving the interstate to 481 makes sense. Then the viaduct area can be developed for the benefit of the city. The boulevard concept would make that development possible.
Please include the new highway design standards that will be required for the "rebuild new" option. People need to know.
Boulevard! It will improve our quality of life and our economy. It's also cost-effective. Let's do it!
Please show how long the demolition and rebuild construction phases will require. People need to know.
Boulevard: not too fast. Exit of Seneca Turnpike to encourage diffuse use of street grid. Find similar point of North end. Fast boulevard from 481/ 81-North to Destiny USA.
Please show the new "rebuild" option impact on city streets and neighborhoods.
It is time to focus on the ped/ bike future of downtown Syracuse and the needs of an older/ student/ and disabled population. Time for the Boulevard.
Important are: walkability; access to medical attention; healthful air quality; safe passage for motorists and non-motorists; access to arts and businesses.
Looks like "Boulevard" is the way to go!
No mention of West St. capacity increases impact on Near Westside.
Boulevard option. Incorporate improved public transportation - Light Rail!
Moving the problem from east to west is stupid.
Build Boulevard downtown. No change to I-81 going north and south out of Downtown.
God bless the county legislature - they are right and really represent the people.
Combination Strategies: (1) Relocate I-81 to (current) 481. (2) Create Boulevard. (3) Create urban greenway (i.e. Highline domino effect to revitalize the city).
Concern: Increased chance for 690 exits to become over congested alternative as nearby highway exits near Syracuse. Teal, Thompson and Dewitt already get backed up.
Boulevard Strategy. Our city is currently split in two. We need to open up our city to grow.
Good info - but the cost of all displays/ posters, etc. seems out of proportion. Much info is about plans that have been dismissed.
Totally ok with eliminating tunnel and depressed highway concept. I like Boulevard strategy the best.

<p>Idea: Build the tunnel from Adams to Pearl Street, one section every 5 years = 15 years. Re-use existing overpasses, by converting to a "high line" pedestrian/ bike route/ park. This solves problem of pedestrian crossings by giving an elevated alternative. High Line is the elevated re-purposing of the train line in NYC.</p>
<p>Boulevard.</p>
<p>I'm sad that the tunnel option is off the table. I wish we would make the investment. My girlfriend is pro-rebuild and I am considering the boulevard. I hope we can stay together.</p>
<p>Please exercise a visionary approach and take down the wall, allowing the city to knit itself back together. Tremendous development potential. People will find a way to get around. Boulevard!</p>
<p>#1 priority of government is public safety - how will response times to hospitals (and emergency response) be impacted for each option?</p>
<p>Never thought I'd say... Boulevard option!</p>
<p>Health care for areas outside of the city of Syracuse should be a top priority. This project should ease access to local hospitals.</p>
<p>Build the Boulevard! It'll be aesthetically more pleasing, it will disperse the traffic, and it will take down the barrier between the two portions of the city.</p>
<p>I feel a necessity to discuss the politics of the options and what and if they have anything to do with the present situation or the history. Relating to crime.</p>
<p>Boulevard seems to be the best economic, social, and environmental option. Not to mention cheaper. I say do it!</p>
<p>Park your car behind Phoebe's - near Syracuse Stage and WALK west to the Everson Museum - then tell us if you see 81 as a barrier Dividing the City.</p>
<p>The Boulevard option is the way to go! Costs less and best for the community.</p>
<p>It is vital that the people decide - not the Legislative Common Council, D. Francisco, Congel, etc. Aesthetics are important to us.</p>
<p>Do the Boulevard and make West St. better for the neighborhood too. A 6 lane boulevard is too big though. 4 lanes!</p>
<p>Syracuse, and really any city/ region thinking of the future, needs to include public transportation into its plan for a transit system. We are suburbanites considering becoming a one car family and hoping it can happen in Central New York.</p>
<p>Boulevard, emphasizing slow vehicle traffic, prompting bike use and pedestrians.</p>
<p>Dismiss depressed and tunnel strategies.</p>
<p>Boulevard is the best way to go. It costs less and it seems like the best option!</p>
<p>So excited for this change coming to Syracuse! What an opportunity!</p>
<p>Boulevard costs less and has better outcomes than reconstruction. Seems like a clear choice to me!</p>
<p>And what does Congel think? What is the going bribe price that he will pay?</p>
<p>The Boulevard Strategy would be a huge improvement and allow for more walking and biking. It would be nice to see more al fresco restaurants in that path of I-81.</p>
<p>Any development should take into account the well being of the people living in public housing near the viaduct. These people have suffered from the injustice of placing a Highway in their backyard/ through their neighborhood and should be offered more respect. Projects should be sensitive to the needs of low income communities that may be impacted by the cynicism.</p>

Boulevard seems to make the most sense based on facts evidenced. However, daytime through traffic is much higher than 12%. I road test vehicles regularly on Rte. 81 from North St/ Court St to Rt 481 approximate traffic through seems much higher than 12 % from 9 am to 4 pm.
The use of West St. to accommodate 20% in traffic is horrifying.
Boulevard/ parkway - no cars, bike and pedestrian paths, residential, small scale commercial rec options - must be coupled with public transit improvements.
Raising speed through city to 55 on I-81 is not necessary and should not be done at the expense of existing historical buildings.
Boulevard has various options (N, S, separated) (slower speeds on some arteries...local traffic) (multiple boulevards, not just one) to implement.
Think of needs of future: less fossil fuel use, more bike and pedestrian and public transit use. Work to make the I-81 project work for this future lifestyle, modern city.
The Boulevard concept seems like the least intrusive, unlike the Reconstruct which still has the overpass but with overpass people would still be able to park under it.
Easier on ramp from 81 South to 481 South might get more through traffic to avoid going through the city.
Whatever option is chosen, it's important that it provide connectivity between I-81 north and I-690 west. This was a serious design defect.
I routinely walk between University Hill and Downtown. Crossing on Adams or Harrison or E Genesee is very risky, especially for people with mobility, vision, or hearing impairments.
The Reconstruction option needs to have an exit from 81 south to downtown after the 690 W to 81 south interchange. Right now you can't do that.
In any case, you must add new exit for University Hill at Comstock St.
Say they will rebuild the viaduct. What will it look like in 15 years. 81 is rusty, dirty cracked concrete and a huge eyesore. If we are saddled with this eyesore (even the "more attractive" viaduct is hideous), will there be any guarantee of money for aesthetic purposes?
Consider changing the traffic pattern from the east by putting an interchange on 90 between Minoa and Chittenango to define load on Route 5 and 690.
If you create new elevated roadway - should be high enough to allow for activities and park area below.
Thanks for doing such a good job helping us understand the options and trade-offs.
Please dismiss the Tunnel and Depressed highway strategies. The presentation clearly showed the disadvantages. The impacts for the Reconstruction strategy does not show clearly enough what additional land is needed for the new ramps at downtown to meet federal highway standards.
Provide financial incentives to develop parking lots and dead space into mixed use building around the highway or boulevard. Bus lane!
(1) Like re-route to west (railroad, West Street , or Camillus) (2) Solve 81 S to 690 W problem. (3) Separate pedestrians and cars - Adams Street - crosswalk at interstate ramps? (4) More exits - distribute to more city streets (e.g. Colvin on/ off for SU)
The scorecard for the viaduct reconstruction scenario overstates its social equity/ quality of life value. The "multi-modal enhancements" depicted are negligible This scenario should be ranked "poor." Also, this scenario deprives city workers like me of on ramp access.
Before heading into the displays I would like to see a video (30-45 minutes) that summarizes the problems and issues. Then more into the charts and detailed comparison amid the babble. This year's presentations have fallen prey to professional jargon. Language needs to be defined (e.g. "Viaduct" is a term from Roman history and needs recognition)

Can we fund this by tolls? (Limit access to EZ Pass vehicles.)
The Near Westside suffers under every scenario.
I believe creating a tunnel would be a great idea. If we will create a tunnel, we have to make sure there are necessary exits in the tunnel in case of emergencies.
I work between Erie Boulevard and Water Street downtown - how will I be impacted by the boulevard option?
Overall cost of project - initial construction and future repairs - should be most important consideration.
(1) No Boulevard. (2) No Depressed Highway (3)Reconstruct an elevated Route 81. (4) Create attractive safe and accessible pedestrian bridges under the new 81 at the Adams Street area and at the Park Street (Regional Market, Regional Transportation Center) area to connect sections of the city and encourage foot traffic.
At the very least restrict commercial traffic to 481 and 690 - considerations will be less if only car traffic is downtown.
I feel as the depressed highway wasn't properly developed. There is no consideration for a downtown exit and doesn't take into account the depressed housing areas that can easily be removed for ramps. I'm completely against a boulevard; no one wants 100 stoplights, slow traffic and 6 lanes to cross. Depressed tunnels, rebuild.
Yes, I understand the process.
Boulevard = gridlock! Reconstruct with modern design.
Both the elevated and boulevard options need to be laid out to accommodate a future LRT track.
Please reconstruct. Do not send more traffic to 481 north. Too much now - noise level is high. Will be worse.
Keep the tunnel! "Checks the most boxes" for suburbanites and city residents, would increase downtown property values tremendously.
Do not tear down: -huge job killer - more pollution on city streets. -increased infrastructure cost. -no one will want to beat their way through traffic to come into the city. -lack of access for emergency vehicles.
Rt 81 is a critical resource to CNY. To remove one of its most attractive utilitarian parts is a big mistake!
Environmental effects that increase impervious surfaces and decrease air quality should not be acceptable.
Trying to move back to the past with a Boulevard seems futile. Instead utilize I-81 as a means to create excitement. Syracuse is the 1st real US city coming from Canada. Use that to the city's advantage.
Well, it looks like a foregone conclusion. The option toward reconstruction seems to be a done deal... BUT, the option toward LR looks might promising.
No Boulevard Strategy!!! I want to be able to access many parts/ sections of the city and am up for higher urban development. Why not raise I-81 (2 tiers). Top tier for through traffic; lower tier for traffic entering and exiting the city. Couldn't this eliminate the need for 6-8 lanes of traffic; or create lanes of traffic specific to buses, bikes, etc. Furthermore, some of the deficiencies might be solved.
Bring back places for people to walk, etc. All objections so far seem to be based on convenience.
Consider transit time to hospitals and universities via stop-n-go boulevard traffic. Rebuild!
I like seeing concrete and not tarvia in your plans.
I would prefer that things be kept "Real, in the feel."

<p>As a young person who currently lives in the city, I would like to comment that the Boulevard option would make me far less likely to wish to remain in the city. I would love to stay and raise my children in the city of Syracuse, but the convenience of being able to get to the suburbs quickly (I work in the suburbs and my parents live in Liverpool) is really essential to my lifestyle. I am very pleased with my current community options and I support the reconstruction strategy.</p>
<p>Just do something.</p>
<p>Reconstruction is only option. Boulevard will slow traffic and travel time.</p>
<p>Hanging gardens!!!</p>
<p>I would like to see the viaduct replaced with another viaduct. Obviously the geometry needs to be improved, along with pedestrian access. It has worked for 50 years (more or less). A depressed highway will flood; a boulevard will slow traffic too much!</p>
<p>There is a lot of political posturing going on. People with power are staking a claim for the Boulevard. But the people who actually drive here, who have taken the time to come here, tend to favor reconstruction. Nancy Cantor has a driver. Why should she decide how long I must drive to see my mom? The community wants reconstruction. Don't let "leaders" override us!</p>
<p>I feel a Boulevard creates more vehicle congestion than most people think. Syracuse is not a city where the majority of people bike/ walk to work/ stores etc. We see 275 days of cloudy skies, roughly, decreasing the desire to bike. Winters speak for themselves. I feel a reconstruction is the most viable long term decision. Take into account traffic exits during rush hour; 690 to exits 81 South and from there to Adams/ Harrison. Make the bridges higher and factor in high density areas with more on/ off ramps.</p>
<p>Reconstruction option is the best choice. Boulevard option would increase accidents and increase delays.</p>
<p>(1) Depressed highway concept incorrectly engineered. Need Downtown exit. Start it farther south and widen Almond Street. Exit at Castle Street/ Renwick Avenue to widened Almond Street. Acquire additional land to west for right of way. (2) Boulevard concept does not work. Traffic analysis is flawed, would not reduce travel times. Placed cited as being "Great examples" of this did not work. San Francisco example is a great example of how the traffic analysis was wrong. Corridor/ boulevards are extremely backed up. (3) Elevated Reconstruction or Depressed Highway are best options.</p>
<p>Reconstruct the overpass in its current place; modernize and visually enhance the reconstructed viaduct. Do not pump more traffic into DeWitt. We live near I-481 and traffic is already intolerable.</p>
<p>One way roads needed to ease Harrison/ Adams bottleneck. Consider Washington and Fayette. Keep 81 with Reconstruction. Boulevard will be a TRAFFIC NIGHTMARE!</p>
<p>Boulevard will cause pedestrian nightmare ESPECIALLY with the aging population - Timers will have to be longer for accessibility reasons and will make lights longer. Reconstruct! Taller, provide green space below - maintain parking underneath and park space for surrounding businesses and residents. Texas and Seattle, WA: GREAT examples.</p>
<p>(The following comment was written in response to Op-ed article published in the Post-Standard on 5/19/13. The article was entitled "Let's not miss the chance to do what's right for Syracuse" by David M. Rubin.) Dear Mr. Rubin - Thank God you are not a highway planner - the boulevard and viaduct are both a bad idea - another 50 years of bad planning will not help Syracuse to grow and be revitalized. Go back to your home in East Syracuse - a tunnel separating vehicular and pedestrian traffic is the best idea - with a public park on top.</p>
<p>No boulevard ! Go reconstruction. The Boulevard is just going to increase accidents and delays. There is nothing wrong with just doing reconstruction.</p>

Learn from the Southern Tier. Boulevards are more of a barrier than ANYTHING. KEEP 81.
The elevated should go - it stinks up the city and drivers don't follow 'good driving' etiquette. A boulevard would snazz up the city.
Definitely in favor of "reconstruction." No Boulevard!!
The Boulevard option seems the most viable while remaining cost effective and increasing the aesthetics and Downtown availability. The Tunnel would be extremely costly, especially when existing underground infrastructure is considered. The same goes for the depressed highway. Reconstruction and rehab do nothing to improve neighborhood connectivity. The boulevard would bring in a new perspective of Syracuse, branding us as pedestrian and bike friendly while rerouting through traffic to 481.
The noise and traffic would be horrendous if they send all traffic via Route 481. People living near 481 now can't hear themselves think especially in winter and fall when the trees are bare. The best way is to rebuild the same location as is. The land is already there and paid for. Making it an "Erie Boulevard type road" would be insane. Traffic would be backed up trying to get to the hospitals. There would be no business downtown from outside the city if they just tear it down and leave it.
I am in agreement with elimination of the tunnel and depressed highway options. As a city resident, I do not favor reconstruction. Noise, pollution, and the intimidation factor for pedestrians does not favor reconstruction. The hospitals, University, ambulance services have all favored the Boulevard option, as more development friendly.
Rebuild the current roadway!!! All other options are flawed.
What's more expensive to maintain over the long run - Boulevard or rebuilt aqueduct? In fifty years will be the new aqueduct be in the same sad state as the current? Who paints it? I think the Boulevard is the best option out of a lot of tough choices.
Rebuild! No boulevard. It will just become another city mess.
Based on the Boulevard option benefits to the community, I favor that option much more highly than the reconstruction.
Disruption is key! Reconstruction seems less than Boulevard approach.
Tear it down!!! Replace it with a Boulevard. Be brave and step outside the box And give our city a chance to move forward!!
Take it down! (Boulevard option).
Tear it down, keep it down!
<p>Comments for the I-81 Public Review process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syracuse/ CNY needs a comprehensive transportation management plan, not just a quick fix. As far as I can tell, that plan must incorporate public health, must include taking down I-81, and greatly increasing and improving accessible public transit options throughout Syracuse and CNY. • Since the mid-20th century, Syracuse/ CNY transport choices shifted towards intensive auto use & dependence, but this followed an original ~150 years of comparably accessible public transportation. Studies have argued, public transport created the current CNY settlement pattern in local towns and villages. (Carson 1978) <p>Planning must keep our original formative transport history in perspective and correct for the relatively recent exclusion of lower-income groups from CNY transport planning (4-5 decades since I-81). For example, there is plenty of plausible evidence that increasing and improving CNY public transit options</p>

would enable more people to access better jobs.

- The existing I-81 infrastructure poses severe environmental and social injustice burdens upon Syracuse residents living within a few hundred feet of I-81. These burdens especially result from their constant daily exposure to CO, SO_x, NO_x, Ozone, particulate matter, likely mercury contamination and other motor vehicular emissions. These emissions likely generate multiple health impacts, including respiratory, carcinogenic and other effects, including potentially unknown impacts. I have personally seen young children at Pioneer Homes regularly playing basketball underneath the Adams Street exit, as there is playground there.

Many of the residents near I-81 cannot afford to defend themselves and often have few choices in housing location. The list of locations considered in this sense should include Pioneer Homes, Toomey Abbot Towers, the VA hospitals, Martin Luther King Elementary School, and many private homes. And staying inside the buildings does not equate to an adequate “filter” against vehicular pollution. Many studies including at the Center for Environmental Excellence (CoE) here in Syracuse indicate, pollution from vehicular emissions most often penetrates building HVAC ventilation systems (Again, I plan on suggestion literature for your review soon). If we were back in 1964 and this was a proposal to build I-81, I would place a formal protest against the motion, as a criminally negligent act against resident’s health. I call upon the planning process to include these clearly evident health concerns.

- Syracuse may have one of the highest, if not the highest CO₂ ‘dome’ recorded among upstate NY cities (Buckley 2012, and presentation by Buckley at CoE conference). The intensity is likely related to the central city’s topography as having a ‘bowl’ shape, and potentially how weather inversion can ‘trap’ stagnant air conditions in this ‘bowl.’ My personal observation is: on many recent summer afternoons from a tall hill nearby, I observed and photographed significant atmospheric haze over central Syracuse.

According to one aggravated report, Syracuse ranks xx worst of xx cities in greenhouse gas emissions from motor vehicle transport (Brown et al 2008). The existing combination of high greenhouse gas and other pollutant emissions supports my initial recommendations that Syracuse/ CNY develop a comprehensive transport plan, including meaningful transit alternatives. And again, these conditions suggest linking urban planning processes with public health.

- Syracuse has a significant Urban Heat Island (UHI) problem, first documented by Flynn (1980), but also by student work in 2006 (Thurman). Urban Heat Island (UHI) are typically related mostly to the total blacktop area present throughout the land area in question.

One comprehensive UHI reduction plan that has seemed to stand the test of time, can be found in Stuttgart Germany. The city of Stuttgart Germany is structurally similar to the city of Syracuse, in how they are both bowl-shaped. Since the 1930’s, Stuttgart encouraged planted trees along the sloping sides surrounding the city, as they found this facilitated regular breezes blowing through the urban core, potentially by creating a directed temperature imbalance. Tree shade generally has a cooling effect, which combined with regular breezes, can help ameliorate an UHI. As a result, Stuttgart city is likely cooler and more pollution-free than it would otherwise be (Hough 2004).

Stuttgart’s UHI management approach might seem ideal for Syracuse, and planting more trees is included in the City of Syracuse sustainability plan in part as an UHI solution. However, I would estimate the existing I-81 roadway presents a significant logistical obstacle on effective tree-cooling in the urban core. As I-81 absorbs and re-radiates heat, and contributes heated vehicular pollution; it may significantly contribute to the Syracuse UHI. Furthermore, I-81 may create a localized ‘heat barrier’ to any ventilating breezes which could otherwise sweep through the urban core and South

Side. When local temperatures rise much above ~90F, tree respiration tends to shut down, and trees tend to contribute more Volatile Organic Compounds (VOC's) than they sequester. So given I-81's likely higher heat contributions, what may be the least expensive and most socially viable method available for UHI reduction, faces an 'uphill battle' as long as I-81 exists as is.

- Diverting I-81 traffic to 481 seems like one option open here, but consider that doing so without attempting to reduce local traffic will result in significantly adding to the Covanta incinerator emissions along Rock Cut Road. These emissions are notably high in NO_x, SO_x and carcinogenic compounds including mercury. The need for reducing traffic can be met by increasing and improving public transit options in and out of Syracuse.

- I understand this is a difficult process with many inevitable tradeoffs, and requires full citizen involvement. I commend your team for doing what you can to include all citizens. However, I recommend you go beyond the accepted 20th-century 'norm' of isolating planning to 'economic' concerns, and fully integrate public health, environmental and social concerns into this planning process. I suggest including academics and citizen groups keen about ecologically-minded planning. I do think we can enact a reasonable solution including a broader and more meaningful transport plan for Syracuse/ CNY, within a reasonable amount of time.

I will send a further clarification on this public comment. Thank You.

Images are copied from Hough (2004), pages 215-216.

This is a standard textbook in regular use in a municipal planning course taught at the landscape Architecture program at SUNY – College of ESF, Syracuse.

Diagrams:

Figure 6.17: Diagram of Stuttgart's cooling system showing directions of katabatic winds down vegetated slopes and valleys into the city. (Source: Professor Dr. J. Baummetter, Office of Environmental Protection, Urban Climate and Planning, Stuttgart.)

Plate 6.7: Oblique view of Stuttgart from the air. These forested slopes are a key factor determining downtown ventilation and air quality in the city as a whole. (Source: Office of Environmental Protection, Department of Urban Climate and Planning, Stuttgart.)

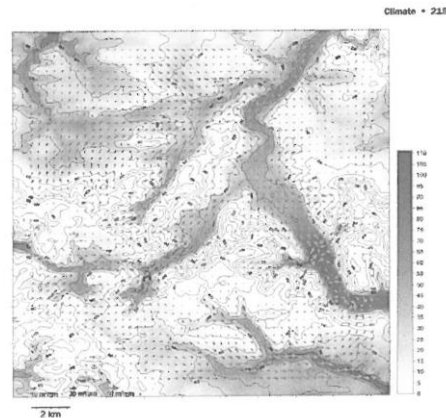


Figure 6.17 Diagram of Stuttgart's cooling system showing directions of katabatic winds down vegetated slopes and valleys into the city.
Source: Professor Dr. J. Baummetter, Office of Environmental Protection, Urban Climate and Planning, Stuttgart.



Plate 6.7 Oblique view of Stuttgart from the air. These forested slopes are a key factor determining downtown ventilation and air quality in the city as a whole.
Source: Office of Environmental Protection, Dept. of Urban Climate and Planning, Stuttgart.

<p>I agree that the boulevard is the best option. However, this opportunity should be used to give PRIORITY to public transit and non-motorized modes and to improve quality of life for city residents who live around I-81. And the 81 corridor should not be a barrier or have a negative impact on noise and air pollution. This is also an opportunity to take a strong position against automobile dependency, decentralization, sprawl, and climate change/ CO2 emissions. Do this right and build a human-scale boulevard, for people, not cars. 6 lanes of car traffic is WAY TOO MUCH! 6 lanes of traffic (composed of many impatient commuters who do not have any ties to the neighborhoods they are passing through) will not improve the quality of life, connectivity, of this area, nor create a pleasant environment. This is a wonderful opportunity to push the envelope and build a world-class trend setting example which will revitalize the city, attract residents, improve quality of life and the environment, provide ecological series, push for transit mode changes and even to create an attraction! Design for people NOT for cars! Design for the quality of life, and ease of accessibility of all people, especially those who have NOT abandoned the city, and to enable and empower the mobility of the youth, the elderly, the disabled and the poor, not for those who have contributed to sprawl, environmental degradation, the collapse of the city's tax base, segregation, the demise of the city's school district and the high levels of vacancy and deterioration in the city. Learn from Vitoria-Gasteiz and what other progressive, international cities are doing. Be a leader and don't settle for a mediocre solution. Do what is right for future generations and the health of our people and planet.</p>
<p>I definitely feel the boulevard is best for the region as a whole. Downtown and SU and the medical complex is the economic engine for CNY. The boulevard will connect the core and allow it to continue flourishing. Possibly, to alleviate concerns crossing the 6 lanes, you should consider a pedestrian subway at one key place.</p>
<p>I like the Reconstruction and Boulevard strategies, however: (1) The Reconstruction Strategy still provides a barrier between campus and downtown. (2) The boulevard is a significant barrier to access between campus/ downtown relationship. (3) While the added (missing ramps) from 81 to 690 W would improve travel for those in cars, it will greatly disturb the Franklin Square neighborhood. I would like to see a solution that combines the bike lanes/ occupiable space of the reconstruction scheme in the scheme for the boulevard. Bringing a multi-lane highway down to grade or keeping any part of the bridge and reconstructing it are not very good options for pedestrian connectivity within the city.</p>
<p>I prefer the Boulevard option. If possible, I would like to see the size reduced to make the boulevard more pedestrian and bike friendly. The traffic accommodated by the current 6 lane design, could be absorbed by the urban grid and less lanes could be used for boulevard. The University and Downtown need a better connection.</p>
<p>Yes - ditch the tunnel and depressed highway options. Boulevard and reconstruction both seem attractive. Reconstruct - with making Almond Street for bicycles and pedestrians is okay but I favor the boulevard option.</p>
<p>Hoping for a boulevard but wondering what it will be like to cross on my bike...</p>
<p>The overpass should be taken down! The overpass serves as a barrier that separates our city.</p>
<p>The Boulevard option is far superior to the Viaduct reconstruction! It should have fewer lanes than are depicted in the rendering, and greater support for commerce and multi-modal cross-traffic.</p>
<p>We cannot forsake the city for a highway. There needs to be a larger view to solution.</p>
<p>Boulevard with financial incentives for developing mixed-use areas surrounding it. 6 lanes is also too big!</p>
<p>Viaduct reconstruction is not a good solution. It poorly serves city residents, downtown workers and university workers by reducing our access to the highway, so it privileges through traffic over city traffic.</p>

<p>Boulevard strategy very good but no mention of change or increase access to points East (University, Hospitals, Dome). From the south: via 81/481: increased access there would be necessary to keep traffic flowing and east traffic into city north and west.</p>
<p>Take down elevated portion and put in a light rail service from Brewerton to Tully.</p>
<p>I like the boulevard IF there is sufficient attention to pedestrian crossings. I liked the depictions of pedestrian bridges over the depressed highway. But I do understand why that option was found to be unfeasible. I oppose reconstruction - it is a missed opportunity to rebuild and enhance our urban center.</p>
<p>As a suburban resident who commutes to downtown from the north, I am pleased to see that the boulevard option would reduce travel time slightly. However, I find this conclusion surprising, considering that the traffic study seems to conclude that the amount of non-local traffic diverted to 481 is fairly minimal (i.e. there is still essentially the same amount utilizing 81). I would have imagined that the slowdown to a boulevard setting beyond 690 would cause a delay or backup on 81 south during peak hours. Also, in a separate issue, what is the impact of local traffic on 481 (particularly originating from 690 as well as points to the east)? This factor seems to have been glossed over in the study pertaining to through (non-local) traffic that would be diverted to 481.</p>
<p>I agree with dismissing all but the 2 remaining options. I lean towards the boulevard option for environmental, social, and economic reasons; however, I'm concerned that the reconstruction concept image looks more appealing to bikes and pedestrians than the boulevard option. If we go with the boulevard, much more time needs to go into making sure it is not a worse barrier than we currently have. I also have one comment on access to areas south of the city. It seems that university hill would be more accessible to these areas (and vice versa) if traffic were allowed through south campus and on to 481. Please consider some sort of interchange modifications to this stretch of 481 to ensure better access.</p>
<p>I am very concerned with the potential impacts to historic E. Seneca Turnpike from the proposed news ramps from I-81 to 481, northbound south of the City. I prefer the boulevard alternative but do not want to see environmental and historic impacts to the landscape of this area. There is sensitive geology (karst limestone) in this area including a sinkhole under I-81 and disturbance could cause drainage and subsidence problems in unpredictable ways and distant areas such as the Valley. Structures and alignment of E. Seneca Turnpike are important to the history of the area and it appears some might be slated for removal in this plan. If this disturbance could be minimized I would not hesitate to support the boulevard alternative.</p>
<p>Our family shares the memories and experiences of practically every combination of the life-work-play dynamics that could possibly apply to our community, city, and suburbs. We experienced the open boulevard of the 60's and the elevated I-81 since then. Simply put: Every single one of us hope, wish and pray that the elevated I-81 is removed and replaced with the boulevard. We believe that will have a tremendously positive effect on the area, business, and people - both present and future.</p>
<p>Our family represents 5 generations of Syracusans, whose background and experiences include life, study, work, business, practice, and retirement in numerous locations throughout the city and nearby suburbs. We share family experiences, observations, writings and biographies of our family and community dating from the early 1900's forward to the present day. Every single one of us feels very strongly that the elevated highway must be removed and replaced with a boulevard. We are intimately familiar with all the combinations of home-work-study-shop-walk-transit-bike-commute-weather in various locations throughout the city, metro and CNY area - and we all agree that the elevated highway must go. Open up our city to the existing and future citizens and businesses; invite and welcome ALL; share the outdoors, fresh air, and community spirit together, day and night, every day, all 4 seasons. Ours is a wonderful city and community, so let's get outdoors and share it!</p>

I perceive, from the materials presented, that the boulevard concept is being pushed forward as the most desirable alternative. I disagree. I think it is ill-conceived, short-sighted, and unrealistic. If the current I81 is perceived as dividing the city, it seems that the boulevard concept would make it all the more so. How would traffic, pedestrians and bicycles get across? With difficulty. How would traffic flow along the boulevard? It wouldn't. We already have far too many traffic lights to deal with. The boulevard would necessitate that many more. I understand that the boulevard would be made of three lanes in each direction. I see that number as insufficient. I also see major problems with emergency traffic trying to negotiate the boulevard during peak traffic hours. Where would they go when all traffic lanes are backed up for blocks? On the sidewalk? In comparing Syracuse to San Francisco's boulevard system, it seems that some major factors have been ignored. For one, the weather is vastly different. How many pedestrians and bicyclists are there in the winter months, which actually range from November through March and well into April? S.F. has no real winter as we know it here. What is the safety factor of surrounding neighborhoods? Many suburbanites are afraid to venture into the city now, when they have highway systems for most of their journey. How many would want to come in when they have to sit and wait for lights in notoriously dangerous areas? How many city dwellers would want to do that, for that matter? If truth be told, there are areas of this city currently that many people will not go into or travel through. It seems that the boulevard might be added to that number. Increased travel time is another big factor. I hate to think how much longer it will take to get north and south from and to different sections of the city via the boulevard or its "complimentary routes." It also seems that a large number of popular venues will be impacted that are now easily accessible via I81. Access to the hospitals, S.U., cultural events, governmental facilities, the Regional Market, ball park, Destiny, etc. will be much more difficult. I strongly favor the reconstruction model. It will provide well for the main purpose of a highway--quick and safe transportation from one area to another if it's properly designed, and not left in the hands of the sadists who designed the current viaduct area. I have never felt that I81 "divided the city." It's a simple matter to use the many streets that go under or over it. True, the area underneath the highway is not overly attractive, but many steps can be taken to overcome this issue. Witness "Art Under the Bridge" in Jacksonville, FL. <http://riversideartsmarket.com>. Granted, such an attraction would be impacted by seasonal and parking challenges, but a determined and creative steering force could deal with these issues effectively. I have never understood why areas under the bridge haven't been used for parking to a greater extent. Perhaps a shuttle system could be used to transport people from the I81 area to the business areas to make parking here more desirable. I think the tried and true concept of an efficient, safe highway system would do much more to promote the viaduct area, while still providing the usual benefits to all those who now access the highway. I strongly support RECONSTRUCTION of I81.

Currently we have 4-lane highway and a 4-6 lane highway in the area in question. Some want to replace that with just a 6-lane boulevard. Its asinine to think this will be an improvement for several reasons: 1) Rush-hour traffic will not improve because you are removing what is already an efficient artery and replacing it with nothing. The people getting off at Adams, Harrison, the 690-exits, Clinton, Salina, Franklin, West, Catawba, etc. will have their commute lengthen extensively if they have to stop at a light every hundred yards rather than cruise right on in to their exit. 2) Everyone expects an economic revitalization of the Almond St. area. How can that happen when an overwhelming majority of the real estate in that area is owned by tax-free organizations? East of Almond, you've got the University on the Hill and the Hospitals which own most of the property from before the Adams Exit to I-690. West of Almond, you've got more property owned by Upstate, a number of Onondaga County Buildings including the Jail and parking lots. There is almost nothing left for upstarts because the prime real estate is already snapped up. 3) If you look at the I-81 Virtual Public Meeting diagrams, you'll notice that there are an overwhelming number of question marks and unknowns on the analysis for the Boulevard option. The I-81 Challenge people have an overwhelming bias towards putting in a boulevard, and it is evident because they irresponsibly rated it the highest of the options, despite having no concrete solutions outside of the 1.4 mile stretch they want to replace with a boulevard.

While the boulevard strategy looks and sounds nice, in reality, it would create congestion at the many traffic lights located along it. This would mean increased noise and emissions from cars and trucks stopped along the boulevard. Would the increased traffic on 481 create an overload to that highway and an increased cost to the trucking business that now travels through the city on 81? I haven't seen any ideas for what will be built along the boulevard that will impact the usefulness of the land there. Will there be more people displaced to build this? Please remember that the other cities that took down their highways were large cities that had other highways in place to take the traffic through their cities, not a small city like Syracuse that has but one highway going north/south through the city. Since we are in the center of the state, it is a very important part of the state transportation system and should not be removed completely. I feel that reconstruction would be the best way to go.

I think removal of the highway is the best option for the city. I was also happy to see that it is the cheapest and has the highest scores for all criteria (Transportation, economic, social, and environmental). If its the least expensive and provides the most benefit I do not see why we would rebuild.

While I'm a little disappointed that the strategy I was hoping would prevail did not, I understand why it wasn't chosen. I feel the tunnel could have worked with a little more thought put into it, but the 2 remaining options are justified. IF the reconstruction of the bridge is chosen, wouldn't putting it at the exact same height--regardless of recreational space--create the same barrier effect? IF the Blvd. is chosen, do you really think that it can withstand all of the local traffic without being congested? The constant flow of traffic on the current bridge allows for a semi-smooth trip through the city. While I know the goal is to create a better environment for all modes of transportation, I fear the 690 on-ramp will be a disaster trying to access during peak hours. I just can't seem to picture all of current local traffic that travels on 81 sitting at a stop light. As you previously stated, the actual Through traffic which will go around the city will have little impact on the current flow of local traffic. I like to think of myself as open minded and would love to be proven wrong about the concerns I just listed, but hopefully future designs will address those issues. I really like how plans to complete the 81-690 interchange are integrated the strategies, so good job on that!

The boulevard is conveniently disregarding the negative impact on local businesses that depend on I-81's visibility. Destiny USA also happens to be the region's #1 tourist destination -- much of its success is owed to its current proximity to 81. Redirect traffic away from the city - and people WILL stay away from downtown, permanently.

Also the boulevard strategy appears to include a major reconstruction of the 690 West to East corridor?

None of these strategies have been thought through thoroughly - adopting Water Street as a unidirectional street would destroy its use as a bike boulevard as per the city of Syracuse bicycle master plan - there is PLENTY of capacity along the existing Erie Boulevard corridor. Secondly, there are so many good examples of boulevard design - it seems shameful that the conceptual rendering puts so much emphasis on north - south traffic flow - when the primary movement of traffic within the city is east west between University Hill and downtown. Simply because the right of way is so large does not mean that the resultant street need be so too. At the same time, it seems that on the surface this approach frees up the most space between the Hill and Downtown for new and re-development along the Almond Street corridor. Under no circumstances should Water Street be preempted into a one way vehicular corridor. Removal of the highway would also present the opportunity to reconnect Cedar and Madison Streets across Almond.

The intersection between current I-481 and SR5/SR92 seems seriously under-performing at all but the lightest traffic volumes. Two-lane southbound exit ramp from current I-481 to SR5 should be considered, or extend I-690 to a point east of the current terminus at I-481. The proposed new Walnut exit on I-690 to serve University seems feasible.

I support the Boulevard concept. I believe there are enough options for it and existing city streets to adequately absorb the necessary car traffic that is entering the downtown/university area and in fact could encourage downtown/university visits/exploration especially if attention is paid to signage and directions for parking. It also improves bike and pedestrian access and safety. I currently walk back and forth from the Meadowbrook area to/from downtown several times a week. Most of the walk is pleasant and safe EXCEPT for crossing Almond Street and going under the Rt 81 overpass. Most traffic on Almond St. is rushing to or from the exit/entrance ramps and there are few traffic lights. The intersections with traffic lights are still not safe due to the large number of vehicles turning right on red and not looking for pedestrians. A boulevard with designated crossing areas at street intersections and a city speed limit would be far safer. The current Almond St. area encourages highway type speeds. I believe the use of 481 as the new 81 is a very acceptable route for thru traffic and would not appreciably add travel time since those cars would be able to avoid the current slower moving congestion in the downtown area. Although I walk a lot, I also drive and have no problem using 481/690 as the route to get to any northern/western businesses. I am sure that anyone wishing to get to Destiny can be easily directed there from the new 81 given proper signage.

Boulevard option seems to have most potential for economic revival of 15th ward. // Realigning I-81 to follow current I-481 should have relatively little impact on traffic that currently passes THROUGH Syracuse. // Northern end of proposed Almond Boulevard should better connect to north side neighborhood street grid. // The proposed Erie Blvd./ Water St couplet creates a massive intersection near the northern end of the proposed Almond Boulevard as currently designed. // Consider glass-enclosed pedestrian/ bikeway overpasses over the Almond Boulevard at Adams, Harrison, and E Genesee. // Colvin Street needs a full interchange with the current I-81, especially if it becomes a SR-81. // Consideration should be given to an underpass of the Railroad in place of current overpass. //Change Interstate designation of the current I-81 from the northern intersection with SR-481/I-481, as it becomes a spur leading to I-90 and I-690, possibly I-981 or I-190. //The analysis too quickly dismisses the importance and need for better traffic access from South of Syracuse to points west of Geddes Street and reverse. SR173 is already overloaded with East-West traffic; and SR80 ends at SR175. //In lieu of a local Southwest bypass loop, consideration for an upgraded route for truck traffic between Cortland area and Weedsport Thruway should be studied.

<p>As a person that lives in North Syracuse and commutes to the near Westside for work using 81, I wholeheartedly support the Boulevard concept as I think it would be better for the city in the long run. In addition to the new 481N and 81N interchange. It would be beneficial to the surface streets near that interchange to have a possible access to 481 for the suburbs in Liverpool and the Morgan Road area in between Rt 31 and 81. The continued development in that area is putting significant congestion into surface streets like Bear Rd.</p>
<p>I have lived in Syracuse almost my entire life. I have never seen what the city looked like before 81 bisected it, but I can imagine. I have always disliked the highway cutting through the city it did not make sense. As a Landscape Architect I can't help to get excited about the prospect of a boulevard experience when entering the City from the South or North. Right now when we enter from the South the experience approaching the city on the curvilinear path of 81 presents the city with the dome as a prominent image and is very pleasant. From the North visitors are welcomed by Destiny and back of building that were once part of streets connected to the other side of the highway. It is not an attractive first image visitors have. Approaching by a boulevard that is tree lined with activity etc... would have an image that yes Syracuse is a nice place to visit and live. I can't imagine that removing 81 through the city would hurt the Destiny. Destiny is a destination and people will get there because they planned it and won't be bothered to drive another 5 to 10 minutes to get there.</p>
<p>The boulevard strategy comes out on top along all the assessment parameters, including costs. It seems the obvious choice. I also believe it is the optimal choice for the city and region. It will: promote the renaissance of the center city, which anchors the whole region; free up valuable land for development; allow for more non-car transportation; improve air quality and noise. Concerning comments in the news that I-81 is "main street" for the mall: If people come from out of town to shop at Destiny, they will not be dissuaded by a changed highway structure. (As it is, the highway does a poor job of connecting to the mall for anyone traveling from the south.) There may be a small negative impact on impulse shoppers who are traveling through the region and happen to see the mall from the highway, but how many of those are there, really? Improved connectivity within the city may promote other businesses and help us diversify, rather than depending so heavily on the mall for sales tax revenues. And, finally, just consider the metaphor of "main street" -- an interstate simply does not qualify. If we want a "main street," the boulevard is definitely the way to go.</p>
<p>My favored option is the boulevard with a bypass on 481. I appreciate the development opportunities while decreasing expensive bridge maintenance.</p>
<p>Based on cost alone, it was the right move to dismiss the tunnel and depressed highway strategies, not to mention that they clearly had other unwanted impacts and did not accomplish the objectives. I think the two choices have been made pretty clear. Nice job by everyone who put this together, this is very informative.</p>
<p>The gallery of posters was informative, but calling this a "public meeting" was a misrepresentation. A meeting is where presentations are given and the public can make verbal comments, not a walk-through. Secondly, I wanted a tangible copy of what was presented, but there is no quick access to a comprehensive PDF for all of the slides. We have to print them out individually. We shouldn't have to go slide-by-slide and print just one page before moving onto the next.</p>
<p>Building the tunnel would be a better option. It would look better. I'd think the area on top of the tunnel could be used for buildings and maybe a park or two. The tunnel option would also deal with the snow removal process. No snow in the tunnel.</p>
<p>I think That You should Put I-81 underground and where the highway use to be above ground . That Land should be redeveloped . Or If I-481 is changed to I-81 , The section of I-81 from I-690 west(downtown) to 481 north exit 27(Oswego exit) should be rerouted as the New I-481. That Section Of I-81 going towards the Mall could act as the New Bypass for I-81 .</p>

I do not understand how the reconstruction and boulevard strategies can be ranked very good to good on social when it appears that both of these strategies prohibit traffic calming on West Street and thus essentially halt the revitalization of some of the poorest census tracts in the US and their reconnection to downtown. It appears that the 70 million in new investment there has been undervalued or ignored in the rankings.

The tunnel and depressed highway assessments indicate they are not good alternatives. Regarding the boulevard concept I would say do it if you want Syracuse to "drop off the map". Remember how many towns lost their vitality when the Interstate System was developed and bypassed the locality. Syracuse is unique and fortunate that the Interstate System didn't pass it by but brought traffic right to the downtown area. Do you think I-90 in any way added to the economic vitality of Rochester, Utica or Rome? Now people were able to travel from Buffalo to Albany without ever seeing what these cities had to offer. Syracuse is not a strong metro area. Removing access from I-81, even by the "Boulevard Concept", will push Syracuse into a deep black hole.

As some have noted, Syracuse has not one Interstate that bisects the City, but two. I-81 services traffic from/to the North and South and splits the city from West and East while I-690 services traffic from/to West and East and splits the City from North and South. Two major Interstates running through the heart of the City, in differing directions. From the point of view of servicing traffic, having two Interstates running through a City the size of Syracuse has been and is a bonanza. But I argue that the City can get along fine with only one of the two. Remove ALL of I-81 in the City proper from Destiny to South of Adams including the elevated viaduct. Give the land formerly occupied by I-81 back to the City to develop as the City sees fit. Then accommodate the traffic which formerly used I-81 in a manner which causes little or no extra inconvenience. To do this, increase the capacity of I-690 to handle increased traffic loads. Now connect I-81 from Destiny area to I-690 somewhere near Hiawatha interchange. There never has been a connector from I-690 E to I-81 N, nor from I-81 S to I-690 W so that work would have to be included no matter which option is chosen anyhow. Make all necessary changes to make this work. If people are concerned regarding impact to Metro Sewage Treatment facility and other facilities along Hiawatha to I-690, build a viaduct there if necessary, or consider other options which will make this work. Further East on I-690 which has been expanded to carry the necessary traffic, construct off-ramps which are designed to carry traffic volumes which seek to exit there with their destinations such as hospitals, SU, Harrison Street downtown, etc. Almond would regress to a simple Blvd not much different than Townsend and would likewise be designed to handle all traffic loads. Interstate traffic which has no intention of stopping in Syracuse would take what is now I-481 re-signed as I-81 so they won't know any difference. Compensate the Businesses that are genuinely negatively impacted. All traffic coming from the North onto I-690 will have their choice of many different off ramps to get onto the local City road network to get to their destination. If more off ramps are necessary to handle traffic, build them. Likewise, the commuters going home in the evening, make their way to I-690 then to Hiawatha Interchange to I-81 home. All commuters coming from the South would approach Almond Blvd and make their movements there whether their destination is the Hospitals or SU to the East, or downtown to the West. For that traffic who have destinations elsewhere, they can connect with I-690 for either direction by an appropriately designed on-ramp from Almond Blvd. Evening commutes would be similar in the opposite direction with an on-ramp to I-81 South near Almond/Adams similar to existing. NYSDOT can do more in-depth traffic studies to determine how many vehicles have particular destinations, then traffic capacity modeling can be done to tell us how well various parts of this proposal may perform. Tweak the concept as necessary. And we would even be able to make comparisons to the Current I-81 experience to get a grasp on what it may mean for us, personally. NYSDOT will also determine all the impacts associated with the construction of such a proposal, and where problems are found, attempt to avoid the impacts or lessen them to make it more acceptable. Syracuse doesn't need two Interstates bisecting the City. We can't get rid of them both and still service the traffic in a responsible manner, but we should be able to get rid of one of them, and reap some big-time benefits long overdue the City.

If you think of the Blvd comprised entirely of Interstate traffic, that is ... a replacement for Interstate traffic, it is true that the Blvd would separate or split or cut off the City every bit as much as the viaduct does, or even more so. But if you think of the Blvd designed for and carrying both local City traffic with some of the former interstate traffic destined for locations which are distributed by it, (and other amts of interstate traffic going onto the city grid distributed elsewhere to reduce loading on Blvd) then the Blvd can be seen as part of the City grid ... The City network. It wouldn't be a foreign facility like the Viaduct is, and it wouldn't separate, cut-off or become a barrier. The Blvd becomes part of the City in ways the Viaduct never had hopes of ever becoming.

The Depressed Highway concept is a mirror image of the Elevated Highway option, in that both provide links via city streets within a super-charged context. The sights, sounds and smells associated with high speed, high volume traffic starkly contrast with most city streets—even those that might occasionally experience bumper-to-bumper peak hour traffic. Regardless of how low [or high] the interstate corridor, a highway infuses the contiguous area with physical features and functions inconsistent with traditional urban conditions. The “connecting” city streets—no matter how creatively designed—always will be viewed as tenuous links. Eliminating the Depressed Highway strategy from further consideration makes sense, as does eliminating the Reconstruction concept for the same concerns. The Tunnel Strategy, while presenting excellent opportunities for reconnecting UH and Downtown, likely would do so at the expense of other existing streets, buildings and neighborhoods—making elimination of this concept acceptable. Regarding the Reconstruction strategy, some summary findings are inconsistent with the evaluation provided; specifically: Transportation: Given strong public sentiment regarding access, it’s unclear how eliminating some local access ramps—particularly at Adams and Harrison—can lead to an overall finding of “Very Good.” Social Equity/Quality of Life: “Moderate property impacts” appears exclusive to physical conditions based on likely alignment, and ignores effects on urban character. In addition, even with the acknowledgment that a visual barrier will remain, calling out possible functional improvements between UH and Downtown and the potential for “context sensitive design” marginalizes the negative visual impact any elevated structure [regardless of height] will have on the urban environment and attendant quality of life—and calls to question an assessment of “Good to Fair.” Environmental Stewardship: With 4 of the 5 remarks pointing out undesirable conditions [low consistency with environmental initiatives, possible higher emissions, impacts to landmarks and historic resources, and nearly ¼ more impervious areas], it’s difficult to accept a “Good to Fair” finding. Therefore, while Reconstruction regrettably might remain a viable option for further consideration, it does not have the level of merit indicated. In the Boulevard Strategy assessment, the representative images of an at-grade boulevard for local traffic unfortunately are less than inspiring—suggesting the result will be only slightly better than a mid-20th century urban arterial, like the current West Street. It would have been more appropriate to reference Boston’s Rose Kennedy Greenway, which sits on top of the Big Dig. With a commitment to high quality urban design, Syracuse could have an equally dynamic multi-layered boulevard that accommodates multi-modal traffic, provides acres of new recreational space, and creates attractive new city places. Finally, the assessments for the 2 preferred strategies do not present possible impacts north of Spencer Street and south of Raynor. Regardless of the selected concept—but particularly with the Boulevard Strategy—it will be imperative to incorporate these areas into the overall design, making it necessary to consider likely impacts now.

Station 5: Our transit system

Improving Our Transit System and making it more accessible especially outside the City and at the City Limits would be a help in reducing traffic on I-81 or in the proposed Boulevard, whichever is decided. Unfortunately to have a better Transit System than what we have now without a steep rise in fares depends on funding which has not been easy over the years.

<p>Light rail seems too expensive and permanent an option for a town with no population growth and for a time when technology is changing rapidly, making bus transit a potentially lower environmental impact and cost in the near future. (i.e. driverless electric buses might only be a decade away) Let's go with the best BRT system feasible for our size. Two additions to service not mentioned are also desirable: Can we add a bus between Cortland and Syracuse? Can we add a bus between Onondaga Hill and University Hill? With so much interaction between OCC and SU on the one hand and the Onondaga Hill medical facilities with the University Hill medical facilities, it seems ridiculous that someone has to switch buses downtown and spend a l-o-o-o-n-g time to get back and forth between the two hills.</p>
<p>I support low intensity BRT enhancement. Our bus system is reasonably good but better signage, posted route maps and estimated arrival time notification systems at more of the bus stops would be a great improvement. Using the concept of a prepaid transit card that can be refilled at vending stations instead of exact change would also help. The bus routes to get to and from downtown from most locations are okay. The real problem is if you have to get from one outlying neighborhood or suburb to another that is not on the direct route. The need to go downtown to get back out using the "spokes on a wheel" route is very time consuming. It would be nice to see some "connector" routes that traveled the circumference of some of the wheel between some neighborhoods or towns.</p>
<p>Bus travel would be more attractive at higher speeds, shorter trip times. *Bus stops spaced at alternate blocks with attractive shelters would boost ridership. / Smaller jitney buses with more frequent arrival times would be attractive, particularly in the urban core. / Buses returning to downtown area should NEVER be "NOT IN SERVICE."</p>
<p>I have always been interested in transportation infrastructure history. The project recommendation to consider light right transit flies in the face of local transit history. Do the authors of that strategy have any idea that at one time there were interurban streetcar lines throughout Syracuse and that you could go to Rochester, Oswego and Utica on interurban rail. All those lines failed before 1950 because it was more convenient to take a car. Think of that. It was more convenient to take a car that was nowhere near as comfortable, that had to travel on two lane roads or dirt roads and was limited to speeds well under 50 mph. Why in the world would you think that Syracuse could support one now? Importantly spending money on that kind of system would mean less money for the existing bus system. That is where money could be spent with the chance that it would be effective.</p>
<p>I currently live in the northern suburbs and work on the near West Side. I would love a park and ride with a connection to either a LRT or BRT with direct access to Armory Square. Puts money back into the City rather than Murbros pockets.</p>
<p>I much prefer the Bus Rapid Transit concept and think that it is better suited for our area, in comparison with the Light Rail Transit idea. The LRT concept that was presented seems to neglect the entire northern suburbs, a very large proportion of the Metro area population. It seems that it is assumed that these riders would perhaps connect at the regional transit facility, but this is of no help with the current state of bus routes in the northern suburbs being inadequate as they currently are. The BRT concept shown is much more balanced geographically.</p>
<p>LRV system would be good. Boston's MBTA Green Line is a LRV and from what I've seen seems to be very well done. They also are expanding that line. This could work for Syracuse and the surrounding area. Reduce the amount of pollution, traffic.</p>
<p>I am baffled as to why all we have learned from the Connective Corridor project is not mentioned here. Next bus technology and other on bus amenities can have a dramatic impact on ridership. To read these analyses one would not even know that a federally funded transportation and transit project connecting University Hill and downtown exists.</p>

I think light rail could make sense along the Camillus-Fayetteville corridor because this is so heavily a retail corridor, and car travel along it is very slow and unpleasant. If the light rail connected easily to transit to the major employers in the city, it could really be a winner. Otherwise, I think bus rapid transit is the way to go along the improvement corridors.
Cities that attract visitors make money. Cities are about walking and mass transit.
Please provide a phased rapid transit plan to village centers - to complement the I-81 plan. This will eventually take the cars off the road.
The routes are silly around the HUB! Buses don't need to drive all over downtown before getting on their way. That's what the Hub is for! It adds 10 minutes or more.
Bus Rapid Transit system seems best but no matter what option is chosen, there must be lots of publicity, signage and visibility!
Take it down. Create a pedestrian friendly, landscaped boulevard. Light rail to connect neighborhoods to city center. Turn Syracuse into a real city again.
Light Rail and walkable boulevard through downtown.
The Connective Corridor bus system is a failure. Existing revenue service has been compromised since those buses have been taken out of service.
Tax payers and utility rate payers are subsidizing a system that benefits SU and SU only. SU is a parasite!
LRT - too expensive, lacks population density, auto centric region, street running not compatible since rights of way are limited.
A well considered BRT system would create a much more livable urban community, and speed up gentrification. It also seems cost effective. I love Light Rail but it seems overkill.
These options are great! I would love to see BRT and LRT in Syracuse. This especially is good for students, kids, seniors, and low income folks who don't/ can't use cars - make our city more livable!
The Interstate System lowered the city density and caused sprawl. A great mass transit system would bring businesses and people back into the core by keeping parking where there is space for it.
Light rail - good application when businesses are in a capital location. In Syracuse, businesses are in diverse locations. Seems costly.
This is disproportionately an urban/ downtown issue. The suburbs should have only a minimal role in this decision.
Mass transit is a good idea but as much as I like it, I don't use it because it doesn't go where I need to be.
Based on use and potential for development, something in the mid-high BRT and/ or low-mid light rail makes sense. I'd use it!
An updated mass transit network would totally transform the downtown, city, and region. I say do it!
A boulevard and transit (BRT or Light Rail) combo I think is perfect.
Buses to airport!!!
Light rail - an actual 21st century metropolitan area! Also to suburbs, especially Fayetteville!
Light Rail from airport please.
I would love more bike lanes. I use the ones on S. Salina in the valley.
Love the light rail transit! Do it! Provides late night access to Armory and the mall, increases safety from drunk driving and creates easy access to key city points!
Boulevard and Light Rail.

Another thing, I think Onondaga Parkway should go also. Why anyone would want to mess up Mother Nature just to get to work (or leave earlier) is beyond me.
Just have good pedestrian # - a tunnel is crazy - it's all wetland between the Hill and Onondaga Cr. Great bus service and park n' ride is a swift idea. Less emissions Boston high \$ tunnel.
Better night time public transportation can help reduce drunk driving and create greater safety overall!
Mid- high BRT or streetcar gets my vote. I believe usership/ would follow, especially as transit-oriented development increases.
Reality seems to point to BRT, lower investment and good flow.
Why not offer parking just outside the city with transit to downtown core. This would help relieve parking issues.
Syracusans do not respond well to mass transit. No matter what. It's a car oriented area.
Would love to see light rail and improved bus options with interchangeable fares/ transfers.
Boulevard and combinations of the mass transit options seem to be the most efficient.
(1) Focus on serving the city in a manner that makes it a feasible and enjoyable option to use public transit and not to own a car. Stop wasting resources on suburban bus routes; they can pay/ provide for their own public transit or simply make a choice to live in the city where it is readily available. If public transit in the city remains so inadequate that it is not a viable option then neither urban or suburbanites will use it. Provide a real alternative to cars.
Must have a subway system.
There is no congestion in the city!
Dumb! Plenty of good hms and schools in Syracuse - if they want ambiance, move to Adirondacks.
Light Rail please!
(1) like boulevard concept but issues need to be solved - i.e. pedestrian link between UH and Downtown. (2) mixed transit and BRT + LRT (3) Shouldn't increase traffic on West St - do not create another barrier.
Would any of the decision matrices used for the feasibility studies be shared with the public? It would be interesting to see what measures were used to assess feasibility within each category.
Light Rail proposal looks great! Consider later Friday and Saturday times to improve access to the mall and reduce drunk driving.
Look at LRT in similar sized cities such as Calgary and Edmonton.
Centro needs an online system map!
Light Rail doesn't look feasible - too expensive and bus lines are already serving same areas Light Rail would service. Like the idea of more express bus routes. Street car may be feasible - not as costly as LR.
Concern: Pearl BRT, LRT.
Bus ROW on Boulevard with potential to be turned into trolley/ LRT if ridership increases, revamp on track.
Yes - promote and improve mass transit!
We don't have population density to support Light Rail. We do need transportation to the airport.
Incorporate light rail please!

<p>There should be more discussion about public transport. Light rail, trolleys, etc., - not just cars.</p>
<p>Overall, I think the biggest part of this whole process is connectivity. How can we best connect University Hill and downtown Syracuse through walking, biking, and transit in a safe manner, while also allowing commuters and travelers to connect to major hotels, restaurants, Destiny USA etc? And it must be done in a way that will best serve the people of CNY and business. I think that maintaining an elevated I-81 while designing it differently where people can safely walk, bike, or ride transit between downtown and University Hill is the most viable solution. Also, I think research should be places on OnTrack and the rail that meanders through Syracuse. It can be useful again for passenger rail.</p>
<p>Every road needs repair from time to time. As it stands now, traffic can run under the highway when needed. What happens when there is no “under”? The city hopes that eliminating the highway and forcing drive through at street level would hopefully cause drivers to take a look and stay around. However, highways were invented because people “don’t like” to be held up and at some intersections that could be “literally”! If the goal is to interest the public in downtown, why not get the OnTrack back on track. It bombed before but now we have Destiny and a revitalized downtown.</p>
<p>~Boulevard concept needs full traffic analysis (as all concepts). ~Boulevard renderings do not indicate a “pedestrian friendly” crossing of Boulevard. Large expanse to cross. Current crossing under 81 and Almond St. at Erie Blvd., Water St., Fayette St., and Genesee St. are more pedestrian friendly than Boulevard concept. ~Light rail does not connect to Southside and North side (other than James St.) ~Engineering studies should assess similar regional projects such as: (1) Rochester: is looking to fill in its depressed Inner Loop. We should look at reasons for wanting to fill it in. (2) Utica has been an at-grade arterial (Routes 5, 8, 12) through the city. This arterial has several stop lights near downtown. Pedestrian crossing of the arterial at stop lights is not pedestrian friendly due to high vehicle speeds, traffic volume, and drivers not wanting to stop. If the Boulevard option resulted in a road similar to the Utica arterial, this would be a big step backward. // In-depth traffic studies should indicate best option, along with cost and feasibility of options. Thanks!</p>
<p>Go boulevard! If dedicated bus routes could be added into the idea, the city would become less congested and easier flow. Bus lanes provided a quick means of transportation around the city without doing something expensive, like railway idea. Less congestion and ease of getting around without cars and less pollution.</p>
<p>I like the idea of bringing in LRT past like old OnTrack to help move people in downtown area. I like best, as before, the boulevard idea as the replacement for I-81 of today.</p>
<p>An exhaustive study, well presented. Thank you for the coordination and outreach to the public. The opportunity to be part of this important decision means a lot to me. Having read a great deal of the information, my feeling is that the boulevard option represents our best hope for a sustainable alternative to reconstructing or doing nothing. It also is the option that best positions Syracuse to grow and develop in a way that promotes communities as well as business. Hoping other modes of public transportation, such as Light Rail, will be a byproduct of this option as well.</p>
<p>OK process, but disappointed that smaller neighborhood oriented committee role dropped. City voices must take precedence. This is our inner city and replacement should be park-like parkway – ecofriendly space with trees, bike, and pedestrian paths, recreational activities, and small-scale commercial bordered by residential. Bring back 15th ward in ecofriendly manner. Make this our central park. Upgrade mass transit – Light Rail, more and improved bus routes with adequate park-and-ride looping neighborhoods and areas (not going from end of county to the other). Large employers should subsidize public transit fares for their employees and get rid of chain-link barbed wire fenced parking lots.</p>

<p>Consideration: From I-481/I-81 Nedrow start a trolley system to Mattydale exit along with the Boulevard option to move people. If trolley not feasible, add a bus lane only or maybe add both trolley and bus lanes!!</p>
<p>1) Future of the auto is not enough under discussion. 2) "The Master Plan" of Syracuse's adjacent sub-communities to I-81 project is ill defined or undefined, e.g. the lack of business impact numbers attached to alternate choices equals a blank. Numerical complexities not correlated equals left unknown and unconsidered. Thus, I see an infrastructure plan for transportation in a silo (Center states, chamber, etc.). 3) Smallest possible passenger carriage with a light rail would use frequency (high frequency) to use the rail in time, i.e. carriages every 45 seconds or carriages employed to be loaded on demand). Lightest carriages, about four people. Would cut to the bone the time and cost of rail system build out.</p>
<p>It is refreshing to see that the community was heard. The boulevard is clearly the most viable option. The idea of a light rail system in Syracuse is so exciting – the map showing proposed routes and stops inspires a whole image of genuine urbanity – a real 21st century metropolitan character. The trains should also run to the airport and suburbs and the dome. Nicely done! Those voices in the community advocating to retain the viaduct represent outdated regressive views that do not reflect the future vision of this community.</p>
<p>As a city (Northside) resident, the impact that the final decision will have is of great concern. I am all for the Boulevard idea and think when combined with more options for public transportation, it will be the most beneficial option for us and the environment. Syracuse needs to add a light rail service to the outer reaches of the country. If it were available in a modern and affordable form, more people would use it instead of each individual driving and parking downtown. For those that are just passing through, taking 481 as a bypass is a more than reasonable solution.</p>
<p>The boulevard option is the best option for Syracuse and the community. -Must address gridlock issues. Ambulances need to get to the hospitals/ people don't want to be sitting in traffic while their workplace is 2 blocks away. -Eliminate big trucks from boulevard as much as possible. -Must have bike lanes. Maybe even a bus lane. -Must have traffic signs that are driver friendly. I should know what lane to get in to get to a street well before the intersection of that street.-Have signs on boulevard directing people to downtown destinations – like the Most, Everson, Erie Canal Museum, Armory Square, SU, hospitals, etc.</p>
<p>I do not support the boulevard option, despite being very pro-downtown. In my opinion, let's face it - we are not NYC. We do not have mass transit like major urban areas, we are majorly dependent on the auto, and therefore roads, highways, etc. I do not like the interruption I would face going 81 North from say, Rock Cut ramp to get on 690 West. There has been very little in the media about how current 81 North would go into the city. (Perhaps along Van Buren?) What about getting off the thruway? Would you go to 690 to 81 South to go home? Favor rebuilding current 81 strongly.</p>
<p>We need to create commuting options within the city that do not involve buses. Nothing on any boards in regards to changes options would present to people with different types of disabilities. That was a major gap. Existing boulevard will be nightmare to people with visual impairments. Outreach to people who are low income and to those who are black and Latino requires more than just publicity through customary modes. Further outreach to these communities in these communities is necessary in NEPA process before public comment. Perception in black and Latino communities is that the only opportunity for meaningful input will be a one shot deal at a massive public hearing.</p>

<p>Please don't choose options that would chop up or gut existing neighborhood communities. The goal is reconnection. Remember major needs and access to medical facilities, universities, and downtown businesses.</p> <p>Communities of the 21st century will require more public transit, less addiction to individual automobile travel. This is our own opportunity to change.</p> <p>Include the hallmarks of a strong and user-friendly rail/ bus/ bike trail system for healthy resident life. Do not harm air quality. Consider keeping low the impermeable surface % increase.</p>
<p>~Should take a progressive approach with small cities of similar size on west coast as a model (i.e. Portland);</p> <p>~Connection to greater metro areas is also necessary (i.e. NYC, Boston, Philadelphia, Toronto, etc.);</p> <p>~Urban greenway will have domino positive effects (i.e. highline (NYC));</p> <p>~Light rail will solve congestion issues.</p>
<p>I would like the Light Rail to be included. Take down I-81.</p>
<p>I think that the boulevard would be an excellent way to connect the city and improve the overall well-being of the citizens of Syracuse. To live in a city that has started developing to promote public transportation and to reduce the number of cars on the road would most certainly draw in more citizens; especially into the city. To be able to improve the quality of life is critical if you want to get more people back into downtown Syracuse.</p>
<p>Rebuild version using 6 foot wide overhang in stepwise fashion for plants and steps to combat air pollutions. Use West Street more to alleviate high traffic level in I-81 in City by adding a road to West Street. Pedestrians need easier way to cross Erie Boulevard. Bring back the train to SU - add a bus on campus to the train so more people can go there.</p>
<p>Boulevard option. Incorporate improved public transportation - Light Rail!</p>
<p>Provide financial incentives to develop parking lots and dead space into mixed use building around the highway or boulevard. Bus lane!</p>
<p>Both the elevated and boulevard options need to be laid out to accommodate a future LRT track.</p>
<p>Take down elevated portion and put in a light rail service from Brewerton to Tully.</p>
<p>Well, it looks like a foregone conclusion. The option toward reconstruction seems to be a done deal... BUT, the option toward LR looks might promising.</p>

Passed resolutions

Memorializing the intent of the town board of the Town of Owasco, County of Cayuga, regarding the need to maintain the existing alignment of interstate 81 through Syracuse.

Whereas, the future of I-81 presents one of the greatest planning decisions to face New York State in decades and the outcome will impact our region for generations to come; and

Whereas, it is the sense of the Owasco Town Board that any decision reached by the New York State Department of Transportation should satisfy function first including safety, efficiency of transportation for personal and commercial use and provide and minimize unintended consequences.

It is therefore

Resolved, that is the opinion of the Owasco Town Board that the unintended consequences of creating any significant changes to Route 81 including, creating a boulevard, could potentially alter the flow of heavy commercial traffic and increase truck traffic flow through the Town of Owasco, State Rt. 38A and thereby causing safety issues and decreasing the quality of life for Owasco residents; and, be it further.

Resolved, that the Owasco Town Board Requests that the New York State Department of Transportation seek a solution to the Route 81 redesign that does not pose negative effects to smaller outlying communities; and, be it further.

Resolved, that the existing Interstate 81 alignment through Syracuse and Central New York must remain and its function and designation as an Interstate Highway must not be removed or impaired; and, be it further

Resolved, that the Town Clerk of the Town of Owasco is hereby directed to cause a copy of this resolution to be transmitted to the New York State Department of Transportation, Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council and the Cayuga County Legislature.