

## **Section 5: Public and Agency Comments and Responses**

### **5-1 INTRODUCTION**

This section of the Scoping Summary Report summarizes public comments on the Scoping Information Packet and provides responses to all relevant comments. This section was not previously presented in the Scoping Information Packet. Therefore, there are no text changes noted in a *separate font*.

The Scoping Information Packet was made publicly available in October 2011. The Scoping Information Packet was posted to the project's website ([www.tzbsite.com](http://www.tzbsite.com)). A notice of its availability was published in local newspapers and was mailed to the more than 5,000 parties on the project's mailing list.

Government agencies and the public were invited to comment on the Scoping Information Packet. Written and e-mail comments were accepted through 5:00 PM on November 15, 2011. The public also had the opportunity to comment verbally at two Public Scoping Briefings. A Public Scoping Briefing was held on October 25, 2011 at the Doubletree Hotel in Tarrytown, New York. A second Public Scoping Briefing was held on October 27, 2011 at the Palisades Center in West Nyack, New York. Each briefing included a formal project presentation followed by an open forum for the interested public to make comments, which were recorded by a stenographer. A separate stenographer was also available to accept oral comments in private for those who were not comfortable speaking in front of the general audience. The public could also submit written comments on comment sheets available at the Public Scoping Briefings. In total, nearly 300 separate parties, including government agencies, elected officials, stakeholder and interest groups, and private citizens provided comments on the Scoping Information Packet.

### **5-2 LIST OF COMMENTERS**

**Appendix B** lists the individuals who provided comments on the Scoping Information Packet. Where an agency, organization, or affiliation was identified, it is noted.

### **5-3 COMMENTS AND RESPONSES**

Comments have been primarily categorized based on the sections of the Scoping Information Packet with an additional section for general comments. There were extensive comments generated on several key common themes and elements and the distillation of comments with common responses is presented below. The individual oral or written comments from which this summary assessment was prepared can be found in **Appendix B**. Each of the comments and summary of comments below are identified by numbers which correlate to **Appendix B**.

**5-3-1 PURPOSE AND NEED AND ALTERNATIVES**

**5-3-1-1 GENERAL COMMENTS ON PROPOSED ACTION AND ALTERNATIVES**

**Comment 1:** Many commenters expressed support for the current project and accelerated review and construction process, including the common themes suggested below. (1, 5, 15, 17, 22, 54, 63, 67, 73, 74, 90, 145, 167, 176, 278-279, 287, 362, 415, 426, 430, 601, 616-617, 687)

We need this bridge now. This project should have been started a long time ago.

We applaud the Administration's collaborative efforts to expedite replacement of the Tappan Zee Bridge and find an innovative way to finance construction of this megaproject. The Governor, NYS DOT and the FHWA deserve credit for finding a way to accelerate the Tappan Zee Bridge replacement project and making it one of only six transportation projects selected by President Obama to be expedited. In addition, the accelerated project will boost employment in the construction trades that have been so alarmingly affected by our economic doldrums. The proposed design of the replacement bridge solves many of the problems associated with today's accident and congestion-prone bridge. Moreover, we are advised that the future bridge spans are being designed robustly so as to bear the weight of future transit improvements and maximize this public investment. The announcement about the joint federal-state plan to accelerate the environmental review process for the purpose of obtaining a Record of Decision from the FHWA by next August and issuing construction bids by the second half of 2012 is welcome.

Westchester County Executive Robert Astorino has long advocated for New York State to make replacement of the Tappan Zee Bridge a top priority. We were encouraged when federal and state officials announced in October that the project would move forward with such priority.

This rebuild represents one of our region's greatest opportunities to maximize our economic potential while ensuring responsible redevelopment and cultural and environmental stewardship.

The City recognizes that it is a beneficiary of and a stakeholder in I-287 infrastructure improvements and generally supports the Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project.

We wholeheartedly support its replacement, knowing full well how disruptive construction will be, and sympathetic to the many legitimate concerns that residents and businesses on both sides of the river have.

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And the time is now. It's got to be replaced. There's just nothing else you can do. And if you really are out there all the time and you talk to the people that are out there all the time, you really understand that. So that's very important. So the safety aspect is number 1. All the accouterments that our task force discussed over a period of perhaps six years are not possible today and we do not want to see anything hold up the construction of a safe crossing.

This new bridge is necessary for the following salient reasons: for the economic growth of the lower and middle Hudson, and: for the safety of all those who have to traverse it. Close calls are not occasional, they are the norm.

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 2:** Many commenters were in support of the economic benefits of the project, including the potential creation of jobs and its importance to the regional and national transportation network. (793, 800-801, 819-821, 829, 836, 840-841, 845-847, 855-856, 858, 862, 965, 989)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 3:** In considering the scale of the project, several commenters noted that the plans should be iconic and provide a signature statement. (34, 35, 37, 263, 265, 439, 460, 497, 550, 557, 627-628, 865, 867, 868, 875, 876, 877, 878, 879)

Will this amount of money (\$5.2 billion) cover the cost of a beautifully designed and iconic bridge worthy of the Empire State and the majestic Hudson it spans? The design should show vision, be a destination site leading as an invitation to the Hudson Valley, and anticipate future demands beyond today's requirements. Dress up the gateway to Rockland County and make it more inviting, maybe with a visitor center. One of my priorities is to be sure that the bridge for 100 years is a beautiful bridge befitting the majestic Hudson River and befitting the Empire State.

Your design is not the best possible state of the art and it should be what the people of New York can look at with awe. The Tappan Zee should be an icon that blends with the rural nature of the valley hillsides while providing congestion free access for the largest metropolitan region in America. The overall architecture of the bridge and its design should be inspiring, and celebrate the Hudson River and the unique environs of the Tappan Zee.

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The Oresund Bridge between Copenhagen Denmark and Malmo Sweden is a good model, it includes trains, is longer, and cost about the same as this proposed bridge.

**Response:** The location of the project and the many years of bridge planning and design leading to selection of a design/build project team will result in a bridge that will be a notable presence in the Hudson Valley for many generations. The EIS will provide a detailed description of the conceptual design scenarios and will assess the new spans in the context of the area's land use, community character, and potential visual impacts. There will be additional opportunity for public input and comment as part of the EIS public comment period.

**Comment 4:** Many commenters participating in the scoping process strongly advocated that any new crossing must include a mass transit component. (2, 3, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 49, 52, 65, 80, 81 91-95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 102, 103-104, 110-112, 114-115, 123, 126, 137-140, 141-143, 144, 151, 170, 172-174, 175, 178, 180, 186-187, 191, 192, 193, 194, 197-206, 207, 208, 213, 216-218, 219, 220, 223-237, 249, 250, 253-254, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262 , 270, 273, 277, 280, 285-286, 291, 292, 293, 295, 296-300, 310, 312, 322, 326, 330, 331, 333-339, 340, 341, 343-346, 349-350, 352-354, 368, 371, 373, 375, 376-377, 382, 383-390 , 392, 393-394, 402, 409, 410, 411, 412, 414, 424, 428, 431, 433, 434, 435, 436-437, 441, 446-453, 454, 455, 459, 460, 464, 467, 468, 469, 471, 473, 474, 477, 481-484, 487-488, 492-494, 495-496, 499, 501, 503, 505, 507, 517, 526, 527-548, 549, 553-556, 562, 563, 564-574, 575, 576-579, 598, 600, 615, 618, 619, 621 , 622, 624, 626, 629-631, 639, 640, 641, 652, 670, 671, 675, 749, 806, 857, 865, 899, 1027, 1062)

All that's being built is something to deal with cars and this is a dead-end from a regional planning perspective. It would be a painful mistake not to think big and try to create something that would last and be useful and be celebrated by 20 generations. The decision with respect to mass transit should be made now and the desire to delay construction of a mass transit project is not acceptable to the community. More congested highways with lengthy commutes will only drive more and more people out of this region; not to mention the environmental impact of increasing green house gas. This is why all of the alternatives in the Old Project included public transportation. This project will actually create mobility deficiencies because without public transportation, the region will see increased traffic on arterial roadways as detailed in the 2006 Alternatives Analysis.

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A Tappan Zee that expands car traffic without encouraging mass transit and making related highway improvements is inconsistent with our needs. No public transportation in the corridor is a problem now and will create a nightmare for future generations.

The lead agencies must take a "hard look" at legitimate alternatives. Providing for transit alternatives should be considered as an alternative to meet the goal of "long-term vitality."

The mobility deficiencies that will be created by consciously ignoring the entirely feasible implementation of BRT should be discussed in this section and studied in the EIS, as well as the mobility improvements that could be gained by implementing the feasible alternative of a new bridge with BRT.

Long Span Truss Bridge Alternative raises many questions about the provision of a transit right-of-way. The EIS should clarify the handling of the concurrent building of a public transit right-of-way in the lower deck as part of construction of the replacement bridge.

The region's long term infrastructure needs clearly include transit. Transit systems throughout the region are serving record numbers of passengers and demand continues to increase. The regional MPO has identified the need for transit in this corridor, the counties and communities of the region have identified the need for transit, and the state's own policies and planning documents recognize the need. Ignoring the need for intra-regional transit service and building a 'cars-only' bridge does not serve to meet the region's long term infrastructure needs. Therefore, the EIS should consider what the long term infrastructure needs of the region are, according to existing local, regional, and state planning documents and compare alternatives that meet those needs.

The objectives should be changed so that the new crossing provides for transit service, rather than simply not precluding it.

Failure to include mass transit will not alleviate congestion on the TZB. Mass transit is the key for handling growth in the region well into the 21st Century, and if included on the new Tappan Zee Bridge will help position New York State as a leader in national transportation policy. In August 2010, a joint report by NYSDOT and the NYSTA concluded that the replacement bridge on its own will not provide additional relief and that only new transit systems will help improve mobility by affording alternative transportation choices in the future. There are no changed circumstances that warrant abandoning that finding.

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**Response:** It is within the discretion of the lead agency and the joint lead agencies to define the project's purpose, need, goals and objectives, taking into account fiscal considerations. The new bridge design does not preclude future transit operations and includes design features that maximize the public investment in creating a bridge designed with the flexibility to potentially accommodate both Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and Commuter Rail Transit (CRT) should a viable plan be developed and approved for implementation in the future.

The current proposed Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project is being advanced specifically to address the immediate structural and operational deficiencies of the Tappan Zee Bridge and is also based on an assessment that there are limited project funding opportunities for the foreseeable future. Therefore, based on the new project's limited scope and termini, the EIS does not examine potential mass transit options nor look at larger regional mobility issues along the Interstate 87/287 corridor.

The rationale for rescinding the previous project and advancing the current Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project has been documented and set forth in a White Paper on "Transit and the Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project." The White Paper prepared by NYSDOT and NYSTA is found in **Appendix A** of this document and will also be an appendix to the EIS. The White Paper describes how designing the proposed crossing to enable any potential future transit at this location without major modifications to the new bridge will advance the project goal of maximizing the public investment.

As will be presented in the EIS description of the current project and in the definition of purpose and need, the project is intended to address well-documented immediate structural, safety, and operational deficiencies of the existing Tappan Zee Bridge. The proposed structure would operate with greater efficiency and safety, and would be less prone to operational disruptions and resulting congestion. The project would not result in any overall additional highway capacity in the Interstate 87/287 corridor. The EIS will examine bridge operations based on existing and future anticipated traffic volumes which reflect regional growth and travel characteristics that are not expected to change as a result of the new crossing.

**Comment 5:** Several commenters sought to balance the need to proceed with the expedited bridge replacement project and to ensure that the many years of planning for the entire corridor, and the mass transit aspects in particular, would not be set aside. (124-125, 172-174 , 318, 367, 416, 417, 466, 480, 591-597, 718)

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I am concerned that the alternatives described may have gone too far in deferring any construction within the crossing that would lay a foundation for a future public transit within the corridor. Now that the design and construction of mass transit has been separated from the replacement bridge project, when will the planning process for mass transit and the improvements to the rest of the corridor recommence and what will it entail? Will the previous analyses be considered valid? What is the proposed timetable for constructing mass transit? Which agency will shepherd this process?

Although a separate and independent environmental review will be required for future transit proposals, the accommodation for transit and options considered should be discussed. The research and findings of the Tappan Zee Bridge/I-287 Corridor Project should not be brushed aside or lost. They must be acknowledged in the environmental review of the new Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project so as to provide the base for future work to implement the needed transit services. Understanding that the project does not preclude transit options, we believe this should be kept as a critical component of the overall improvement of the 287 corridor. Current and future mobility issues should be addressed including: funding and investments in transit options to reduce congestion; improvements to the Intelligent Transportation System (ITS); and, NYSDOT must work with NYSTA to use shoulders for busses during peak travel times in the I-287 corridor. Rockland County can only support a new crossing project that will advance the construction of both transit and highway alternatives concurrently.

We urge you not to disregard the considerations identified previously by the many various stakeholder groups that have convened and the agencies formerly in the lead and sponsor roles. All of them have invested substantial funding, time and effort to develop a river crossing that will serve the region suitably, aesthetically, and most sensibly for generations. FHWA's work must be informed by the thoughtful work already completed.

**Response:** The new project will benefit from the many years of corridor planning and community input undertaken as part of the previous project and, while the current review process is independent, the EIS utilizes, where appropriate, the extensive documentation and analyses prepared for the prior corridor project.

Design features of the project would include the provision of extra width on the new spans to potentially accommodate any future HOV and BRT lanes. This extra width has immediate utility in providing emergency access lanes to help improve bridge operations, but can be

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converted in the future as appropriate without compromising bridge safety and emergency access.

For CRT, the project incorporates several design features intended to accommodate future potential rail transit infrastructure, including: structural support within the new foundations and substructures so they may carry CRT loadings at a later date; a vertical profile that would meet required grades of CRT; and the provision of a gap between the eastbound and westbound structures to allow for a potential future transit deck.

As set forth in the White Paper, including these important public investments in the current bridge design has the potential to save between \$1 and \$2 billion dollars (in current dollars) as compared to the cost of construction of an independent transit crossing of the Hudson River.

Future consideration of any BRT or CRT system to be implemented within the Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing would require its own environmental review, approvals, and permits.

**Comment 6:** Build all the structure supports and "bridgework" at the onset so as to make it quick and easy to add the trains underneath (or perhaps another car level) at a later date. Building the train line underneath the roadway on each bridge is more cost effective than building a separate bridge for the trains. The current design and construction must provide for the foundations and underwater structure for the addition of the rail lines without future disturbance to the river. Instead of precluding rail by 80% you will be able to include it to 80%; at the bare minimum you must add rail tracks and reinforce the bridge enough to hold commuter rail. (397, 401, 443, 508, 633-635)

**Response:** See response to Comment 4, above.

**Comment 7:** In addition to the realities of land-use, it is also clear that climate change is real, that it is having a real impact on our environment, and that we have an obligation to arrest our contribution to that change. In New York State we have a Climate Action Plan, a Smart Growth Cabinet, and various executive orders all dealing with this issue. NYSDOT, along with Westchester and Rockland Counties, also have a plan (NYMTC's Regional Transportation Plan) that specifically calls for future growth in the region to be channeled to the 287 corridor that is served by rapid transit. Yet, when it comes to the largest infrastructure project in New York, all of those documents and policies seem to fall by the wayside. Instead of reducing the demand for driving, the state wants to build a double wide bridge. Instead of encouraging

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development where we already have significant investments in infrastructure, the state is encouraging longer commutes in personal vehicles. Instead of channeling growth to areas served by transit, the state has abandoned its commitment to preparing our region for the future. (227, 296, 337, 339)

**Response:** As explained in response to Comment 4, the proposed Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project does not include the provision of BRT or CRT. However, the project has been designed to not preclude transit if and when a viable proposal is advanced in the future. In addition, the project is being designed to maximize the public investment by ensuring that the new bridge would have the structural ability to accommodate such a proposal for bus and/or commuter rail transit in the future. Accordingly, the project is not inconsistent with the policy goals associated with climate change enumerated above. Further, since the project would not result in an increase in peak traffic capacity, it would not affect regional travel growth or development patterns. The EIS will evaluate the project's potential impact on energy use and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

**Comment 8:** Many commenters specifically stated that BRT should be included as part of the proposed project. (34, 35, 37, 38, 109, 116, 121-123, 149, 172-174, 183, 184, 242-248, 256, 262, 304-305, 336, 363, 378, 399, 407-408, 419, 425, 426, 427, 438, 441, 447-451, 465, 486, 498, 504, 510, 525, 527-548, 551, 579, 591-597, 601, 604-609, 643)

Not including bus rapid transit would be missing a once in a lifetime opportunity; the George Washington Bridge was supposed to accommodate transit in a later phase but was never built.

The omission of any reference to a bus lane on the new bridge facility or bus/BRT connection to the Tarrytown Rail Station is a cause for serious concern. Rockland County asserts that the project limits and scope must be expanded to include a dedicated bus lane and a direct connection from the Tarrytown Toll Plaza to the rail station.

I welcome DOT's decision to move this process forward without a mass transit component, especially in light of the financial constraints this project faces. That said, with an eye to the future we need to examine including transit down the road and would encourage inclusion of BRT and against inclusion of a rail component.

The scoping document's discussion of the dual-level truss bridge raises many questions about the provision of a transit right-of-way in the proposed EIS's definition of alternatives. At one point in the study process, NYSDOT officials told us that security concerns barred BRT

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from the lower level of such a span and the Department's current position on that point must be clarified. Also to be clarified in the definition of alternatives is the handling of the concurrent building of a public transit right-of-way in the lower deck as part of construction of the replacement bridge. Does it include the possibility of BRT lanes?

The cost of BRT or light rail serving the corridor is much less than the cost of commuter rail and can be implemented with or without a Hudson line connection.

As the County Executive stated in his comments at the Scoping Session on October 25, 2011 in Tarrytown, the lack of a mass transit component in the proposed plan is of major concern to Westchester County. Our concern is that the replacement Tappan Zee Bridge will face the same overwhelming traffic volume the day it opens. A highway only strategy will greatly inhibit the economic growth and vibrancy of the region, state and country.

Under the prior plan, BRT routes and interchanges were to be established such that we could take account of them in Tarrytown; under a new plan with no mass transit, we lose this specificity, which will only make transit more difficult to introduce later. The Village of Tarrytown requests that the required hard look be given to alternatives that include BRT. With or without BRT, the Village requests that a hard look be taken regard a bus-train transfer station within the toll plaza reconstruction.

The emergency lanes of the proposal should be used as a designated bus lane and in an emergency they can divert to the regular lanes.

Given that the preferred alternative contains the physical capacity to accommodate BRT in the emergency lanes and the oft-stated goal of BRT, the Village of Elmsford requests consideration of whether the failure to take a hard look at BRT constitutes a segmentation issue under SEQRA or NEPA. We request that a thorough discussion of bus rapid transit be provided in the draft EIS.

**Response:** For the reasons previously explained, the project does not include BRT (see response to Comment 4). As such, there is no legal requirement to examine BRT in the EIS. The absence of such examination does not constitute segmentation. The project has independent utility and is designed to achieve its articulated goals and objectives respecting the Tappan Zee Bridge.

As noted in the White Paper, the planning and implementation of a BRT system involves extensive development of the network improvements for both the highway elements and the local road

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interface. These project elements are beyond the physical termini and scope of the bridge project and have cost estimates that are considerably higher than estimates evaluated in the earlier phases of the corridor project documentation.

However, as noted in the responses above, the width of the proposed structure and the inclusion of separate emergency access lanes have been designed for potential conversion to BRT/HOV use in the future.

**Comment 9:** Several comments suggested the existing bridge could be rehabilitated or reused for important transportation services, would result in a cost savings overall and would preserve the historic structure. (30, 56, 66, 77, 118, 169, 177, 188, 209, 212, 221-222, 242-248, 369, 404-406, 421, 550, 598, 608, 833)

One of the biggest reasons for the continued massive upkeep costs of the Tappan Zee Bridge is not poor structural design, but rather the unexpected growth in population in this region from the time the bridge was built. With all the money being spent on bridge maintenance, it will be a colossal waste of money to knock down the bridge. I see no reason that the old structure can't continue to be used even if only in a limited fashion as a means to augment the traffic capacity if a new bridge with inadequate future traffic capacity is built. Maintenance costs would be a fraction of what it is today if traffic on the old span was reduced to an amount that falls within the original design parameters and no commercial vehicles were permitted on the old span once the new bridge is completed.

Statements in the scoping document say the old bridge can be made seismically appropriate by replacement of its pieces. This would be of lower impact to communities. Look at the possibility of using the current bridge for another 10 years at a cost of \$1.3 billion in maintenance, which is a \$4 billion savings.

The DEIS should discuss the status of the current bridge, including the "no action" alternative and potential use of the existing bridge for bike and pedestrian traffic, as well as the costs and environmental impacts of demolishing the existing bridge. The DEIS should include a vigorous analysis as to why new construction is preferred. All technical information (scientific and engineering) studies relating to the bridge should be published.

Consider reinforcing the old bridge so that it can last another 15 to 20 years and support light rail and buses. Perhaps bike lanes and rail lines could be located on the old bridge. Supplementary ferry service would also be useful to reduce bridge traffic.

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Consider a conventional rehabilitation of the existing span instead of the proposed new span. With such redundancy, the absence of earthquake protection for the rehabilitated bridge should not be considered a fatal flaw. The cost differential leading to the preferred alternative was based on rehabilitating the existing bridge to accommodate BRT which is no longer in the preferred alternative. The DEIS should take a hard look at the marginal benefits of energy consumption and GHG emission from bridge rehabilitation. A portion of the old span could serve as a large parking lot.

**Response:** As discussed in the Scoping Information Packet, and as will be related in the EIS, rehabilitation of the existing bridge for the uses inquired about is not a viable option. Rehabilitation is not feasible because it would not meet many of the goals established for the project, including long term viability, redundancy, security, life-span, and construction duration, and because it would fail to maximize the public investment by precluding future transit operations on the bridge. Further, considerations associated with reuse of the existing bridge will be discussed in the EIS as part of the Section 4(f) analysis.

**Comment 10:** Several comments specifically discussed the opportunity to use the existing bridge as a public park in the future. (77, 95, 102, 118, 221, 222, 313, 369, 427, 444, 454, 457, 500, 506, 518, 602, 625, 891, 892)

At least a portion of the bridge should be preserved as a linear park. We should not waste either the structure or the money to dismantle it. And if you can't save the whole bridge, it might be more feasible to save a portion of it extending out from Westchester County. This could be a suburban version of the New York Hi Line or the Poughkeepsie Walkway. You should also explore turning part of the bridge into an express bus lane.

Please consider reusing the old bridge for a public use like the drive-on fishing pier created in the reuse of the Sunshine Skyway in Florida. Perhaps at both ends docks could be put under the bridge with sheds for rowing shells, canoes, and kayaks.

The fate of the Gov. Malcolm Wilson Tappan Zee Bridge, which has been deemed eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, should be considered. Reviewers should study the alternative of keeping the landmark as a park. A cost analysis comparing demolition with retrofitting for a park type uses should be reviewed for feasibility.

**Response:** As noted in the response to Comment 9, and as will be described further in the EIS, rehabilitation of the existing bridge has been determined not to be feasible. In addition, the EIS will provide a

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discussion regarding reuse of the existing bridge. While a park use would not likely result in the same level of utilization and loading as an active highway, the basic assessment of the bridge's utility remains the same. Furthermore, keeping the existing bridge in conjunction with the new structure would be considered an obstruction to navigation by the U.S. Coast Guard. Therefore, as presently set forth in the scoping document, the EIS will analyze the environmental consequences of the bridge demolition and does not assume that a portion, or all of the structure, would be reused.

**Comment 11:** Some commenters were opposed to the inclusion of the proposed shared-use (pedestrian/bicycle) pathway, (or thought it was a lesser priority), as summarized below. (44, 99, 107-108, 132-136, 167, 267, 442, 445)

The EIS should consider the relative costs associated with providing pedestrian and cyclist access to the bridge versus providing for BRT, another public good.

While the objective of pedestrian and cyclist access to the bridge is normatively a 'good' thing, the EIS should consider the relative costs associated with providing this 'good' versus providing for BRT, another public good. Few, if any, pedestrians will use the crossing for transportation purposes and the number of cyclists engaged in transportation, as opposed to recreation, is also likely to be small. Thought should be given to eliminating the pedestrian/ bikeway in favor of additional bus/HOV/travel lane.

Please clarify if the proposed pedestrian/bikeway is allowable since they are prohibited on interstate highways. This is a terrible idea because of: security reasons, more suicide potential, conflict with interstate highways, length of the span.

If you do proceed with a bikeway, charge pedestrians and bicyclists the same toll as motorists. The bicycle and pedestrian path should be opposed as it's not healthy given the car and truck traffic and pollution.

The bicycle lane is purely recreational but if there was an additional railway station on the Westchester side at the foot of the bridge it would encourage cycling to the train.

**Response:** The project has been designed to accommodate a broad range of potential uses on the new structure. The incorporation of a shared-use path, physically separated from the main roadway, would enhance the connectivity of recreational resources east and west of the Hudson River, consistent with public policy. Moreover, the shared-use path is not being undertaken at the expense of transit, since the bridge has

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been designed not to preclude any future incorporation of BRT and/or CRT on the bridge.

**Comment 12:** Many commenters were advocates for the shared-use path and identified many planning, transportation, economic, and health-related benefits and offered a number of design considerations. (86, 100, 113, 119-120, 128, 152-166, 172, 251-252, 257, 276, 303, 306-309, 311, 314-315, 323-325, 364, 396, 418, 422, 427, 456-458, 509, 516, 519-521, 580-590, 593, 606-607, 611-613, 614, 623, 638, 642, 771-772, 773, 789-790, 791)

The part of the proposed bridge dedicated to walkers and cyclers is a most welcome response to a long-standing public need. We believe that such a facility will link the growing regional network of multi-use trails and project should study how to link the new pathway with trails on both sides of the bridge. Bike/pedestrian lane would be well utilized and would bring business into Rockland County on weekends and decrease congestion during weekday commuting hours. Better access across the bridge by bicycles would have an environmental justice benefit.

The inclusion of bike/pedestrian facilities will help get long distance bike community to participate in the economy of New York State (spending about the same as auto tourists). Project should consider trails on both spans, 24 hour security, ensuring clear views of the Hudson. Assuming the east side ramp will connect to Route 9 (Broadway) in Tarrytown, traffic signal accommodation must be made for cyclists who wish to cross to the northbound side of Broadway. To the west, the access ramp should connect with the Raymond G. Esposito trail.

The entrances on both sides of the bridge must be designed with safety and ease of access in mind. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Panel working with DOT and NYSTA should be reconvened to help design a safe and attractive multi-use path and on the connections on both sides of the river.

It is important that enough width is provided to accommodate cycle and pedestrian users of the bridge. What will the bike/pedestrian path look like in the end. The bike/pedestrian lane should be on both the north and south sides of the bridge. Since the proposed path is narrower than before, there should be one on both sides of the bridge. I support the observation that the north side of the bridge offers attractive views and appears easier to connect to trails and routes, though is among the many details to be worked on.

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We should focus on ensuring that all crossings (GW, Bear Mountain, Newburgh) all have pedestrian/bicycle crossings.

We recommend that the shared-use path on the bridge be designed and positioned to minimize potential user-exposure to mobile source air toxics and particulates.

Consider using the pedestrian bicycle lane double as an emergency access lane; to do this there would need to be bicycle/pedestrian crossing the bridge at key points to access alternate pathway.

**Response:** The shared-use path has been developed based on the many years of planning associated with the prior corridor project and the working collaboration of the state with members of the prior advisory panel. There are no expected design changes to the basic alignment of the shared-use path along the north side of the north structure.

In response to the expressed concern about the adjacency of bikers and pedestrians to the heavily travelled highway, it is noted that the EIS will include an analysis of air quality along the bridge's shared-use path.

**Comment 13:** Several comments requested additional information regarding the basis of the cost estimates for the current and prior projects. (34, 39, 49, 52, 60, 65,70, 75, 78, 80, 88, 89, 269, 794, 838, 839)

Provide more clarity on the \$5.2 billion because over the past years it's been said that the bridge alone would be at least \$6 billion (which was in 2009 dollars or 2008 dollars but it is now 2011 and \$5.2 billion is substantially less). Will this amount of money cover the highway improvements needed at the approaches to the bridge and the climbing lanes?

It would also be helpful for us to understand the estimated costs for the now delayed mass transit alternatives and improvements to the rest of the corridor. DOT commissioner Joan McDonald stated that a BRT system could cost from \$2-4 billion but offered no explanation of those costs.

The project has been turned from phase one of three to phase one of one. You have declared that it's too expensive to accommodate transit in a Tappan Zee rebuild, to any degree—but, we've got over 5 billion dollars just lying around to pay to accommodate more people in personal cars? I don't think so.

Regarding transit funding: exactly a year ago, Governor Christie canceled the Access to the Region's Core Plan with its three billion dollars' worth of federal funding. We still have approximately \$2.8

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million worth of federal transportation funding that nobody can tell me what happened to it and we can't understand why some of that money can't be used for funding of transit alternatives in the Tappan Zee I-287 corridor.

If you make the decisions now and it's part of the project and the federal government and the state government make a commitment to rail transit, it will happen. If you do not make such a commitment, you will solve your immediate problem and you will do nothing for this region.

There is no clear funding source for any part of the project so new revenue will have to be generated no matter what. Why is one part of the project affordable, but others are not? Bus rapid transit was the cheapest of the components and it's likely an improved design could further drive costs down. This must be included going forward.

Cost estimates for transit on the bridge have been widely misreported. According to NYSDOT, the projected cost of cross-corridor bus rapid transit is between \$900 million and \$2.5 billion, and it's likely that a new streamlined design could drive costs down even further. And it's important to note that with bus rapid transit, the more you spend, the more you get.

This is an asset. This can be borrowed against. There will be a public/private partnership to deal with this. But let's not think about five billion. Think about ten or fifteen. Now is the time to do it. We need the jobs and interest rates have never been lower. It should be done the right way.

The environmental review process must provide a complete foundation for the public to fully understand the proposal and the impact it will have on future mobility in the region, fiscal implications, and on the environment and communities in both the short-term and over the projected lifespan of the new bridge. The DEIS should have a comparison on how much environmental impact and cost can be avoided or not avoided depending on when the public transit will be added to the bridge. So there should be a time horizon, 10 years, 20 years, 30 years, if it must be 50 years, in terms of things even like greenhouse gas emissions, in terms of pollution, and other benefits that would arise to the communities if we had public transit.

**Response:** It is within the discretion of the lead agency and the joint lead agencies to define the project's purpose, need, goals and objectives, taking into account fiscal considerations. The current project does not include the implementation of BRT and CRT in the corridor because, as explained in the White Paper (see **Appendix A**), the agencies have determined

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that the implementation of transit elements are not affordable at this time. However, the replacement bridge design will include certain provisions for transit to maximize the public investment in the new crossing.

**Comment 14:** Many comments called for a financing plan to be created for the project and several commenters provided suggestions as to financial options available to pay for the project. (23, 31, 33, 34, 37, 36, 38, 48, 50, 62, 64, 69, 71, 72, 78, 85, 87, 88, 89, 740, 848)

We must see a financial plan. A viable financial plan is more vital now than ever and we must ensure that the cost of this project does not rest on the backs of commuters, nor impose an inequitable "tax" on Rockland residents by reducing our quality of life.

We have learned that New York State is considering a variety of sources for the proposed \$5.2 billion project cost including bridge tolls (that would need to be raised) and pension fund contributions from unions associated with highway construction. However, questions remain about the funding. Exactly where will the funds come from and will the Merrill-Lynch financing study completed at least 18 months ago be released?

There have been a number of funding sources suggested by the state, and it's incumbent on the involved agencies to look at what is best for the taxpayers. And we cannot be afraid of the public/private partnership. I would hope that the agencies involved now can partner in creative thinking to find, when funds become available from collateral agencies, not necessarily the transportation departments but from other agencies, ways that we can mitigate the effects of the Hudson crossing on the river communities.

Ways of funding the construction of the new bridge must be resolved quickly. The options, including NYSTA bonding, infrastructure loans, private and public pension loans, and private and public partnerships as well as traditional federal and state funding are all possibilities. The lead agency for the project must resolve this quickly because some options will require state legislation to go forward.

The plan for funding that we're hearing in the newspapers is totally unrealistic. Funding through loans and bonding may not be feasible because I don't think that the NYSTA has the revenue stream to support the debt service that would occur. What we're really going to need is an allocation from Congress as part of the upcoming Five-Year Transportation Funding Act; Rockland County should be able to get some of that money.

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If the bridge tolls are doubled or something like what's happened on the George Washington Bridge, people aren't going to be able to afford it. It's going to be a serious hindrance to business in this region when we've got to be business friendly. As an option, consider no tolls on the bridge at all, but rather an increase in taxes to pay for the operating costs. Which makes me wonder how the NYSTA comes up with their toll pricing.

If the financing plan for this project, or if the new bridge when built, includes any toll increases or new congestion pricing policies/strategies for commuters during peak hours; Rockland will require that a portion of these funds be dedicated to improve Rockland County transit operations to expand service, provide new routes, and to make Park & Ride facility capital improvements along the I-287 corridor.

Westchester County is justly concerned about how this project will be paid for. It is incumbent on the involved agencies to look at the best fit for the taxpayers with a public-private partnership as a potential option, particularly if it allows greater flexibility in building a better bridge. While toll revenues could be a funding resource, the state must do everything it can to keep tolls as low as possible for already-overburdened taxpayers and commuters. As funding is being investigated, it is critical for the state and federal government to keep the lines of communication open with the local governments and communities that are directly affected by this project. Therefore, this subject should be addressed in the draft EIS.

With government budgets stretched thin, privatization of big-ticket infrastructure such as the Tappan Zee Bridge is a highly attractive option and a private/public model for infrastructure funding. There are private equity partners here and abroad with plenty of liquidity, and the time is right to foster a partnership with them and others, such as public sector pension funds, to create a long-term solution for the Tappan Zee Bridge, not really one that is a quick fix. I have been reading about a private/public partnership, and I do have some concerns that I would like to hear more about in terms of transaction costs.

Charging trucks using the Tappan Zee Bridge during rush hour more than they would pay during the non-rush hour could provide the additional revenue that could then be used to pay for a mass transit option. It could also be used to guarantee bonds covering the construction of a transit way on the bridge. One could also consider implementing such a pricing system to other types of vehicles. After the construction costs have been paid off, the charge were to be kept it

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could be used to pay for maintenance of the transit way. What about congestion pricing?

Another possible measure of financing a mass transit option on a replacement bridge would be to collect from the mass transit vehicles (whether buses or trains) using the bridge meaning that a portion of the passenger's fare would be collected for this purpose. The revenue raised this way could be used to pay off the costs of building and maintaining the transit way being used by these vehicles. It would be similar to the additional charges levied on passengers who take trains to Kennedy where a portion of the additional charge is used to cover the cost of the Airtrain ride.

As a less preferable alternative to state and federal funding, it is possible that bus riders could be given a choice between riding buses charging a lower fare which would use the regular traffic lanes and get stuck in traffic versus buses charging a higher fare (perhaps a dollar more) which would use the transit way and avoid being delayed by traffic congestion.

**Response:** A financial plan is being developed. That plan will be summarized in the FEIS and financial feasibility must be demonstrated before FHWA will issue the Record of Decision for the project.

**Comment 15:** Opportunities to privatize some or all aspects of the project and beyond were noted by several commenters. (84, 76, 90, 1022)

Have you considered exploring the possibility of having private companies bid on that right-of-way which would help reduce the amount of subsidies required to build this bridge. This goes beyond just the Tappan Zee corridor and is for the entire Thruway system. If you allow a private company to bid on that right-of-way, it won't just reduce the subsidies, but it will also allow for new types of technology to be developed because the Tappan Zee Bridge, as it's been noted, carries such a high volume of traffic. If you allow private companies to come in and bid on that right-of-way, they can invest in new types of transport technology such as Maglev.

The MTA is the longest running government bailout in American history, and it should be privatized because their ridership is at the highest in their history, the same way that Conrail got privatized by CSX. Therefore, since CSX put public tracks within Rockland County and Orange County, they as a private entity, may provide the solution that you guys are looking for.

One way of keeping tolls down is by selling naming rights to the bridge, this would be an excellent source of revenue.

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Could a new bridge be built more quickly, and with more elements (such as mass transit) if the project were turned over to a private company or consortium of companies in exchange for the rights to collect the tolls? This seems to be a growing trend both here and abroad.

**Response:** Comment noted. See response to Comment 15.

**Comment 16:** As a NYS taxpayer I can not support the proposed \$5.2 billion dollar Tappan Zee bridge replacement. It's too slow and complicated for those of us who spend our money on things other than automobiles and gas. (51)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 17:** I don't believe that the safety of the current bridge will hold out for the time it takes to design, build, and put the new one into practice. I think what will happen is that traffic will be restricted to reduce the load, which means truck traffic will be reduced and rerouted and this will cause incredible traffic jams at the George Washington Bridge and perhaps bridges north of here, not to mention horrendous impact on the economy of the region. (83)

**Response:** The existing bridge undergoes routine maintenance and repairs to ensure it remains safe to the travelling public.

**Comment 18:** The construction and design duration; design/build needs some legislation in Albany; the funding mechanisms to have this project move forward quickly may require some legislation in Albany. So we'd ask our legislators to identify and look at those issues. (71)

**Response:** Comment noted. Legislation authorizing the design/build procurement for the Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing was passed in December 2011.

**Comment 19:** In addition to the inclusion of mass transit, several comments focused on the need to broaden the scope of the proposed action and the DEIS to include more of the 30 mile corridor study as analyzed in the prior project. (61, 101, 127, 190, 255, 272, 288-290, 375, 402, 462-463, 492-494, 520-523, 594, 620, 864)

The Scoping Information Packet we were provided has very little information regarding the long-term solution to growth and congestion; its two alternatives—don't build a bridge or build a bridge—which is no choice at all. All the Tappan Zee replacement proposals offer absolutely nothing in the way of improving traffic capacity despite all

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the housing developments that had been springing up in bedroom communities to the north and the west.

Unless you expand highway to four lanes to the Palisades Parkway, the traffic will still back up going west and this should be part of the project or a new project after this is finished. This is a chronic problem and the bridge alone does not solve it, its inadequate. Reducing the project to a bridge and no longer a larger corridor is a concern in that other impacts are not being evaluated as part of the environmental review, in particular, increased capacity with additional permanent lanes. Increased bridge capacity without any additional mitigation is not only segmentation but will negatively impact residents of Clarkstown and Rockland County. Add necessary improvements in the planning and review stages including the reduction of the bottleneck in Central Nyack on the Northbound lanes and necessary improvements at the exits along the immediate corridor.

Expand the project to the Suffern interchange (at least to the Palisades Parkway) and add a minimum of one extra lane each way to the Thruway. Even if we can't find the money today for the full scope of the project from Port Chester to Sloatsburg, the bridge itself should be built with that scope in mind.

We need five lanes of traffic each way, four lanes is barely more than we have now, which is clearly inadequate. The designs are exceedingly generous with shoulders and emergency lanes resulting in twice the width of the existing bridge but with minimal improvement to traffic flow. If no transit is provided on a new structure, Rockland County insists that the EIS identify actions/measures to relieve congestion in the corridor until transit is provided on both the bridge and along the entire corridor.

Rockland County acknowledges the need to replace the bridge, and obviously, its safety and reliability is of paramount importance. Rockland County considers it a requirement that any alternative must preserve and enhance the quality of life of Rockland County residents because it will shape the future of Rockland and the region for the next 100 years. We also need to recognize that the expansive population growth we need to tackle is not here, not just in Clarkstown, but west and north. Rockland should not be treated as a pass-through or the last stop as it has in the past. It needs a bridge and a long-term plan and a solution worthy of its people.

**Response:** The broadening of the project to encompass the 30-mile corridor is not being undertaken because of the financial constraints previously described. Interstate 87/287, including the Tappan Zee Bridge, is

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prone to frequent and heavy congestion. The capacity of the bridge is controlled by several factors, including a reduction in the number of travel lanes west of Interchange 11, and weaving maneuvers at interchanges in Westchester and Rockland Counties. While it would not address the capacity constraints along the Interstate 87/287 corridor, the Replacement Bridge Alternative would improve the safety and operational features of the Tappan Zee Hudson River crossing, resulting in fewer delays from traffic incidents and accidents on the bridge itself.

**Comment 20:** The Interchange 10 area and the toll plaza in Tarrytown area should be included in the scope of this project to include, in the airspace above both areas, large multi-story parking and transit station structures each covering a few acres that will allow many hundreds of vehicles (from south Route 9W and the Route 9 corridor) a parking, carpool, and transit option now missing in our region. A similar large facility at Interchange 12 for the Route 303 corridor is also desirable. By building a smaller bridge these ancillary facilities can be built within a similar overall cost. (332)

**Response:** As noted above, while not precluding the development of future transit related infrastructure, the current project does not include a transit element. Therefore, recommendations to facilitate development and utilization of a future transit scenario is beyond the scope of this EIS.

**Comment 21:** Existing commuter rail lines, most especially the Pascack Valley Line and to a lesser extent the Port Jervis Lines should be incorporated into this project as a form of mitigation for environmental impact the added traffic capacity of the new bridge will bring to the region. The integration of these lines will have an almost immediate impact and should be seriously considered. To compensate for disruption to the Village of Suffern, I urge support of locating a new train and bus station on the suitably large parking lot across from the post office in Suffern. This would provide a much needed boost to the retail economy of Suffern. (290, 366, 566, 857)

**Response:** As noted above, while not precluding the development of future transit, the current project does not include a transit element. Therefore, recommendations to facilitate development and utilization of a future transit scenario is beyond the scope of this EIS. Moreover, as discussed in EIS Chapter 4, "Transportation," the project will not add capacity and thus no mitigation is required.

**Comment 22:** The project should not stop at the old corridor boundary but expand to think about the importance of the Stewart Airport. You should take it up

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at least to Hillburn and then thinking ultimately about connecting to Stewart because if you connect with the rail system and into Westchester County it will have enormous economic consequences for this region. (374)

**Response:** It is within the discretion of the lead agency and the joint lead agencies to define the project's purpose, need, goals and objectives, taking into account fiscal considerations. As explained in the White Paper (see **Appendix A**), the agencies have determined that CRT is not affordable at this time.

**Comment 23:** The scope and EIS should be expanded to discuss Transit Oriented Development (TOD) possibilities with detail of the potential beneficial impacts from TOD and industry examples in the United States and World. The placement of stations within the Village of Elmsford has the potential to follow the proposed policies of "Channel development to centers" and "Nurture economic climate" in the Westchester 2025/plan together. (403)

**Response:** This is beyond the scope of the Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing project.

**Comment 24:** Several comments suggested that the DEIS should include a tunnel alternative for the Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project. (56, 58, 181-182, 210, 239, 287, 329, 348, 391, 420, 423, 470, 472, 479, 485-491, 558-561)

The DEIS should discuss why construction of the New Bridge is preferable to construction of a Cross-Hudson tunnel. This alternative was prematurely eliminated from consideration; benefits include a reduction in visual impacts, minimize air pollution, noise impacts. New technologies make this option less extensive and more feasible than scoping packet suggests.

The FHWA and the state government should take a fresh look at the tunnel option instead of the bridge option. As taxpayers, we all have to realize there are 3 costs to this project (1) the cost to build it (2) the annual cost to maintain and operate it over the next 100 years (3) the cost to the environment and wildlife that depend on the river. The tunnel option has by far the lowest cost to maintain and operate and the lowest impact on the environment. Plus it would eliminate the many suicides and suicide attempts that sadly take place every year on this bridge. The tunnel would eliminate snowplowing, salt and sanding in the winter. A tunnel would eliminate the issue of sun glare.

The immediate solution would be to build a truck-on-train tunnel from West Nyack to Elmsford taking all the trucks of the bridge. Regionally,

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an underground tunnel carrying heavy freight, high-speed rail, heavy trucks, and general traffic should and could be built to relieve bridge congestion.

**Response:** The EIS will summarize the alternatives analysis, which eliminated further consideration of a tunnel alternative based on cost and environmental constraints. Comments about a regional transportation strategy for using tunnels are outside the scope of the EIS.

**Comment 25:** A number of commenters suggested that the DEIS consider a single structure option. (211, 316, 318, 321, 511-514)

The DEIS should include a discussion of the difference and viability of building a single new crossing instead of the two or even a possible third crossing for mass transit. In the DEIS, the lead agencies must thoroughly consider the need for two crossings instead of one, since building two new structures would potentially double the impact on the riverbed and marine environment. Because a future possible third crossing for rail transit was suggested, we request that the analysis also include a discussion of the potential impact of three newly constructed crossings.

The EIS should include a single structure alternative in addition to the preferred twin structures pointing out the advantages and disadvantages of each. If preliminary investigation identified fatal flaws or reasons why a single structure is not preferred, the EIS should provide a rational basis for precluding in-depth analysis. While a two bridge option provides operational flexibility for vehicular traffic it provides a lengthy "tunnel" for navigation to pass through. The overall width of the structure(s) is explained to be 194 feet (220 feet when including a 42 feet gap for future transit options). The existing bridge width is approximately 85 feet wide. This 100 foot increase and its impact on navigation needs to be addressed.

Consider this sketch alternative of a single span: three lanes in each direction on the upper level, three lanes that would be switchable on the lower level, with revised curves and alignment that is more functional.

**Response:** The EIS will discuss the design criteria for the project and will include the most current design descriptions such as the total width, gap between spans, and other aspects noted by the comments. Although a single structure alternative would not provide the necessary service redundancy identified in the Scoping Information Packet, as will be explained in the EIS, the single structure alternative is not a feasible option. In planning for the future bridge, NYSTA and NYSDOT are

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considering alternatives that provide for a minimum of four lanes in each direction, and reversible lanes are not preferred for long-term operations on the replacement bridge.

**Comment 26:** One of my concerns is that the bridge is being built further north of the existing bridge. It would seem more proper to me to build the replacement bridge south of the existing bridge which is further away from the population masses of Tarrytown, Sleepy Hollow and Nyack. I am concerned that one of the reasons for building the replacement bridge north rather than south of the existing bridge is because the Port Authority would have jurisdiction over the bridge including both responsibility for funding and the right to tolls from the new bridge. (317, 379-380)

**Response:** The northern placement of the Replacement Bridge Alternative is based on the consideration of a footprint that would maximize the use of existing Interstate 87/287 right-of-way, while minimizing adverse effects in Rockland and Westchester Counties. The design parameters considered in the development of the Replacement Bridge Alternative are described in this Scoping Summary Report and will be described in the EIS.

**Comment 27:** The DEIS should include a vigorous analysis of the “reasonably foreseeable” environmental impacts for all of the project alternatives considered. Anything less than a full analysis of alternatives would fall short of the lead agencies’ responsibilities under NEPA to consider the “adverse environmental effects” of the “agency action” on the “human environment.” According to CEQ regulations, the “effects” or “impacts” that must be studied include those “which are caused by the action and are later in time or farther removed in distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable...[and] may include growth inducing effects and other effects related to induced changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth rate.

**Response:** The EIS will provide an analysis of the potential for indirect and cumulative impacts pursuant to the guidance noted in the comment. The EIS will also describe and analyze the relevant project alternatives and identify those alternatives that were previously analyzed and eliminated from further consideration.

**Comment 28:** It’s critical we acknowledge the concerns of the communities affected; the mistakes that have been made in the past; and the importance of community involvement in getting this rebuild right. It was over half a century ago when the Tappan Zee first crossed the Hudson and cut the South Nyack in-two, forever blighting and dividing the community.

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While we cannot change mistakes that were made, we do have a unique and unprecedented opportunity to undo some of this damage and, hopefully, to make this community whole again. (21)

**Response:** The Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project has been developed with many years of planning and community engagement through the previous Tappan Zee/I-287 Corridor Project and the current environmental review process affords the public many opportunities to provide thoughts and comments on the project and its community effects.

**Comment 29:** This proposed project is to the advantage of residents on the Rockland/Orange/Jersey side of the river while we, in Tarrytown, will bear the brunt of worsening air quality, added traffic issues, intrusion into our living areas, noise and general pollution. Residents of Rockland County and New Jersey should be encouraged to utilize existing mass transit on their side of the bridge, and/or to provide bus and/or rail traffic there, to prolong the life of the structure, whether it is refurbished or replaced. (57, 327)

**Response:** The overarching purpose of the project is to maintain a vital link in the regional and national transportation network that benefits residents and businesses throughout the region. The EIS will examine the potential for project generated-impacts for both Westchester and Rockland Counties, including the immediate project area located in the Village of Tarrytown.

**Comment 30:** Mr. Anderson mentioned that the South Broadway Bridge was going to be eliminated. This is going to cut off Salisbury Point from access Route 9W I'm just concerned that you're going to cut Salisbury off from an easy way to get up onto 9W. (189)

**Response:** The South Broadway Bridge is proposed to be replaced as part of the Replacement Bridge Alternative. The EIS will set forth and analyze the sequence of the proposed construction.

**Comment 31:** How can you about build one span first and the second span possibly and later in the future? It costs less to build two spans at the same time!

**Response:** The Replacement Bridge Alternative would consist of two structures that could be built concurrently.

**Comment 32:** With a new mass transit system, you should use the General Motors' site as the site of the rail yards that will allow connection to Metro-

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North. The site will have a connection from north, south, east, and west, it will make it a great place to build a conference center. (281)

**Response:** As noted above, while the project does not preclude transit, a transit component is not part of the project and will not be analyzed in the EIS.

**Comment 33:** In the event of a catastrophic event at the Indian Point nuclear power facility would the new bridge have the capability to convert all Westchester-bound lanes into Rockland-bound lanes to facilitate evacuation? (476)

**Response:** The proposed Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing would not change the overall regional highway capacity to move traffic in the event of an evacuation. However, in correcting operational and safety deficiencies, the new structure would be expected to better facilitate an evacuation than the existing bridge.

### 5-3-1-2 DESIGN-RELATED COMMENTS

**Comment 34:** Encourage the use of solar or wind power to help power the bridge itself, the lighting and everything that's needed. It's so easy to do in a bridge type of structure to have that kind of capacity. The Tappan Zee Bridge should be rebuilt as a green power generating station using wind turbines, water turbines, tidal, hydrokinetic, and solar. You could use the GM site as a location for power storage from the Bridge's power generation. (130, 262-263)

**Response:** No onsite energy generating features have been included in the project. The EIS will analyze the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the project and opportunities to reduce such emissions.

**Comment 35:** What consideration had been or will be given to suicide prevention in the design of the new bridge? Certain people are attracted to places such as bridges to end their lives in spectacular fashion. There are design features that can reduce this attraction, and they should be considered during design, especially since this bridge will have provisions for pedestrian traffic which will make it easier for would-be suicides to make their attempts. A tunnel would eliminate the many suicides that take place on this bridge every year, or attempted suicides, that use police and first responders' resources, not to mention the human cost. (10, 19, 400, 478, 743)

**Response:** The final design will incorporate available methods to improve the safety and security of the facility, including suicide prevention.

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**Comment 36:** Use underground roadway heating elements to melt the snow and ice and avoid the use of road salt. To minimize sun glare install motorized panels which could be used to shield the sun's rays from the driver's line of site. In addition, the panels could be made out of a photovoltaic material so that electricity could be produced to power lights and signs on the bridge. Install security fencing throughout the bridge for public safety. (146-148)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 37:** In order to lessen the congestion at the toll barriers, establish an operation to collect tolls on the lanes leading up to the superstructure. Employ electronic bill collection, E-Z Pass, high speed cameras. At the same time, a minimum number of toll collectors should be used. At least a few conventional tollbooths for those who still believe in cash should be provided. (150, 577)

**Response:** As currently envisioned, the Replacement Bridge Alternative would change the two, higher-speed E-ZPass lanes at the Tappan Zee toll barrier to three highway-speed E-ZPass lanes. Cash booths would still be available. The highway speed lanes would improve speeds and reduce delays through the toll plaza for E-ZPass users.

**Comment 38:** The project should include a parking area on both sides of the bridge for people who want to park and bike or walk across (they could be part of major parks or parking lots that provide some sort of an attraction). This is probably less of a problem in Tarrytown because the Metro-North parking lot is not particularly crowded on weekends. (179, 302)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 39:** The designs that serve local people with respect to getting on and off the bridge in South Nyack are very impractical and should be considered as part of your overall project. The project limits should really be the Franklin Avenue Bridge. (185)

**Response:** As noted above, the project focuses on the replacement of the Tappan Zee Bridge and upland highway improvements are outside the scope of the project, other than those improvements necessary to accommodate the alignment of the proposed bridge. Interstate 87/287 interchanges in the vicinity of the project would continue to operate similar to existing conditions. For pedestrians and cyclists using the proposed shared-use path, the project would include design features to ensure safe ingress to and egress from the pathway.

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**Comment 40:** Of the two types of bridges showed, the arch bridge fits in with the area better than the cable thing. The cable one looks manmade, the arch one at least mimics what nature has done out there with the curves. (195)

**Response:** Comment noted. The EIS will consider the visual impacts of both the arch and cable-stayed design options.

**Comment 41:** Of the two options presented in the scoping document, we strongly encourage FHWA, NYSDOT, and NYSTA to select the Long Span Option as the lower number of piers and greater structural strength associated with this option would benefit both the Hudson River and the users of the bridge. We also prefer the uncommitted span of the Long Span Option as it ensures the long-term viability of the bridge by allowing those levels to provide a more complete range of use in the future. I would vote for the long span option with 70 vs. 118 piles. This would be most aesthetically pleasing and least environmentally disruptive. (347, 636, 866, 877)

**Response:** Comment noted. The EIS will consider the environmental effects of both the Short and Long Span Options.

**Comment 42:** Our proposal is for a Lid Park that would provide a cover to the Thruway; a green project that would have trees, it would be a park for people similar in some ways to the High Line in New York City. It will bring people and commerce. I think it has an economic function as well as a green function. Our proposal is recommended in the Rockland County Comprehensive Plan and it's gained wide support by the public and by county, state, and federal representatives. I ask that current planning not forfeit any option for this to be realized in the future. In fact, the mere construction of this bridge will attract possible private funding, so that the concept South Nyack has for mixed-use development may ultimately be realized. (86, 196, 294, 699, 776, 788, 807)

**Response:** Comment noted. While the project would not include a lid park, the project would not preclude such future initiatives.

**Comment 43:** The long span option is unclear as to the number of lanes on each level. It appears that there will be four lanes on each level for a total of 16 lanes (both directions) (316-318)

**Response:** The Long Span Option would provide for a total of eight (8) traffic lanes. Four (4) eastbound lanes would be located atop the south structure, and four (4) westbound lanes would be located atop the north structure. There are no lanes proposed for the lower levels.

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**Comment 44:** The Tappan Zee Bridge replacement should include an assessment of a pedestrian bridge across the Thruway to reconnect the Old Croton Aqueduct trail, the National Historic Landmark that was severed when the Thruway was built. Trail walkers and bikers have ever since had to maneuver detours through substantial traffic to get around the dead ends caused by the Thruway. Mitigation is long overdue, and the new construction project provides the best and perhaps only opportunity to provide it. This could be linked in with the pedestrian and cycling lanes on the bridge to create a real intermodal corridor, allowing for local traffic (walk to school, walking to work) and it also connects with the regional trail system. (215, 355, 599, 637, 787)

**Response:** No aqueduct trail crossing is contemplated but the project would not preclude a crossing solution in the future. The EIS will assess the project's potential impacts on area open space resources.

**Comment 45:** What is the expected useful lifetime of the TZB River crossing? It should be on the order of 100 years and earlier statements of NYS DOT mentioned at some point 150 years. Is 100 years a realistic time frame before major maintenance is required? Don't do the same thing again and build two new bridges to replace it that are only going to last 50 years and then come back again. Let's come up with a design that will allow the bridge to last much longer than its current life span. There are plenty of bridges in this world that are 2,000 years old; let's see if we can make this one last 200. (301, 324, 342, 502)

**Response:** The new bridge is expected to have a life span of at least 100 years before major maintenance or rehabilitation is needed. With such maintenance activities, the total life span of the replacement bridge is expected to be 150 years or more.

**Comment 46:** Please do not import made-in-China bridge and assemble it here as they have done in California. (351)

**Response:** The project is subject to the federal "Buy America" provision, which includes rules that encourage using structural steel made in the USA.

**Comment 47:** One of the things you read about all the time with the Tappan Zee is that the materials used at the time were substandard steel and the piers weren't prepared properly. What guarantees do we have that the right materials will be used, that we won't be using cheaper materials this time around? (461)

**Response:** Details of quality requirements, specific materials, and achievement of a long life span will be developed for the selected preferred alternative at the completion of the EIS process.

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**Comment 48:** Please consider incorporating a Rest-stop/ Observation Deck either on the new bridge or the old one as a source of additional revenues. You have the benefit of NYC Skyline, the beauty of the Hudson River as a natural attraction. With a little creativity and private initiative, you can make it a reality. (372)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 49:** Construct an elevator from new bridge to Metro-North Tarrytown station. This elevator would need to go down from the new bridge, then horizontal (or a moving sidewalk) to the north end of the Tarrytown station. This would allow an Express Bus to discharge passengers while on the bridge and then the passengers could proceed to the Tarrytown station without the bus diverting through the congested streets of the village of Tarrytown. (450)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 50:** Did you ever consider incorporating helipads into the new bridge to enable medical evacuation by helicopter? (475)

**Response:** Helipads are not considered for this project.

**Comment 51:** The cable stay scenario would seem to be unfeasible since for a bridge with a single line of cable stay supports, it has to come up through the center of the bridge. This works fine when you have traffic going one way on one side of the bridge or the other but you are proposing separate spans with the traffic lanes on each going across the center of each span. (515)

**Response:** Arch and Cable-stayed Options for the main span of the replacement bridge are both feasible and will be analyzed in the EIS. Both the Arch and Cable-stayed Options have four supports (tower or arch). In each of the two traffic directions there is a tower or arch located on each side. There are many options possible for the form and configuration of the Cable-stayed and Arch Options.

**Comment 52:** Several comments provided corrections or clarifications to specific language. (9, 24, 25, 32, 55, 651, 861)

On page 1-5 - a "collision" between a vessel and fixed structure is an "allision"

On page 1-7. Goals and Objectives notably omits consideration of maritime operations and safety.

The graph on Figure 1-3 of the Scoping Packet is reversed for the direction of traffic flow.

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The name of the "Tappan Zee" Bridge is actually the "Governor Malcolm Wilson Memorial" Bridge and the Thruway is the Governor Thomas E. Dewey Thruway.

There is no Broadway Avenue and it should say South Broadway.

Correct 2010 population estimates and percent changes in Section 1-3-2.

**Response:** The suggested revisions have been made and will be carried into the EIS.

**Comment 53:** The current bridge is very noisy. We hear truck tires, motorcycles, cars at all hours of the day and night, and in my house in our bedrooms, on our streets. I would like the new bridge or bridges to be built with noise reduction in mind. The noise pollution from the existing bridge permeates the entire Hudson Valley region around the existing bridge including the Ihabod's Landing development, the new Hudson Harbor development, as well as, other residents and local. (328, 381)

**Response:** Potential noise related impacts generated by traffic on the new bridge will be evaluated as part of the EIS and for any identified noise impacts, mitigation measures, as appropriate, will be evaluated.

**5-3-2 ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSES FRAMEWORK**

**5-3-2-1 GENERAL**

**Comment 54:** The U.S. Coast Guard Bridge permit will be issued under authority of the General Bridge Act of 1946 (33 U.S.C. 525) rather than Section 9 of the Rivers and Harbors Appropriation Act of 1899. See pg. 4-3 also. (644)

**Response:** This correction has been made and will be carried into the EIS.

**Comment 55:** The EIS should identify potential uses for the existing bridge, and the EIS should identify the landside impacts and proposed mitigation for the transition areas. (645)

**Response:** The existing Tappan Zee Bridge would be demolished as part of the Replacement Bridge Alternative. Maintenance and reuse of the existing bridge is not prudent for several reasons. A detailed analysis will be provided in the Section 4(f) and Transportation chapters of the EIS.

**Comment 56:** The Westchester County Planning Department is currently preparing an update to the County's comprehensive plan, entitled Westchester 2025: plan together. The placement of BRT along I-287 has the potential to follow the proposed policies of "Enhance corridors",

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"Support transportation alternatives", and "Join regional initiatives" of Westchester 2025: plan together. The EIS should discuss how the Hudson River Crossing Project will respond to the County's proposed policies. (68)

**Response:** The EIS will analyze the compatibility of the project with local zoning ordinances and other applicable local or regional public policy documents.

### 5-3-2-2 TRANSPORTATION

**Comment 57:** And while this plan wouldn't focus on the Exit 10 intersection, I believe that if we expand the bridge, the current infrastructure on Route 59 and by Mountain View Avenue is not going to be able to handle the traffic situation. There would be local traffic congestion for residents in the Town of Clarkstown and other parts of Rockland County that use that part of Route 59 to go over the Tappan Zee Bridge or get into Nyack for work. One of our largest hospitals is there so it's a busy roadway in the morning. I would like to see how that will be addressed. Mitigate the impacts on local streets. Whenever there's a hiccup on the bridge our local streets are gridlocked. Study the problem, come up with the right solutions from a traffic engineering standpoint, and put them in, whether it's lane widening, turning lanes, traffic signals, et cetera. Do it right this time, if you're doing it again, do it right. (649, 657, 668)

**Response:** The eight-lane bridge would have adequate capacity to meet future demand. The project would not result in increases in peak-direction capacity or long-term operational changes to traffic patterns or transit services. Traffic on the Tappan Zee Bridge is controlled by the more limited processing capacity of the adjacent highway segments. Any improvements to address these constraints are not foreseeable at this time, and their implementation would require a separate and independent environmental review process if and when they are foreseeable and financing is available. The project's potential traffic impacts will be analyzed in the EIS.

**Comment 58:** The DEIS should also consider effects on marine traffic due to the construction, demolition, and placement of the new bridges. The crowding of floating construction machinery, bridge pilings, caissons, and other work-related disturbances will impede traffic flow through the Hudson River's navigable channel for barges, ships, and boats that pass through every day. A series of bridges could also impede the wind flow affecting the recreational use of sailboats on the Hudson River.

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The Short span and Long span bridge options discussed in the EIS should address: differences in navigational clearances compared to existing bridge clearances; availability of auxiliary navigational channels. Section 3-4-1 should include volume and type of vessels, destinations, vessel dimension including LOA, draft and air gap requirements, and cargoes carried. (653, 661, 662)

**Response:** The EIS will include an assessment of the potential effects of the project's construction on marine transport.

**Comment 59:** Tarrytown should discontinue non-resident parking permits, the sale of which increases traffic on the bridge and locally, on Route 9, which sustains very heavy traffic even without the added vehicles, because it is a main road as well as an emergency route. (663, 677)

**Response:** This is outside the scope of the project.

**Comment 60:** There will be an increase in traffic in Tarrytown when new residential properties in Tarrytown and Sleepy Hollow are occupied by residents and when additional housing, shopping, movie theaters, etc. are introduced.

A new, wider bridge would encourage more people to use it, instead measures should be taken to limit use of the bridge when possible. Heavy traffic in the area takes away from the suburban/river town qualities that residents of Tarrytown enjoy. Promoting more traffic will discourage people from living in the area and supporting its businesses and recreational/cultural sites. Nothing should increase private vehicle traffic in the Lower Hudson Valley. There is no logical reason to build an eight-lane crossing across the Tappan Zee Bridge with six lanes on the approach on either side. How are eight lanes in the middle of a six lane 30-mile corridor justified? The maintenance of the existing bridge and the flow of traffic on the Thruway needs to be improved on both sides of the existing bridge until this new bridge is operational. (664-666, 669, 678-680)

**Response:** Traffic impacts will be analyzed in the EIS, including future traffic conditions that account for local and regional growth from new development. As noted above, the project would not result in increases in peak-direction capacity or long-term operational changes to traffic patterns or transit services. Traffic on the Tappan Zee Bridge is controlled by the more limited processing capacity of the adjacent highway segments.

Any improvements to address these constraints are not foreseeable at this time, and their implementation would require a separate and

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independent environmental review process when and if they are foreseeable and financing is available.

**Comment 61:** On Scoping Information Packet (1-3-2, 2nd Paragraph) Page 1-4: NYMTC's most recently adopted regional forecasts only cover years through 2040. A better explanation of how the 2047 estimates were developed would be helpful. (646)

**Response:** The 2047 forecasts are based on an extrapolation of data beyond the 2040 NYMTC projection and the EIS will discuss demographics and the Best Practices Model (BPM) used for travel demand forecasting.

**Comment 62:** The Town of Clarkstown has been closely following the Tappan Zee Bridge/I-287 Corridor project for over a decade now. The project as set forth by the NYSDOT was of monumental scale, with the bridge replacement, CRT, BRT, multi-modal stations and accompanying Thruway modifications. The Town formed its own Task Force 2 years ago to attend the public informational meetings and tackle the myriad documents put forth by the NYSDOT. Throughout the process, one thing was clear: a new bridge is needed, and desperately at that. For the continued economic vitality of the region, we need a bridge. But what kind of bridge and what accompanying modifications would be needed? Given the scale of public investment in the billions of dollars, this project would have to serve the needs of this area for years to come - a hundred years according to the documents. One thing is for certain, in all of the discussions, the region can not simply build more roads in answer to its congestion problem. (656)

**Response:** While the project's Replacement Bridge Alternative options do not preclude transit, the project does not include a transit component. Therefore, the EIS will not evaluate the mobility benefits of transit, nor will it compare costs and benefits of transit. Any improvements to address the constraints of adjacent highways or the implementation of mass transit projects would require a separate and independent environmental review process when and if they are foreseeable and financing is available.

**Comment 63:** Another element of this project that does not appear to have been thoroughly examined is the consequence of adding an additional off-peak lane and analysis of potential traffic volumes this may create. It is unclear why the implications of this lane addition, particularly in a region projected to grow by such a significant amount, would not be studied during this EIS process. The New York-New Jersey Port Authority, by 2040, is going to quadruple the container port in Port Elizabeth and Newark. And that means you're going to quadruple the

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number of trucks on the road. Right now, all the river crossings from Outer Bridge up to George Washington Bridge and Tappan Zee Bridge are at capacity. (658, 659)

**Response:** The eight-lane bridge would have adequate capacity to meet future demand, as will be detailed in the EIS. Any increase in truck traffic related to port expansion would occur with or without the project. Furthermore, the additional lane would not induce demand during the off-peak periods because the limited capacity of the adjacent highway segments in Rockland and Westchester Counties would continue to control volumes on the bridge. Traffic on the Tappan Zee Bridge is controlled by the more limited processing capacity of the adjacent highway segments.

**Comment 64:** Section 3-4-1 of the scoping packet states that traffic volumes will not change as a result of this project and that the build-year analysis will be based on projected no-build traffic volumes. The EIS should explain how the addition of a traffic lane and the other mobility and redundancy improvements would not increase traffic volumes.

What will the impact be on the significantly increased number of cars and resulting traffic on Route 9 and feeder streets? How will our ability to get in and out of our property change and what will be done to mitigate resulting problems? (654, 655)

**Response:** The Traffic chapter of the EIS will present traffic growth projections for the Replacement Bridge and No Build Alternatives. The Replacement Bridge Alternative would expand the cross section of the bridge from seven lanes to eight lanes, making an additional lane available to support traffic flow in the off-peak direction. As will be indicated in the EIS, traffic modeling results show that the additional lane would not induce demand during the off-peak periods because the limited capacity of the adjacent highway segments in Rockland and Westchester Counties would continue to control volumes on the bridge. Further, the Replacement Bridge Alternative's improvements in the ability to avoid and respond to incidents and accidents would reduce delays for motorists. In addition, the EIS will examine roadway access issues during and after construction.

**Comment 65:** Air pollution, traffic congestion, and noise issues are very serious problems and they need to be dealt with. The road, I-87, needs to be widened and some of the I-87 traffic must be diverted. (660)

**Response:** The EIS will analyze the project's potential impacts on air quality, traffic, and noise. Regional congestion issues are outside the scope of

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the project; however, the EIS will evaluate traffic conditions within the project's study area.

**Comment 66:** What will be the extent of congestion and air pollution on secondary corridors (Route 119, Route 9 and Route 9A) in Greenburgh and its villages if the new bridge is built without a mass transit capability? (Please quantify) Is there any way this congestion and air pollution can be mitigated? The 10 year study that preceded dropping the mass transit option concluded there would be severe impacts on existing roads and highways if mass transit is not included. What has changed in the analysis? How will the state address the problem? (395)

**Response:** The EIS will analyze the project's potential impacts on air quality and traffic, and in the event of any adverse impacts, will identify and analyze mitigation measures for such impacts. As will be discussed in the EIS, the Replacement Bridge Alternative would not change traffic volumes or travel patterns as compared to the No Build Alternative.

**Comment 67:** Many commenters were concerned about traffic congestion and the constraints of the adjacent roadways. (413, 647, 648, 650, 667, 672, 673, 674, 686, 688, 689, 690, 691, 865)

Investments must be made to improve transit from west of the Hudson and reduce congestion in the corridor. Other than accidents from those dangerous driving conditions on the bridge, the real rush hour traffic bottleneck west bound is where the four bridge lanes become three between exits ten and eleven on the New York State Thruway and then subsequent congestion until after the PIP Interchange 13 where GW bridge and other traffic from the south joins with the Thruway to slow down everything back to the bridge. The bridge project will not address the Exit 11 lane reduction, and therefore will fail to address the bottleneck and the non-accident congestion that appears to be bridge related, but really is not. In fact, if more cars are able to cross the bridge faster and easier, the backups at the lane reduction point will likely be longer, and still extend back onto the bridge. The new bridge will be safer, but not better from a traffic flow standpoint because west-side system will not have been improved. At that point, critics will say that the new bridge cost billions, but is no better than the old one because the backups still exist. In the future, this may become a practical, political, and public relations problem for the agencies and politicians who authorized the project.

Improve the flow of traffic on both sides of the bridge until this new bridge is operational. The maintenance of the bridge, present bridge and the traffic flow need to be dramatically improved.

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We need a bridge that will be functional for 100-150 years into the future; it would be far wiser to spend more now to build a bridge that will accommodate the ever-increasing volume of travelers well into the future than to spend less to build a bridge that will be obsolete in just a few decades.

The EIS Scoping packet itself states that despite providing four lanes in the busiest direction during peak travel hours, “the bridge remains highly congested with frequent travel delays and a poor level of service.” Given the project population increases in the area, it is difficult to see how the new bridge design will do anything at all to lessen congestion and delay and the consequences they bring.

Where I run into traffic is across Rockland. It often takes me -- you know, it can take me up to 45 minutes to get from Suffern to Nyack. When I get to the bridge, the traffic moves.

There are three causes for the traffic. There is the merge from the oncoming traffic getting on at Exit 10, you have the curvature of the road that causes trucks to slow down, and you have sun glare. This new proposed bridge is actually going to make matters worse. It's not going to do anything about the merge, it's going to make the curve sharper, and it's not going to do anything about the sun glare, so you're going to end up with more congestion after this project is built than you have now, without any increasing passage way.

The scope of this Environment Impact Study needs to be extended to include the area approximately two miles on either side of the Tappan Zee Bridge because traffic congestion is not limited to the actual bridge itself. The approach roads also get congested. Lengthening the area of the study will ensure traffic problems will be taken into consideration and solved. A new, wider roadway on the bridge itself would still get congested because of the congestion caused by the highway's narrowing in Nyack.

**Response:** The scope of analysis in the EIS will encompass the potential impacts of the project. The Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project would address the structural, operational (i.e., sun glare and horizontal curve alignment), mobility, safety, and security limitations and deficiencies of the existing Tappan Zee Bridge. Although the project will not increase capacity, the eight-lane bridge would have adequate capacity to meet future demand. As noted above, traffic on the Tappan Zee Bridge is controlled by the more limited processing capacity of the adjacent highway segments. Any improvements to address these constraints are not foreseeable at this time, and their implementation would

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require a separate and independent environmental review process when and if they are foreseeable and financing is available.

**Comment 68:** Several comments focused on the projected growth of the region and potential increases in traffic volumes. (129, 658, 659, 684)

The more you build this bridge to make it easier for people to go across, the more it will attract traffic from elsewhere, like the George Washington Bridge, and only make the conditions worse here in Rockland County.

What is the consequence of adding an additional off-peak lane? The EIS should analyze the potential traffic volumes this may create. It is unclear why the implications of this lane addition would not be studied during this EIS process.

The New York-New Jersey Port Authority, by 2040, is going to quadruple the container port in Port Elizabeth and Newark and the number of trucks on the road. All the river crossings from Outer Bridge up to George Washington Bridge and Tappan Zee Bridge are at capacity.

Projected growth in the region is projected to exacerbate congestion by: 1) resulting in level of service F in most sections of the corridor in 2025 during AM and PM peak (See Alternatives Analysis Report 2006, pg. 4-17, 4-19); 2) creating a peak-hour type environment throughout the 1-287 Corridor for significant portions of the day ("With peak spreading in both the AM and PM periods, there would be very little time remaining between the peaks for noncongested operation.") (See Alternatives Analysis Report 2006, pg. 4-16) and; 3) increasing traffic on many arterial roadways as people look for other routes to their destination. (See Alternatives Analysis Report 2006, pg. 4-18, 4-21).

**Response:** The EIS will examine traffic conditions in the study area with and without the project. Future traffic conditions will be based on the NYMTC Best Practices Model (BPM), which considers regional data. See response to Comment 67.

**Comment 69:** Section 3-4-1 Transportation lays out the methodology for studying traffic conditions. It also raises several questions. First, wasn't this already done? Second, if it is known that capacity will not be increased, what purpose will be served by studying the existing conditions? If capacity is not being increased and earlier studies project ever increasing traffic near the bridge as well as throughout the corridor if no public transportation is built, how could goods movement be improved? (685)

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**Response:** The project will not increase capacity or result in long-term operational changes to traffic patterns or transit services. Although the Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project is undertaking an independent environmental review, this EIS relies on the relevant analyses conducted for the prior Tappan Zee Bridge/I-287 Corridor Project. The project would not result in increases in peak-direction capacity or long-term operational changes to traffic patterns or transit services. The project is intended to improve traffic safety and operations by creating a Hudson River crossing more consistent with current highway and bridge design standards while also providing structural and operational redundancy.

**Comment 70:** The Garden State Parkway connection is very dangerous as it exists now. I would encourage the state to develop a project to alleviate the problems and the dangerous situation there. The Thruway adds to the insurance rates and the costs to the taxpayers of Rockland County because of the amount of accidents that occur on it. (797)

**Response:** Such future additional studies may be undertaken by NYSTA or NYSDOT, but are independent and beyond the scope of this EIS.

5-3-2-3 COMMUNITY CHARACTER

**Comment 71:** Many commenters were concerned about the traffic, air and noise effects of the proposed action on their property values, health and quality of life. Commenters advocated that that any new crossing scenarios consider the potential community character impacts to local communities. (660, 692, 693, 695- 698, 700-701, 703, 705-714, 716, 719, 720-721, 723-724, 726-730, 731-736, 737-739, 742, 744, 746, 747, 748, 750, 752, 755, 757, 792, 795-796, 798-799, 802, 804-805, 808-818, 822-823, 825, 826, 827, 828, 830-832, 834-835, 837, 842-844, 849, 850-853, 860, 864, 980-981, 988, 1056-1058, 1060-1061, 1065, 1070-1071, 1078, 1080-1084, 1089, 1096-1098, 1101-1102, 1105, 1107, 1110-1114, 1117-1119, 1122, 1125)

Air pollution, traffic congestion, and noise issues are very serious problems and they need to be dealt with. The road, I-87, needs to be widened and some of the I-87 traffic must be diverted.

The Village of Tarrytown requests that the required hard look be given during the Environmental Review Process to alternatives and/or specific actions that would mitigate the substantial negative impacts the project outlined in the scoping packet ("the preferred alternative") will have on the eighty-nine unit Quay Condominiums (261 - 299 South Broadway).

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The planned new TZB structure will abut and, in places, overlap and affect Quay tennis courts, swimming pool and clubhouse. These amenities will be impossible to use during construction and likely after the project is completed. The planned structure will come an estimated 90 feet closer to residential units. If this occurs, it will significantly impact quality of life and result in noise, air quality and light impacts as well as unmitigated visual impacts. During construction and operation, the combination of effects will inevitably result in substantial negative environmental impacts, markedly diminish property values and likely impact the health of many of our residents. The Quay Condominium requests that the required "hard look" be given during the Environmental Review Process to alternatives and/or specific actions that would mitigate the substantial negative impacts on our community as outlined in the scoping project. The concerns cover both the construction and final phases of the new TZ Bridge. Although this project will have major consequences - both positive and negative - on the region as well as the village of Tarrytown, we know that The Quay will be especially impacted and therefore requires a vigorous examination.

Since the TZB project will be of greater benefit to residents of Rockland County and New Jersey, I would like to know how residents of Westchester would benefit, especially Tarrytown, where there is already substantial out-of-area traffic on a daily basis.

How will you incorporate feasible and reasonable noise barriers during building and post building process in the project design? We expect that appropriate mitigation and/or compensation will be considered.

How will the direct financial impact to the condominium community be mitigated or compensated?

The current plans will significantly increase sound and air pollution and yet will do nothing to change these same problems after project completion (i.e., no reduction of individual auto transport, and in fact, more). The current proposal suggests a new construction that does not even meet current needs, yet alone the needs of the next decades. (725) The projected project will have a devastating impact on all, is poorly conceived, is ignorant of its negative outcome, and is insensitive to current and future citizens of the community.

Construction and operation of the proposed new TZ Bridge will severely reduce the value of our home and our ability to resell our unit.

I used to be the manager of the Salisbury Point Cooperatives right at the foot of the bridge. Your last major announcement caused a serious decline in prices there. The one that you've just done is doing it again.

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Please, just be honest with us. Be clear. Let us know what properties may go and may not go so that people a half a mile away aren't terrified that they cannot resell their house or people will not buy there.

As retired Senior Citizens living in one of the closest homes to the planned new bridge site, not only will we suffer a very heavy loss of home value, but also there is the possibility of not being able to resell our unit at all. How will these issues be mitigated or compensated? Some owners may have such negative financial impacts to their living situation that they would prefer to be compensated so they may relocate to a situation that is commensurate to their current situation.

We have to ensure this redevelopment does not come at the further expense of the communities surrounding the Tappan Zee Bridge.

**Response:** The EIS will analyze potential environmental, social, and economic impacts of the project, including an analysis of noise, air quality, traffic, and community character impacts. The EIS will also include an analysis of any potential land acquisitions. Where any adverse impacts are identified, feasible and practicable mitigation measures will be discussed.

**Comment 72:** The proposed new bridge is estimated to be 90 feet closer to our community. We were promised one bridge, not one old and one new and not a third span. We can't have our river villages destroyed and I think that is something that is of great concern. This will result in substantial negative impact on the quality of our life with increased noise and a decrease in the existing air quality. Currently the air quality surrounding the TZ Bridge is already out of compliance with Federal air quality standards. At all of the public involvement meetings that have been held over the years, the impact to our home has not been addressed, yet we are directly impacted by any changes that occur. (189, 692,693, 695, 696,697, 698, 700, 701, 705, 706, 707, 711, 712, 713, 714, 720, 724, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 732, 733, 734, 737, 738, 739, 744, 746, 748, 750, 752, 755)

**Response:** The community character of the study area is currently shaped by the presence of the Tappan Zee Bridge. Because the project would replace an existing use, and the majority of work would occur within the existing Interstate 87/287 right-of-way and the Hudson River, potential adverse impacts would be primarily short-term during construction. The EIS will fully analyze any potential air quality, noise, and community character impacts.

**Comment 73:** What is unclear is what community impacts are considered adverse? Is increased traffic in the entire corridor which will lead to more pollution

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an adverse impact? Are negative economic effects created by increased traffic and decreased mobility adverse impacts? In light of the past studies, this must be explained in more detail. (749)

**Response:** The EIS will assess and identify potential adverse impacts to community character. That assessment will include a number of elements, such as direct physical changes, increased traffic, increased noise, increased emissions, etc.

**Comment 74:** Section 3-4-2 of the packet says that the EIS will evaluate the compatibility of the project with local and regional public policy documents. The review in this section should include: NYMTC's Regional Transportation Plan and other documents; Westchester County's Comprehensive Plan, Westchester 2025; Rockland County's Comprehensive Plan; NYS Climate Action Plan; NYS Smart Growth Cabinet documents and smart growth plans; and, plans and zoning ordinances of the communities along the I-287 corridor that will be affected by this project, including the plans and processes that were initiated by NYSDOT as part of its TOD training during the previous I-287 project. Many of these communities have prepared plans and changed zoning ordinances in anticipation of the transit service that was supposed to be provided by this project. (702)

**Response:** Comment noted. The EIS will assess the project in the context of all applicable local and regional public policy documents, including comprehensive plans, zoning ordinances, and smart growth policies.

**Comment 75:** No other community on this side of the Hudson will be as profoundly affected as South Nyack. We are Ground Zero for this project. The previous bridge destroyed the economic center and growth of our Village by ripping out 118 houses and the entire commercial district. This revised and narrowed project takes away an opportunity to address some of that and to find ways that will bring back what was taken away from our community. Our initiative that had been proposed has not been seriously considered in this. We get a new bridge. We get more noise, we get more dirt, we get more pollution, and we get more construction, but we do not get anything that repairs the damage to our Village or prevents future damage occurring to our Village. (704)

**Response:** The EIS will analyze the potential community impacts of the project, including potential impacts on the Village of South Nyack.

**Comment 76:** The River communities along the Thruway still suffer from the imposition of the Robert Moses-like cutting through communities by this highway artery. In addition the peculiar routing to cross the Hudson at its widest stretch and with a cheap (while in detail technically

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ingenious) solution that has lasted barely 60 years, is haunting us now and is the cause for why the TZB has to be replaced prematurely. (715)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 77:** I-287 and I-95 were conceived and built with virtually no regard for the municipalities destroyed by their construction, most obviously Nyack and Tarrytown, but also including New Rochelle, Mamaroneck, and many others. Any attempts to widen the existing right-of-way and increase or decrease traffic, add rail transportation which we'd have to add, or replicate the existing Tappan Zee Bridge will be met by the most vigorous community opposition. (745)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 78:** We need to assure that the proposed landing sites that include the Trooper barracks and the DOT depot, don't continue. It is extremely important to have a welcoming approach that is environmentally sound and does not continue to separate community (717)

**Response:** The replacement bridge would have a similar alignment to the existing bridge and would maximize the use of existing NYSTA right-of-way. The toll plaza, maintenance operations, and a State Trooper barracks (Troop T) are expected to be located within the same general vicinity as exists currently.

**Comment 79:** Currently the bridge lands in Grand View-on-Hudson. If the bridge is relocated to the north with a sharper sweep, it will either split the border or land in South Nyack. Will such a change impact fire and police jurisdictions, and therefore potentially service and taxes to residents of the impacted villages? Will such a change impact the judicial jurisdiction for bridge activities, now Grand View Village Court, and what would be the implications of such a change to the two villages. (756, 773)

**Response:** A change in municipal boundaries is not anticipated with the Replacement Bridge Alternative. The Replacement Bridge Alternative would not alter access on local roadways.

#### 5-3-2-4 VISUAL AND AESTHETIC RESOURCES

**Comment 80:** Are there artist's renderings of the proposed new TZ bridge system? Scope Section 3-4-6 VISUAL RESOURCES should include an analysis of the bridge design regarding the view from the bridge toward the Hudson Valley viewscape for drivers, passengers and transit commuters, not just walkers on the pedestrian walkway.

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The proposed bridge would create an aesthetic "wall" blocking the view between Piermont and Nyack. Perhaps the aesthetics of the bridge should outweigh the possible safety concerns raised by a lower profile approach structure.

The height of the open area below the trusses and the thickness of the trusses will have a significant impact on the views from the roads and homes in the surrounding area, particularly Grand View-on-Hudson, South Nyack, and Nyack. The ability to "look under" the bridge and across the river may be as or more significant when considering visual impact, than the number of piers. (869, 873, 874, 880)

**Response:** The EIS will include simulations of the Replacement Bridge options from various vantage points on both sides of the Hudson River and will include an analysis of potential visual impacts.

**Comment 81:** Section 3-4-6 VISUAL RESOURCES should include an analysis of lighting impacts and address light fixtures that direct light downward toward the bridge roadway and screen the source of light to surrounding Hudson River view shed. This discussion of lighting should also address lighting for the toll plaza area. Light from the existing fixtures at the toll plaza can be seen 3.5 miles away in Piermont. (872)

**Response:** Lighting on the bridge would be in accordance with all necessary safety standards, as well as FAA requirements. Potential impacts related to lighting on the bridge will be evaluated in the EIS.

### 5-3-2-5 LAND ACQUISITION, DISPLACEMENT, AND RELOCATION

**Comment 82:** Several commenters were concerned about the potential for property acquisition and eminent domain. The range of input is summarized below. (753, 758-760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 768)

In terms of our homes, are they protected? And if they are going to be in trouble, when will eminent domain issues be decided?

I am the owner of 317 South Broadway Nyack, NY 10960. After attending the October 27th, 2011 meeting in Rockland at the Palisades Center it is clear that my house will be affected by the new plans of the Tappan Zee Bridge. Because of this, our house will not be salable. Our whole life will be affected and disturbed. It is my researched opinion that if you do not acquire my whole property, but only a part of it, our house will be worth so little that the financial ramifications will be devastating for my family. Not only will this cause a negative economical and social impact on our lives but also the environmental aspect of the pollution and gas emissions will be right on the house.

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Please consider acquiring my whole property and not only a portion. Also, the amount of the property that would remain after the acquisition may render the parcel unsuitable to build. Further review of the relevant zoning requirements should be done, as with the land that is left, we may be unable to modify and/or remodel our home and still meet the requirements of the regulations imposed.)

**Response:** In New York, acquisition of real property must adhere to the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 and the New York State Eminent Domain Procedures Law (EDPL), which establishes the exclusive procedure by which property is acquired in New York State, ensures just compensation is paid, and establishes opportunities for public participation in the planning of projects necessitating the exercise of eminent domain. The EIS will describe this process and will identify properties considered for acquisition for the Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project.

**Comment 83:** Stay within the existing right of way. The communities of Nyack and South Nyack lost enough when the Thruway ripped their heart out building the Tappan Zee Bridge the first time. In addition, 10 feet of our property will be needed for the new bridge - how are we as a community compensated? What if we don't want property to be acquired? How will these issues be mitigated or the community compensated? When/how soon will eminent domain issues be decided? (753, 758-760, 768)

**Response:** See response to Comment 82. To the maximum extent possible, the Replacement Bridge Alternative reflects efforts to avoid property acquisitions.

**Comment 84:** I would also express my concern that the State and Federal Government are going to take significant chunks of rateable land located within the Village of Nyack to accommodate various uses and access points for the new bridge and highway structures. The planners should consider the impacts that such takings will have on the Village of Nyack both from a tax perspective, a planning perspective and an environmental impact. I would suggest that any of the plans to remove such land from the tax rolls of the Village of Nyack be seriously considered and alternate plans made to accommodate and compensate the Village of Nyack for the loss of such land. (824)

**Response:** The EIS will identify and assess the impacts of any land acquisition proposed as part of the Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing project.

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**Comment 85:** Excess property on which any structures would be sited should be returned to South Nyack rather than retained for Thruway purposes. (767)

**Response:** Comment noted.

### 5-3-2-6 PARKLANDS AND RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

**Comment 86:** A number of commenters advocated for inclusion of a boathouse and other recreational boating opportunities in the project. The range of comment is summarized below. (770, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 991)

The Hudson provides not only a picturesque backdrop to our communities along the valley, but a playground for our residents. The cost that would be incurred is minimal (negligible) compared to overall cost of the replacement bridge while its purpose and value to our communities is invaluable. I would love to see this happen!

**Response:** This comment is outside the scope of this EIS. However, the project would not preclude implementation of such a proposal if it were advanced in the future.

**Comment 87:** The River Rowing Association is very concerned that this bridge project is going to significantly impact our use of the Hudson River. It will prevent rowing, kayaking, canoeing, et cetera from the Village of Nyack to the Village of Piermont which is the consistent and normal route underneath the Tappan Zee Bridge. It's our view that the installation of this bridge is going to significantly impact the rights of all human powered sports enthusiasts who use the Hudson River. (781)

**Response:** The ability of boats to travel along the Hudson River would be maintained throughout the construction period. Signage and channel markers would be utilized to advise recreational boaters of preferred routes and potential dangers within the construction zone. The EIS will describe potential impacts to recreational boaters.

**Comment 88:** The new bridges may provide a benefit to Hudson River boating by reducing the number of bridge piers in the river bed. This would provide greater access beneath the bridge. Fewer columns could reduce disturbance of wind to benefit sailboats. (779)

**Response:** Comment noted.

### 5-3-2-7 SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS

**Comment 89:** We are also concerned the proposed new TZ Bridge will severely reduce the value of our home and our ability to resell our unit. We

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expect that our concerns will be addressed as part of the Environmental Review Process and that appropriate mitigation and/or compensation be part of this "hard look". (792, 795, 796, 798, 799, 802, 804, 805, 808, 809, 810, 811, 815, 816, 817, 818, 822, 823, 825, 827, 828, 830, 831, 832, 834, 835, 837, 842, 843, 844, 849, 851, 852, 853, 860, 864)

**Response:** The EIS will assess the potential for the project to result in adverse impacts across a range of environmental issues, including land use, community character, and visual quality. For identified adverse impacts, mitigation will be developed and evaluated. The EIS will specifically identify those private properties for which partial or whole land acquisition is proposed. For these locations, the partial or complete loss of property value will be evaluated using a well-established process in which NYSDOT will have appraisals made to determine the fair market value of any property to be acquired and the monetary damages, if any, to the remaining property. Appraisals would be prepared in conformance with the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP). The offer of compensation required under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 and the New York State Eminent Domain Procedures Law (EDPL) would be based on those appraisals, after they have been thoroughly reviewed for accuracy and content.

**Comment 90:** What are the specifics methods to make sure that our businesses within Rockland County and within the region as a whole are directly engaged and they're not getting sort of undercut from afar. (854)

**Response:** The EIS will identify any potential adverse impacts on businesses in the delineated socioeconomic analysis study area.

5-3-2-8 HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

**Comment 91:** The area of potential effects for Section 106 consultation appears to be limited to about a mile north and south of the river, but only really extends just along the coastline. Given the numerous historic structures within the villages on both sides of the river, I think that this area should also be extended a little further inland to really afford the public the opportunity to comment.

Given that the existing bridge is clearly visible from countless areas further inland, including but not limited to the ridgelines running along both sides of the Hudson River, and given that the proposed scope will include two bridges where there is currently only one, it is clear that the APE should be expanded to include these areas. Furthermore, it should be noted that there are numerous properties located further

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inland which are listed or eligible for listing within the National Register of Historic Places or are locally designated as historic.

The DEIS should also consider impacts on historic and cultural resources in the construction area, including the historic Irving neighborhood, immediately next to the bridge in Tarrytown. As a corollary to this historic resource analysis, the review should examine the effect of the project on the neighborhood character of the surrounding municipalities. (882, 883, 884)

**Response:** An Area of Potential Effect (APE) will be defined and evaluated in the EIS to assess potential direct effects and potential indirect effects on cultural resources. Direct effects typically result from demolition or damage to resources, whereas indirect effects may result from a change in character or setting of a cultural resource (including visual impacts). The area evaluated for indirect effects of the project extends 500 feet from either side of the existing centerline of the Thruway. The proposed APE for Indirect Effects is more expansive in the area that is within visual range of the Tappan Zee Bridge to account for potential visual and audible impacts associated with construction of the replacement bridge. The APE takes into consideration topography and the surrounding built environment. The APE includes areas from which the existing Tappan Zee Bridge and Hudson River are clearly or partially visible, and where the replacement bridge, proposed north of the existing bridge, has the potential to alter directly, or indirectly, any of the characteristics of a historic property that qualify the property for inclusion on the National Register that would diminish the integrity of the property's location, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association. At greater distances, potential indirect effects would not be expected to result in adverse effects to the character of properties that qualify them for listing on the National Register. NYSHPO concurred with the APE in a letter dated October 27, 2011. Consideration of views from near, middle and far distances (and encompassing the ridgelines on both sides of the river), including the preparation of visual simulations that depict existing and proposed conditions, will be included in the visual impacts analysis of the EIS. A State/National Register-eligible Irving Historic District was identified as part of this project and is included in the APE. The project's potential to affect the Irving Historic District will be considered in the EIS.

**Comment 92:** Clarkstown contains many historical landmark buildings and sites, many of which are designated on the Town of Clarkstown, New York State and/or Federal Registers of Historic Sites. It appears that the following three sites would or might be directly affected by any proposed widening of the Thruway right-of-way through our town: 1)

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Memorial Monument to the Brinks armored car robbery; 2) Nyack Rural Cemetery; and 3) West Nyack Historic District. (885-889)

**Response:** The project limits do not include Interchange 11. None of the referenced resources would be affected by the project.

**Comment 93:** I have to give kudos to the NYSTA because I've been assured ever since the first meeting, which was many years ago, that where these sensitive sites are, that they were not going to widen them. And not that I don't necessarily believe what I'm told, but I keep coming back every year just to make sure that nothing was changed when I wasn't looking. And it hasn't. (890)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 94:** Our Town task force was formed to make sure the concerns of our residents would be addressed. We are concerned with the protection of our historic district in West Nyack. (891)

**Response:** The EIS will assess the potential effects of the project on historic resources, including historic districts, within the APE.

5-3-2-9 AIR QUALITY

**Comment 95:** Many commenters were concerned about the air pollution that comes from the cars and trucks crossing the bridge and several commenters suggested mass transit could improve air quality. The range of comments is summarized below. (751, 893, 895-897, 910-912)

The residences and businesses near the bridge approaches at Nyack and probably at Tarrytown experience excessive air pollution. We who live in Westchester County see the congestion and the pollution that comes from the cars and the trucks crossing the bridge. We want to cut down on the number of vehicles, not allow more vehicles to come across faster and then sit in traffic in our communities. Actively mitigate the air pollution you put in the local communities. Take active measures to fix the problems you created with the first bridge and with the increased capacity of the new bridge. I am concerned about adding additional car capacity and how that's going to effect air quality.

We must not ignore that Rockland County is currently in a nonattainment zone for ozone. As proposed, this replacement bridge will not improve air quality. This corridor cannot wait for transit, which may be another 20 years from now. This corridor is ready to be served by an east-west bus lane that meets all the goals of the project. (894, 911) Explain how this project will meet the requirements for attainment in this corridor. Further, this project, as proposed, will not improve

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mobility or reduce the number of SOVs in the corridor. The EIS must provide updated Origin and Destination figures and should identify growth for the region and travel estimates for this corridor. There must be discussion of how to reduce the use of SOVs and how transit options can reduce congestion in the I-287 corridor.

The EIS should evaluate the impacts of what has to be an increase in traffic volume on regional air quality - not just on air quality of the communities situated at the approaches of the bridge.

A more detailed analysis of air quality that includes public transportation like the analysis described in the Old Project's EIS Methodology Report must be done in the New Project's EIS.

We're already worried about asthma with the traffic. Without bus rapid transit or any mass transportation, these extra lanes will bring extra traffic so we'll have more pollution.

**Response:** The EIS will analyze any potential impacts related to traffic and air quality during construction and operation of the project. The Replacement Bridge would improve traffic safety so that fewer accidents would occur, and would improve emergency response time, all of which would decrease vehicle delays and their associated emissions. Furthermore, the new bridge would not increase capacity, which is controlled by capacity of adjacent highway segments.

As noted above, the Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project would not preclude transit or infrastructure improvements along the Interstate 87/287 corridor at such time that these improvements are foreseeable and funding is available.

**Comment 96:** The 17th District in the Lower Hudson Valley already has a high number of children with asthma. The environmental review must examine ways to decrease the air pollution as well as mitigate traffic in the surrounding neighborhoods during and after construction of the bridge. A lot of people are dealing with COPD and children with asthma. I am a brain tumor survivor, and I'm really concerned about what we're doing to our population. Over two thousand people a year die prematurely due to traffic air pollution, primarily from trucks. If instituted when this process started, trucks carried on trains would have already saved over twenty thousand lives.

The air pollution and the soot that comes off that highway now is absolutely phenomenal. We live about 200 feet above the approach and back from it about a quarter or half a mile. And every week we go out with a rag and wipe the soot off the balustrade of our deck. And it's just amazing. And we are breathing that stuff. (905-909)

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**Response:** Comment noted.

5-3-2-10 NOISE

**Comment 97:** Many commenters were concerned with the noise pollution generated by the bridge. Several commenters provided suggestions of how to minimize the noise that is generated. The range of comments is summarized below. (913-915, 751, 917-922)

The residences and businesses near the bridge approaches at Nyack and probably at Tarrytown experience excessive noise pollution. I wonder whether current monitoring would meet EPA standards.

A lot of people who live near the Thruway get noise. The structure of the bridge itself should be designed in a way that will minimize the amount of noise that is generated. If the curve is made sharper please consider the impact this will have to noise pollution in the area. We have concerns about noise pollution as result of massive traffic and trucks passing directly next to or over Quay property. How will these issues be mitigated?

Noise from the bridge is even the dominant and intrusive sound far up the hillside on Clausland Mountain in Rockland County. Scope Section 3-4-9 should include an analysis of noise reduction and mitigation of existing, ambient noise levels. This should include changes and improvements to road pavement materials, sound barrier/absorption/deflection panels, etc. The EIS should also study reduction of heightened noise levels generated from traffic on wet roadways.

We are requesting, myself and my neighbors, a sound barrier located on the Thruway right before the Spring Valley toll plaza, between exit 14 and 14B. Going westbound, it's before the toll plaza.

The noise and shaking from the highway is severe you need to consider building a sound barrier wall on the south side of the landing of the bridge in Nyack.

The current bridge any new structure spanning the river should be a Jake Brake Free Bridge. Jake Brake Free Bridges would reduce the tremendous noise pollution that brakes on large trucks produce, and should be implemented now on the current bridge, and considered for any future span.

**Response:** The EIS will include a detailed assessment of noise and vibration in accordance with FHWA and NYSDOT guidance and procedures. If noise impacts are identified within the project limits, then abatement

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measures will be identified, consistent with FHWA and NYSDOT policies and procedures.

### 5-3-2-11 ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**Comment 98:** Placing an attractive wind turbine/solar energy on the new Tappan Zee Bridge would help make the project more exciting, would generate savings to the public (because wind power produces inexpensive kilowatts) and would make our new bridge a destination point for tourists to visit. (924)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 99:** A number of commenters were concerned about the project's effect on GHG emissions and several suggested that mass transit could provide energy savings and reduce GHG emissions. The range of comments is summarized below. (923, 925-931)

The Project Is Inconsistent with the Executive Order Requiring New York State Reduction in Greenhouse Gases of 80% by 2050. The current proposal of an 8-lane bridge for automobiles without inclusion of any mass transit options is clearly inconsistent with the goals enumerated in Executive Order No. 24. The Scoping Document lacks reference to the greenhouse gas emissions that could emanate from the demolition of the old bridge and the construction of a new one. Riverkeeper therefore requests that the involved agencies consider the levels of greenhouse gas emissions that would likely result from all stages of the project.

The EIS should consider not only the energy costs of future vehicle operations, but also the potential savings in energy associated with providing for transit on the new crossing.

The EIS should discuss the macro-level impacts of the decision to exclude transit from this crossing on energy consumption and climate change and should evaluate the impacts of the alternative to provide for BRT service on the new crossing. The EIS must study what impact public transportation alternatives would have on energy efficiency and consumption reduction in order to meet the State's Energy Plan's requirement and meet the requirements of NEPA and SEQRA.

The EIS should discuss the energy and GHG impacts associated with future land uses that will be encouraged as a result of this project.

When discussing the mitigation measures for the energy and GHG impacts of the project, the EIS should consider transit as the mitigation.

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You should be looking at the potential impacts of global warming on the river level where you're going to have this bridge; also, any change that might exist to the estuary.

The review must also take a hard look at the marginal environmental benefits, in particular those related to energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions, derived from the reuse of the materials and reduced demolition activities, were a rehabilitated bridge to replace the new southern structure.

**Response:** As stated in the Rescinded Notice of Intent for the Tappan Zee Bridge/I-287 Corridor Project and described in the White Paper in **Appendix A**, the implementation of transit elements are not affordable at this time. It is within the discretion of the lead agency and the joint lead agencies to define the project's purpose, need, goals and objectives, taking into account fiscal considerations. As noted above, the replacement bridge design would include certain provisions for transit to maximize the public investment in the new crossing.

NYSDOT and NYSTA remain committed to helping the State and the Nation achieve its greenhouse gas reduction goals. As will be detailed in the EIS, a number of project elements would work toward improving emissions. The EIS will provide an analysis of energy, climate effects, and greenhouse gases. This analysis will include a discussion of measures that could be implemented as part of the operation and construction of the project to limit greenhouse gas emissions.

5-3-2-12 WATER RESOURCES

**Comment 100:** My constituents in the West Nyack area have experienced tremendous flooding over the past several years. This area, which is along the Hackensack River, is upstream from the proposed project. Over the past decade or more, numerous projects have altered the terrain of this region and increased impervious surfaces. These projects seem to have exacerbated flooding conditions. I am concerned that this current project, or future work to the corridor, will once again alter the landscape in a way that exacerbates flooding for my constituents. I would ask that the DOT partner with the DEC, Army Corps of Engineers, EPA and any other relevant agency to do a comprehensive study of this area so that the project helps, rather than hurts this flooding. (942, 943)

**Response:** The EIS will evaluate stormwater runoff and the potential for the project to affect the floodplain within the study area for the project.

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**Comment 101:** Several commenters expressed concerns related to existing roadway flooding and drainage improvements in the surrounding areas. (932, 933, 934, 935, 939, 942, 943)

West Nyack on Route 59, which is the Official Emergency Evacuation Route for Rockland County, it's under water on many occasions. The flooding is ongoing. The double bridge across the PIP along the Hackensack River Basin is another bottleneck. Flooding on Main Street in Nyack, NY, was partially caused by the installation of the NYS Thruway. Residents in West Nyack along the Hackensack River have experienced tremendous flooding over the past several years. I am concerned that this current project, or future work to the corridor, will once again alter the landscape in a way that exacerbates flooding. And general concerns with regard to potential drainage impacts.

**Response:** The EIS will evaluate stormwater runoff and the potential for the project to affect floodplains within the study area. The stormwater management plans developed to treat stormwater would be designed and constructed in accordance with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's Stormwater Management Design Manual, NYSDOT Highway Design Manual, NYSDOT's "The Environmental Manual (TEM)", and NYSTA engineering guidance.

**Comment 102:** A bigger bridge and the bigger Thruway which will most surely follow is a sprawl incentive. Sprawl is the biggest environmental threat to the waters in our region. All the streams in Orange County, all the streams in Rockland County are impacted. (940)

**Response:** The EIS will evaluate the potential for the project to affect water quality of the Hudson River and streams receiving stormwater runoff from the project. The stormwater management plans developed to treat stormwater would be designed and constructed in accordance with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's Stormwater Management Design Manual, NYSDOT Highway Design Manual, NYSDOT TEM, and NYSTA engineering guidance.

**Comment 103:** Several commenters expressed concerns related to potential impacts to the Hudson River. (936, 938, 941)

The EIS should include an analysis of how the project will impact or change the flow and velocity of river currents and rates of sedimentation that occur in the broader Tappan Zee riverine basin. The depth of the water in the Tappan Zee in the area between the existing Tappan Zee Bridge and the Piermont Pier is as shallow as three feet. The build-up of silt has made the approach channels to local marinas shallower and limited access. Larger vessels that used to be

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able to access our marinas have left for other locations due to the insufficient depth. We would hope hydrologic studies have been performed or accessed from experts (such as Columbia University LDEO) to adapt the final design to perhaps reverse the existing silting condition. This issue has tremendous economic impact to the Village of Piermont and its business community. The EIS consultants are reminded that the Hudson River is tidal and the river currents flow in both a northerly and southerly direction. The sedimentation issue applies to the river both north and south of the bridge.

**Response:** The existing depositional and erosional characteristics of the Hudson River will be described in the EIS. Additionally, the potential for the project to affect water flow in the vicinity of the piers for the Replacement Bridge and project scouring and deposition that would result from the Replacement Bridge will be evaluated.

**Comment 104:** The scope should recognize that the Hudson River is a designated American Heritage River, under American Heritage Rivers Protection Program Executive Order, Number 13061 dated September 11, 1997. (937)

**Response:** The EIS will evaluate the potential for the project to affect the cultural and natural resources of the Hudson River Valley National Heritage Area and the management plan developed for this National Heritage Area.

5-3-2-13 ECOLOGY

**Comment 105:** Several commenters noted the requirement for a Section 7 Consultation under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in addition to the need for coordination under the Magnuson-Stevens Act, Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act and Marine Mammal Protection Act to ensure listed species are afforded protection from harm resulting from the development and operation of the proposed project. Consultation and coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)/National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) along with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) would be required. The development of a Biological Assessment (BA) and an Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Assessment for the proposed project are an integral part of these consultation and coordination processes. (944-946, 951 - 955, 959 – 961, 1064)

The BA must provide an analysis of the acoustic impacts of pile driving.

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The DEIS should consider the effects on the fisheries and species propagation. The Hudson River is critical habitat for federally listed endangered Shortnose Sturgeon (a listed endangered species) and Atlantic sturgeon, a “candidate species” for listing under the Endangered Species Act, and currently a Species of Concern under the National Atmospheric and Oceanic Administration. Both are NOAA Trust Resources in the Project Area. This is in addition to other fish populations which are in decline, such as the American Shad. Two candidate species also occur in the project area, Alewife (*Alosa pseudoharengus*) and blueback herring (*Alosa aestivalis*).

If an ocean disposal site, such as the HARS, is used, the EIS must include an analysis of effects of dredged disposal on large whales and sea turtles. Impacts that should be considered include potential for ship strike, exposure to increased suspended sediment and potential effects to forage.

We strongly suggest that FHWA and/or NYSDOT coordinate with NMFS and other relevant agencies to develop appropriate avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures to protect fishery resource and habitats. The resulting options would then be available to inform the EIS, and would facilitate future regulatory coordination.

**Response:** FHWA, NYSDOT, and NYSTA have consulted and coordinated with the USFWS, NOAA/NMFS and NYSDEC. The EIS will include a draft BA and draft EFH Assessment consistent with regulatory requirements and consultation will continue with these agencies in the development and completion of these documents.

The EIS, BA, and EFH Assessment for this project will examine the potential effects to marine resources due to the project, including acoustic impacts of pile driving and transportation of material from the bridge site to the HARS. Candidate species will be evaluated in the EIS with respect to potential impacts to the overall fish community.

**Comment 106:** The Study Area identified in 3-3-3 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY AND IMPACT CRITERIA and the affected area in Section 3-4-12 WATER RESOURCES and 3-4-13 ECOLOGY should be expanded to include the entire broader Tappan Zee riverine basin. NMFS considers the "project area" as any and all areas that likely would be impacted by bridge construction, demolition and operations. (947, 993)

**Response:** The study areas for water resources and ecology in the Hudson River were based on the areal extent of the potential effects from the construction of the project. The EIS will also evaluate potential in-water and upland staging areas. In addition, the EIS will evaluate the

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potential impacts of transportation to and placement of dredged material at HARS and potential EFH impacts from disposal at HARS.

**Comment 107:** The EIS should include discussion of endangered migratory birds such as Bald and Golden Eagles which may transit through or occupy. (948)

**Response:** The EIS will address potential impacts to migratory birds, including bald and golden eagles (protected under The Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Lacey Act but not the ESA).

**Comment 108:** Several commenters noted the presence of a wide variety of living aquatic resources including benthic organisms, subaquatic vegetation, phytoplankton, zooplankton and fish and the potential impacts that may result from the construction and operation of the proposed bridge. (957, 958, 962, 963)

The EIS must fully investigate the effects of any under-bridge lighting; the toxicity of any paint to be used on the bridge; the placement of piers, the increased shading and the discharge of storm water or other pollutants from the bridge on aquatic and benthic communities. If, in the future, mass transit is installed at the bridge, additional coordination with NMFS is likely to be necessary.

**Response:** The EIS will address potential impacts to aquatic resources including benthic organisms, submerged aquatic vegetation, and fish due to dredging, placement of piers, construction activities, shading, paint and stormwater. In addition, an analysis of hydroacoustic effects to fish, including the federally endangered shortnose sturgeon and Atlantic sturgeon, a candidate species, and benthic organisms will also be provided. Note that the only under-bridge lighting would be navigational lighting, which would be used per USCG vessel safety requirements and would be similar to what is used on the existing bridge. The project would use paints per AASHTO/NYS DOT requirements. The EIS will address stormwater discharge in the Water Resources Chapter. In the event of a future proposal for mass transit at the bridge, a separate environmental review and additional coordination with NMFS would be initiated at that time.

**Comment 109:** The Hudson is not a river, but a tidal estuary! (964)

**Response:** The Hudson River is both a river and a tidal estuary.

5-3-2-14 CONSTRUCTION

**Comment 110:** Consider construction with the least amount of disruption during the high peak hours weekdays and weekends. (676)

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**Response:** Traffic and transportation issues during construction will be described in the EIS. Construction activities that might substantially disrupt traffic would not be performed during peak travel periods to the maximum extent practicable. Access to all businesses and residences would be maintained.

**Comment 111:** If you're going to be doing all sorts of construction, will you be fixing the damage that happens to our homes which were built in the 1800s? (754)

**Response:** While architectural damage due to construction activities is not anticipated, the EIS will describe the potential impacts of construction activities on structures and residences near the project area. The EIS will identify measures intended to protect against any such impacts and will identify mitigation measures, when appropriate.

**Comment 112:** If/when the refurbishing or replacement of the TZB is done, how will those who live in the area be protected and assured that there will be no disturbance, such as noise, unsafe air quality, interference by construction vehicles/equipment, etc.? (722, 741)

**Response:** An assessment of potential air quality and noise impacts from operation and construction of the project will be provided in the EIS.

**Comment 113:** The officials, designers, architects, and engineers must construct a bridge employing the latest technology and best construction materials available. The bridge ought to be a structure that residents are proud of. Are we again doing this bridge on the cheap; cheaper materials and compressed time lines. We need to build the replacement TZB with the best materials available and NOT scrimp or "value engineer" in any area. The bridge should be designed to last at least one hundred years. (966, 971, 973, 1020,1126)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 114:** Many commenters were concerned with the demolition of the existing bridge. Several were concerned with the financial and environmental impacts of the demolition, as well as how the debris from the bridge would be handled. The range of comments is summarized below. (967, 968, 984, 1016, 1021, 1025, 1036)

The public should know the cost of the demolition of the existing bridge and how that is being incorporated into the overall costs and why it is going to be removed. The EIS must include a complete description of the methodology and timing of bridge deconstruction and removal,

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including details on any in-water work, debris removal, noise, and air quality effects.

**Response:** The costs of the bridge demolition are included in the overall project cost estimate. The proposed demolition of the bridge will be described and analyzed in the EIS.

**Comment 115:** The scoping materials do not provide sufficient information on pile driving activities or the number, size, location, and installation methodology. The installation of piles has the potential to result in increases in underwater noise levels that may harm, impair, or change critical behaviors of affected fishes. Several factors contribute to the likelihood of adverse effects. These factors include: the number and diameter of piles; fabrication material; installation method; type and size of fish exposed (smaller fish are more vulnerable to hydroacoustic impacts); depth of water; substrate type; and, distance from the sound source. We also expect that the EIS will also incorporate information from the pilot demonstration project.

Given the available information from studies on other fish species, 150 dB RMS is a conservative estimate of what sound levels might result in behavioral modifications of fish that would be present in the Tappan Zee reach. We recommend that you avoid installation of all 8 and 10 foot diameter piles between April and August.

Given the variety of species utilizing the project area at different times of year, it is critical that mitigation among the involved state and federal resource agencies and the following measures be considered: 1) Install all ancillary pilings using vibratory pile driver/extractor systems; 2) Stage the piling installation to ensure that the largest diameter pilings and those slated for installation in deeper water are put in place before adult fish begin to stage/gather for spawning migrations or move through the area; 3) Restrict all pile driving that would exceed the injury thresholds described above to a 12 hour period each day and provide an acoustic refuge of at least one mile or 25% of the river width (whichever is greater) to permit sturgeon and other fishes to pass through the project area without being exposed to potentially injurious noise levels. Stage the use of impact hammers to coincide with parts of the day or stages of the tide that fish are less likely to be gathering in or moving through the immediate project; 4) Maintain a constantly available zone of passage for fish through the project area; 5) Install all cast-in-place casings, and other wet concrete pours for piling caps and similar features within sealed forms to be maintained until the material hardens and cures; and 6) Use the pile driving demonstration to field test the feasibility and utility of implementing appropriate, commercially

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available technologies to mitigate for acoustic impacts in various sediment strata and at different water depths. Develop a monitoring strategy prior to installing the pilings in order to determine the hydroacoustic impacts associated with installing various diameter pilings in across a spectrum of environmental conditions and while implementing a variety of potential mitigation measures. These data should be made immediately available to us and will be necessary to support our future ESA and EFH consultations and also may prove invaluable for resolving conflicts with aquatic resources during eventual bridge construction. (969, 994-1004, 1006)

**Response:** The EIS, draft BA, and draft EFH Assessment will evaluate 1) the number and type of piles that would be installed for each design alternative being considered; 2) the approximate location of these piles; 3) underwater noise estimates for each type of pile (based on available literature); 4) estimates of the river area where noise will exceed injury and behavior thresholds described above for each pile type; and 5) a description of how work area staging and/or any sound attenuation measures would be used to realize the expected noise reduction during the course of the actual bridge installation.

The EIS will use the FHWG 2008 interim criteria to evaluate hydroacoustic effects, including the 206 dB peak sound exposure level (SEL) and 187 dB cumulative SEL. The results of the pile demonstration project will be incorporated into the Final EIS. A discussion of fish behavior at sound pressure levels above 150 dB will also be provided in the EIS. Vibratory hammers will be used where feasible. However, the EIS will evaluate the worst case scenario, i.e., the use of impact hammers. Noise attenuation measures, such as bubble curtains (confined and unconfined), cofferdams, and isolation casings will be used, where feasible and practicable. The EIS will also evaluate the use of measures for the protection of aquatic biota during construction.

Close coordination and consultation will continue with the resource agencies regarding the impacts of pile driving and the formulation of a comprehensive plan to minimize such impacts.

**Comment 116:** We view all of the proposed dredging as new work, and the project area described and evaluated in the EIS must include all aquatic areas in which dredged materials would be placed as well as the waterways that would be traverse while the material is in transit. If the HARS disposal location is used, all conditions consistent with previous consultations among the US Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. EPA and NMFS must be maintained. Additionally, we recommend the use

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of lookouts or observers to spot listed marine mammals or sea turtles during disposal operations. Any vessels that are 65 feet in length or greater must abide by the 10 knot speed limit in designated seasonal management areas during the November 1 - April 30 time period. We also strongly recommend that any dredged material disposal vessels abide by the 10 knot speed in any dynamic management areas. More information on our ship strike reduction.

The EIS must consider the environmental impacts of use of rock armoring, including potential introduction of contaminants, temporary and permanent loss of benthic resources, and changes in substrate type in the project area. The EIS must analyze effects of leaving rock in place or attempting to recover it at the conclusion of the construction activity. As we have recommended previously, the EIS should also include a comparison of environmental impacts of work occurring in an un-armored river bottom as compared to impacts of armoring and work occurring on an armored bottom. We request that the EIS analyze: (1) the stability of any rock armoring (2) potential impacts if the rock is displaced from the project area; and (3) the feasibility of removing rock after the project is complete. We also request that if rock is to be placed that it be clean, natural material and that the minimum amount possible be used.

The EIS must consider effects to benthic resources in the project area and the consequences of any potential loss of foraging opportunities for sturgeon and other managed species. Wherever possible, we recommend that the project utilize appropriate practices or technologies (e.g., turbidity curtains, installing floatation on anchor chains, judicious use of dynamically-positioning vessels, working within dewatered cofferdams, etc.) to minimize suspended sediments. (1007-1010, 1087)

**Response:** A detailed discussion of dredging, including the use of an environmental bucket and the results of sediment modeling, will be presented in the Construction Chapter of the EIS. The Construction Chapter of the EIS and draft EFH Assessment will discuss the effects of dredging on fishery resources and their habitats. A discussion of potential disposal sites, including HARS, will also be included in the Construction Chapter of the EIS.

A limited period for dredging from August 1 – November 1, approved by the resource agencies, along with other measures to protect aquatic resources during construction activities will also be evaluated in the EIS, draft BA, and draft EFH Assessment.

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The EIS will provide additional details on rock armoring and scour protection. The EIS will also address methods to avoid this using standard USACE procedures. The EIS will include analyze the impacts leaving the armoring in place after construction is completed and how long it would take for the benthic organisms to recolonize the area. The EIS will include a comparison of these conditions.

The EIS, draft BA, and draft EFH Assessment will evaluate the potential for resuspension of sediments and contaminants into the water column, and the effects of resuspended sediments on aquatic biota, including sturgeon and EFH species. These documents will also discuss the use of measures to minimize suspended sediments.

**Comment 117:** Heavy noise-producing activities on the new bridge such as pile driving should be restricted to daytime hours. Villages along the river have noise ordinances, which should be consulted. (978, 1039)

**Response:** The EIS will discuss all applicable regulations and standards to which the project would be subject. An assessment of potential noise impacts from operation and construction of the project will be provided in the EIS.

**Comment 118:** Why don't you build a bridge and have it floated next to the old bridge, like they did to the Willis Avenue Bridge in the Bronx. (972)

**Response:** It is possible that portions of the structure would be built off-site, but the total length of the structure is too long to permit complete off-site construction.

**Comment 119:** In what sequence are you replacing S. Broadway Bridge. If taken all at once, how will those of us living on S. Broadway between 9W and S. Broadway Bridge get in and out. (974)

**Response:** In Rockland County, South Broadway would be realigned over Interstate 87/287. Limited, temporary closures are anticipated on South Broadway, but adjacent easements would allow for the staging and construction of the bridge off-line to prevent any long-term closures. The EIS will describe construction sequencing.

**Comment 120:** The problem with the old bridge is the expansion joints. (975)

**Response:** The Replacement Bridge Alternative would be designed in accordance with current engineering standards and guidance.

**Comment 121:** During the 4 to 5 year construction phase, what will the increased health risks be for our residents during construction? Construction will result in constant truck traffic impacting air quality, increasing noise

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and affecting the traffic pattern potentially making Quay entrance and egress close to impossible. Everyone knows we are already out of air quality compliance and construction will make it even worse - what will the new air quality be and how do you plan to mitigate? How would you manage the 24-hour, 7 day a week noise pollution from construction preventing our residents the basic ability to sleep? This project is projected to create thousands of construction jobs. How will these people get to the worksite? Where will they park? How will the trucks get to and from the site? How much added pollution will result from all these vehicles? What guarantees can you give me that I will not be awakened at 2 AM by construction trucks or equipment? What's going to be done for the residents to minimize the noise, the vibration, the actual pollution that's actually going to occur as a result of the construction.

It is important to consider the length of time building two separate bridge structures will entail, if these projects follow one another. The environmental impact of the noise, increased particulate matter, large trucks in the vicinity, and all other detrimental aspects of construction (which would be doubled in years for those in the region who live nearby) must be considered. What are the negative impacts of this extended construction time? Would preserving the existing bridge, repaired, and made user/ earthquake safe be an alternative that could mitigate destruction costs, length of construction time, provide public commuter transportation?

When stirring up the water for installation and/or removal of pilings & bridge base what health & safety assurances & measures will you make to protect the residents on the riverbanks and in town? (976, 977, 979, 983, 986, 1026, 1030, 1031, 1034)

**Response:** A number of environmental performance commitments (EPCs) would be implemented during construction to minimize and avoid potential impacts related to noise, air quality, water quality, and other environmental and community considerations. A detailed discussion of the construction process, as well as an analysis of potential impacts and any mitigation measures, as appropriate, will be provided in the EIS.

**Comment 122:** Where will all the material be stored during the construction phase? Where will the construction staging take place? (978, 1017, 1032, 1035)

**Response:** The EIS will identify potential waterfront and inland staging areas in Rockland and Westchester Counties for the purpose of providing a reasonable scenario to assess the potential impacts that may occur

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from the operation of staging areas. Potential candidates for staging areas include two privately owned properties in Rockland County and two parcels within NYSTA's right-of-way. A contractor may use one large site or possibly multiple sites for staging needs and would be required to obtain all necessary approvals and permits for each and any site. However, the contractor is not obliged to use these privately owned sites identified in the EIS. The overall duration of construction is estimated at 4.5 to 5.5 years, but activities in the individual staging areas may vary in length. Further details will be provided in the EIS.

**Comment 123:** During construction, what trucks, cars, or people will be using the Quay easement and what is the impact? (982)

**Response:** The construction impacts of the project will be analyzed in the EIS.

**Comment 124:** During construction, we are concerned about the potential for a rodent invasion similar to 287-construction site. What can you do to mitigate this problem? (987)

**Response:** During construction, onsite waste management and stringent health and safety practices would be implemented to minimize rodent-related issues. The contractor would be responsible for managing waste and maintaining an orderly work area to reduce sanitation and rodent concerns.

**Comment 125:** To the extent possible (in a design build project) construction methodology should be described in the EIS in as much detail as possible. Information regarding lay-down locations, post-construction disposition, temporary access roads, construction and use of temporary work platforms, use of marine construction equipment and storm water controls should be included. A distinct Navigation section addressing the volume, frequency and type of commercial and recreational vessels that transit through the Tappan Zee bridge vicinity during construction should also be included. Proposed navigational clearances should be shown to accommodate present and prospective navigation along the Hudson under the bridge during and after construction. Anticipated closures of the federal navigation channel should be discussed with their impacts on of Waterway Traffic plan to The Port of NY/NJ Harbor Safety, Navigation and Operations Steering Committee to receive its comments and recommendations regarding navigational safety during construction. Coordination with the local harbormasters should be reported in the EIS. (992)

**Response:** The EIS will include a detailed assessment of construction impacts, including any potential effects on maritime transport.

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**Comment 126:** We have concerns with the reconstruction of exits off the Thruway. (1011)

**Response:** To the maximum extent practicable, construction activities that might substantially disrupt traffic would not be performed during peak travel periods. Access to all businesses and residences would be maintained. The EIS will describe construction sequencing.

**Comment 127:** This project should be constructed as a Union Free Zone and the implementation of a Union Free Zone should be enforced and monitored regularly. (1012)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 128:** To mitigate construction emissions, project sponsors should be aware of sample construction specifications that have been developed by EPA and its state and local partners to offer guidance to agencies interested in addressing pollution from construction sources. The contract specifications promote the widespread use of emission controls in the construction sector. (1013)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 129:** We must ensure that all efforts are made to ensure that this project is as environmentally and community-friendly as possible. I urge the relevant agencies to fully account for any possible environmental impact during the building of a new bridge. (1014-1015)

**Response:** The EIS will analyze and disclose the potential environmental impacts of the project, including the effects of construction of the replacement bridge, and will identify mitigation measures to address any identified adverse impacts, as appropriate.

**Comment 130:** We must consider design-build under such a plan, and a team consisting of design engineers and contractors would simultaneously design and build a new structure to federal and state standards. To do this, New York State's education and finance laws must be amended. This legislation should be approved immediately. (1018)

**Response:** Comment noted. Legislation authorizing the design/build procurement for the Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing was passed in December 2011.

**Comment 131:** Does the planned new construction call for keeping the old bridge opened for the construction period or will drivers be forced to find an alternated route for the 4 year period? (1019)

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**Response:** The existing Tappan Zee Bridge will remain open until all traffic can be moved over to the new bridge.

**Comment 132:** Choose the least maintenance materials that are long lasting to build the bridge. (1020)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 133:** Specific funding for the details of this project have yet to be established. We are greatly concerned that the project could run into financial pressures in the middle of the project and subsequently only one span is built. This would result in the construction of a slightly wider version of the old bridge - a huge, expensive undertaking with sub-optimal results. We would suggest staging the project to ensure both spans are constructed simultaneously. (1023-1024)

**Response:** A financial plan is being developed. That plan will be summarized in the FEIS and financial feasibility must be demonstrated before FHWA will issue the Record of Decision for the project. Further, details with respect to the staging of construction will be provided in the EIS.

**Comment 134:** How long is the construction process going to take? And during that process, as issues come up, how will the public be able to have their thoughts and interests expressed? (1028)

**Response:** The two Replacement Bridge options would be constructed using the same general construction sequencing and methods over an approximately 4.5 to 5.5 year period. The EIS will describe the potential impacts of construction activities on structures and residences near the project area. The EIS will include mitigation measures where applicable. The project website and hotline will continue to serve public outreach needs over the course of the project.

**Comment 135:** The safe life of the current bridge will not survive the time required to design, license and construct the new bridge. The result will be that the load on the current bridge will have to be rationed as it deteriorates further, most probably by re-routing the heaviest traffic, the trucks, (and perhaps even passenger cars at rush hours) to the George Washington Bridge or bridges to the north, causing incredible traffic jams there and untold economic losses for the area and the truckers. The current bridge could be upgraded while the new one is being planned or constructed, which will not be cost effective nor is it likely that funds will have been budgeted for such an emergency. (1029)

**Response:** NYSTA will continue to maintain the existing bridge so that it is safe to the traveling public while the replacement bridge is under construction.

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**Comment 136:** Will you reimburse neighbors should any construction crack walls/foundations etc. (1033)

**Response:** A construction management/protection plan will be developed in the future. The plan will require contractors to take preventative measures and ensure that vibration, construction vehicles, and other construction concerns are monitored throughout the project. Pre- and post-construction conditions surveys will be conducted on properties within a certain proximity to the construction activities. In addition, monitoring of some properties may also be conducted if they are determined to be sensitive.

**Comment 137:** When you start to dredge the river what sorts of PCBs and things will be stirred up? How will our health be affected? (1052)

**Response:** The EIS will include an assessment of potential effects on water quality from sediment dispersion.

**Comment 138:** It is imperative that River Road be kept open during construction. Closing River Road for construction would increase the trip to Nyack by approximately 4-5 miles. (1037)

**Response:** A Work Zone Traffic Control Management Plan will be prepared for the construction period. Local roadways will be maintained in operation to the extent feasible and practical given public safety considerations.

**Comment 139:** River Road is deteriorating and has been falling into the river at some points. Work on the River Road project should be expedited so that it is completed prior to the TZ project, or, at minimum, the projects are coordinated, thus allowing more flexibility for both projects. (1038)

**Response:** Comment noted.

5-3-2-15 ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

**Comment 140:** The EIS should discuss the distribution of the benefits, not just impacts, that this project will have on various population groups. (1040)

**Response:** Distribution of benefits is not a focus of Environmental Justice assessments and the regional benefits to mobility would accrue to all residents and workers in the region as expressed in Section 1, "Purpose and Need."

**Comment 141:** Since the preferred alternative eliminates BRT from consideration, there will be no meaningful, less costly alternative mode of transportation provided. The review should "identify and address any disproportionate and adverse impacts (of the project) on minority and lower income populations" who 1) live on the west side of the Hudson

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River and must cross the Tappan Zee in order to reach employment destinations throughout Westchester County, Connecticut and areas of New York City not served by Metro-North; and 2) live on the east side of the Hudson River who must cross the Tappan Zee in order to reach employment destinations in Rockland County, Orange County and northern New Jersey. In addition, the negative impact of higher toll charges on discretionary travel, such as that related to tourism and retail activities, should also be considered. (1041-1042)

**Response:** An analysis of the impacts of the determination to rescind the prior project is not required under NEPA or SEQRA.

**Comment 142:** I oppose the draft plan as presented on February 15, 2011, which includes a police barracks, maintenance facility, and impound lot at Interchange 10 in South Nyack. Beyond being unsightly, these are inappropriate for the area, given South Nyack's intention to one day create a park there. The buildings would abut a preexisting and popular nature trail and would negatively impact residents in the most diverse section of the village, which is also the most economically disadvantaged. (1043)

**Response:** The project would not result in any changes to Interchange 10. The project and study area are described in Sections 2 and 3 of the Scope. The EIS will include an environmental justice assessment to determine whether the project would have any disproportionate impacts on minority or low-income populations.

### 5-3-2-16 INDIRECT AND CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

**Comment 143:** The current Scoping document generally defines the study area as one-half mile from the current right-of-way. This unfortunately does not include any of Sleepy Hollow or any of the other villages that are potentially impacted by either indirect effects, construction effects, or anything along those lines. I ask that the Scoping document expressly include an expanded area at least for the indirect effects so that the surrounding villages and communities can be afforded an opportunity to really participate. (1044)

**Response:** The EIS will comprehensively analyze potential indirect and cumulative impacts of the project.

**Comment 144:** Several commenters stated that the environmental review for the project should consider cumulative effects from other projects in the area. (1045, 1046, 1048)

In the New York metropolitan area FHWA is involved with a significant number of bridge and highway improvement projects that should be

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discussed in this analysis along with initiatives that involve Metro-North Railroad and New Jersey Transit. Since this project has a significant dredging component, the EIS should also consider cumulative effects from the maintenance dredging for the Hudson River Federal Navigation project, private work at commercial and industrial waterfront properties, significant public projects such as dredging at the Passenger Ship Terminal, possible installation of a freight tunnel between Port of New York and New Jersey infrastructure east and west of the Hudson River, and linear utility proposals including the Champlain Hudson Power Express project and electric or natural gas transmission proposals in the lower Hudson. We suggest that you consult with the New York District, Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's NEPA analysis unit regarding additional projects that should be considered in the Cumulative Effects section of the EIS.

The DEIS should thoroughly analyze the cumulative impacts of the proposed bridge project, in conjunction with other road/transportation infrastructure projects or even major developments that will doubtless have an impact on urban sprawl, traffic patterns, land use, etc. The proximity of the Project to two increasingly important air travel hubs – Stewart Airport in Newburgh and Westchester County Airport – necessitates the study of the Project's impacts on increased air travel. Increased development will in turn increase impermeable surface coverage, causing more runoff to enter the Hudson River as opposed to being absorbed into soil, possibly triggering Clean Water Act issues. This would include increased point sources, through the construction of new storm water and sewage outfalls to increased capacity for a larger population, as well as general storm water from non-point sources – not necessarily a “discernible, confined and discrete conveyance” – which will flow into the Hudson River because of the increased impervious ground coverage. Effects of suburban sprawl should not be limited to Rockland and Westchester Counties. Orange County municipalities discharge into tributaries of the Hudson River as well, and so the lead agencies should study suburban sprawl impacts on water quality as far away as Orange County. Though the FHWA has stated that the construction will not have an effect on traffic flow, they fail to consider the psychological disconnect of the public who may think that the project will lead to less congestion and will therefore be more inclined to drive across the new bridge. While the FHWA has stated that the project does not have the purpose of alleviating congestion, the inclusion of pictures of congestion on the Bridge and charts and graphs concerning traffic patterns in the scoping packet give the impression that the project does mean to address traffic

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congestion. This is misleading to the public. Furthermore, the focus on automotive transport raises environmental justice concerns, because low-income working families will not have access to jobs in Westchester if the project does not include affordable mass transit options.

The EIS should include consideration of other planned, proposed, or pending projects including the 9A Bypass, Saw Mill River Flood Control, and Village of Elmsford Main Street Improvement Project.

**Response:** The EIS will provide an analysis of potential cumulative effects from other reasonably foreseeable projects in the area whose timeline and potential environmental impacts may overlap with the Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project. The cumulative effects analysis will evaluate any applicable environmental, social, and economic considerations.

**Comment 145:** Several commenters stated that transit should be considered as part of the cumulative effects analysis since the Replacement Bridge Alternative would not preclude transit. (1047, 1050, 1051)

Although the decision has been made to separate bridge replacement from the transit and highway elements due to funding considerations, should impacts of the proposed bridge construction upon future transit and highway options be discussed as cumulative impacts or irreversible or irretrievable commitments of resources?

The potential indirect and cumulative impacts of providing the necessary infrastructure to accommodate BRT or possible rail transit needs to be studied. The impacts of the addition of BRT, at the very least, must be examined as part of this DEIS to avoid segmented review, as this is essential to achieving a full understanding of the impacts of this project in the long term.

The indirect and cumulative effects analysis must include an analysis of the effects of not installing public transportation by including the public transportation alternatives in the EIS, specifically cross-corridor BRT. The reduced energy consumption, increased mobility and compact development attendant to public transportation would provide a whole host of positive effects, both direct and indirect. Again, because public transportation alternatives are realistic and feasible, they must be studied in order to meet NEPA and SEQRA requirements.

**Response:** As described in the White Paper included in **Appendix A**, development of transit on the Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing is not foreseeable at this time. However, in order to maximize the public investment in the

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new crossing, the project has been designed such that it would not preclude transit. Because there are no foreseeable initiatives to implement transit on the replacement bridge or in the Interstate 87/287 corridor, the EIS does not evaluate the potential indirect and cumulative impacts of providing the necessary infrastructure to accommodate bus rapid transit (BRT) or commuter rail, nor does the EIS evaluate mobility benefits of transit. At such time that transit in the corridor becomes foreseeable, it would require a separate environmental review and approvals under NEPA and SEQRA.

**Comment 146:** There is no doubt in my mind that legalized casino gambling will soon be greatly expanded in New York State, and in particular in the Catskill region. When that happens there will be an exponential increase in vehicular traffic across the bridge. Has this development been considered in the planning? (1049)

**Response:** The legalization of casino gambling in the Catskills is speculative. Moreover, should that occur, it would not alter the goals and objectives of the project, nor would it affect the design of the bridge replacement or any determinations to proceed with that initiative.

5-3-2-17 OTHER NEPA AND SEQRA CONSIDERATIONS

**Comment 147:** The New York State Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act sets out ten criteria the NYS DOT must follow in order to "maximizing the social, economic and environmental benefits from public infrastructure development through minimizing unnecessary costs of sprawl development. In accordance with this law, the EIS should discuss how this project does not induce sprawl, how the process induces community participation, how it reduces auto dependency and fosters transportation choices, and how it promotes compact mixed-use developments and downtown revitalization. (1053, 1054)

**Response:** The project's consistency with the Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act will be evaluated in the EIS. State-sponsored projects must adhere to any applicable criteria to the extent feasible and practicable. The project will incorporate smart growth principles wherever practicable. Because the project would replace an existing use, it would not be expected to induce growth or sprawl.

**Comment 148:** Based on a review of the documents produced by the Old Project, public transportation would protect, preserve and enhance the state's air quality (subsection d); foster mixed land uses and compact development (subsection e); provide mobility through transportation choices including improved public transportation and reduce automobile dependency (subsection f); and promote sustainability by

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strengthening existing and creating new communities which reduce greenhouse gas emissions and do not compromise the needs of future generations (subsection j). It is difficult to see how removing transportation would allow the state to meet the goals in subsections g and h. The Scoping Packet and EIS must discuss how the New Project can meet these six requirements without including public, transportation. (1055)

**Response:** As noted above and described in the White Paper in **Appendix A**, implementation of transit is not affordable at this time. Although transit is not a component of the project, the project would not preclude development of transit in the future. The project sponsors have, and will continue to, coordinate with local and regional agencies to ensure that all concerns are considered and addressed, where practicable.

### **5-3-3 PROCESS, AGENCY COORDINATION, AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

**Comment 149:** We live at The Quay of Tarrytown condominium and are extremely concerned regarding the proposed new TZ Bridge. We are requesting a "hard look" during the Environmental Review Process at the impact this will have on our health, quality of life and the financial impact on our home. We are concerned the proposed new TZ Bridge will severely reduce the value of our home and our ability to resell our unit. We expect that our concerns will be addressed as part of the Environmental Review Process and that appropriate mitigation and/or compensation be part of this "hard look". (18, 1056, 1057, 1058, 1060, 1061, 1065, 1070, 1071, 1078, 1080, 1081, 1082, 1083, 1084, 1089, 1096, 1097, 1098, 1101, 1102, 1105, 1107, 1110, 1111, 1112, 1113, 1114, 1117, 1118, 1119, 1122, 1125)

**Response:** The EIS will assess the environmental impacts of the project consistent with NEPA and SEQRA and other applicable regulations and requirements will provide the requisite "hard look" at potential environmental impacts in the lead agency's balanced consideration of the social, economic, and environmental consequences of their decision. Mitigation measures will be identified, when appropriate. Project sponsors will continue to hold public meetings and open houses and targeted meetings with stakeholders.

**Comment 150:** The League of Women Voters of Westchester (LWVW) commends the process pursued by the NYSDOT (NYSDOT), the NYSTA (NYSTA) and MTA Metro-North Railroad (MNR) during consideration of the Tappan Zee Bridge-I-287 Corridor Project in the past few years. Discussions with the stakeholders advisory groups (SAWGs), on which League members served, were thorough, open and inclusive, and those in charge were responsive to suggestions made. We hope this

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process will continue under the FHWA and the NYSDOT with the Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project unveiled locally on October 25, 2011. (1099, 1104)

**Response:** Comment noted. Other such meetings and public outreach will be conducted.

**Comment 151:** The Scoping Comment Period closes on November 15, 2011. The final identification of the range of alternatives should be determined after FHWA has reviewed all the public scoping comments, not on November 15th. (1109)

**Response:** FHWA has reviewed and considered all relevant comments in its preparation of the EIS.

**Comment 152:** On top of public transportation, there may be other alternatives that are feasible and reasonable that the public will suggest be included in the Draft EIS. To state that the range of alternatives will be identified the day public comments are due, especially in the face of large public support for inclusion of public transportation, makes it very unlikely the NEPA requirement that the EIS "rigorously explore and objectively evaluate all reasonable alternatives" and "devote substantial treatment to each alternative ... so that reviewers may evaluate their comparative merits" can be met. (1121)

**Response:** A 30-day comment period for a scoping process is typical and in compliance with NEPA and SEQRA guidelines. The project sponsors held two public hearings on the Scoping Information Packet; one in Westchester County and one in Rockland County to provide officials, residents, and workers in the affected areas an opportunity to learn about the project and provide comments. At each public hearing, two presentations and two public comment periods were provided (i.e., an early session and a later session) in an effort to be as accommodating as possible. The project sponsors will continue to solicit public input, in full compliance with NEPA and SEQRA, as the environmental review process moves forward and will continue to consult with regulatory agencies to ensure environmental concerns are evaluated.

**Comment 153:** The analysis presented in Sections 2-3 and 3-4 of the Scoping Information Packet suggests a level of detailed study, engineering and documentation that is at a greater level of detail than necessary to satisfy NEPA requirements and will be unnecessarily restrictive to any design-build procurement. Providing performance-based criteria will help to accelerate the NEPA process while allowing teams the flexibility to investigate final bridge configurations that provide the most efficient means of satisfying the goals of the project. (105)

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**Response:** The range of options presented in the EIS is intended to allow evaluation of the full range of potential impacts as required by NEPA and SEQRA, but not to determine the final bridge design.

**Comment 154:** The Village of South Nyack objects to the Scoping process. The Village and the public were given less than two weeks' notice on the Scoping prior to this public hearing. And the November 15th deadline provides us barely 30 days to give adequate consideration. The Scoping Packet was inadequate. It did not describe the project in enough detail for the Village to give adequate consideration and provide any sort of meaningful comment. No design drawings were provided until this evening, and they are superficial. The Three Week Time Period to Submit Comments on the Scoping Documents is Insufficient, Violates the Public's Right to Meaningful Participation, and is Contrary to the Express Purposes of NEPA and SEQRA. The public must be given an adequate opportunity to provide input on the project's potential impacts and alternatives. The lead agencies cannot just go through the motions of public participation, but must consider and address the public input they receive. (1068, 1076, 1077)

**Response:** The Scoping Process is intended to provide an overview of the project and provide an outline of areas to be studied in the EIS. A 30-day comment period for a scoping process is typical and in compliance with NEPA and SEQRA guidelines. The Scoping Information Packet was posted to the project website on October 14, 2011 for public review. The comment period was held open until November 15, 2011, allowing for sufficient time to review the document. Two public hearings on the Scoping Information Packet were held: one in Westchester County and another in Rockland County to provide officials, residents, and workers in the affected areas an opportunity to learn about the project and provide comments. At each public hearing, two presentations and two opportunities to present oral comment were provided (i.e., an early session and a later session) in an effort to be as accommodating as possible. The project sponsors will continue to solicit public input, in full compliance with NEPA and SEQRA, as the environmental review process moves forward and will continue to consult with regulatory agencies to ensure environmental concerns are evaluated. The EIS will consider and address all pertinent comments, as appropriate.

**Comment 155:** Given that the preferred alternative in fact contains the physical capacity to accommodate BRT in the so-called "emergency lanes" without reducing the number of general traffic lanes, and given the often stated goal and reasonable expectation that BRT will be implemented within the foreseeable future, the review should consider

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whether the lead agencies' failure to take a hard look at the environmental impacts of BRT constitutes segmentation as defined under SEQRA and/or NEPA or any other applicable State or Federal statute.

The new project is simply “a \$5.2 Billion Bridge project” that “does not include but also does not preclude rail and other transit options in the future.” The impact of the future potential transit that could be included at a later date must be addressed as part of the baseline review otherwise it would appear to be a case of segmentation. The fast-tracking process is in complete contrast to addressing all of the alternatives to consider in the EIS. The additional impact of a bridge that is built to allow future transit and BRT capacity must be evaluated in total and not in part as to what is proposed and potentially added in after it is built. I firmly believe that the limitations imposed upon the new project outlined in the scope appear to be segmentation and appropriate mitigation is not adequately addressed as part of the review process to date as it relates to the environmental impacts the project presents. (1075, 1086-1088)

**Response:** The EIS will evaluate all potential environmental, social, and economic impacts of the project and will discuss any appropriate mitigation measures to minimize or avoid any identified impacts. There are no foreseeable plans to implement transit. Accordingly, it is not necessary to examine the impacts of potential transit initiatives and it is not segmentation to proceed as planned. Any future transit proposals would be subject to separate review and approvals under NEPA and SEQRA.

**Comment 156:** Visual communication warnings about what's ahead should be considered for this project. One in twelve people have hearing loss, deaf or hard of hearing, and having visual signs that communicate about traffic and things to expect up ahead are extremely valuable. (1079)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 157:** Given the Scope's stated interest in building the Tappan Zee spans in a way that will not preclude transit alternatives in the future, why would agencies with rail or transit expertise not be included as participating agencies? Are there entities better equipped to advise on how best to build a bridge that would not preclude transit than Metro-North, Metropolitan Transportation Authority, and Federal Transit Administration? Multiple references are made in the Scope to the Tappan Zee's importance for safety purposes, including its importance

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for emergency response, civil defense, and its status as part of the Strategic Highway Network. Why are the Departments of Defense, Homeland Security, and State Division of Police not listed as participating agencies? (1085)

**Response:** All of the aforementioned agencies have been advised of the project and will receive copies of the EIS.

**Comment 158:** Was the elimination of transit options as part of the TZB project done unilaterally by the FHWA or with the consent of NYS, the Governor, NYS DOT and MTA? (The answer seems yes, under NYS budget constraints, NYS officials agreed). Was there any input from local communities at the time that the old NOI was rescinded and replaced by the new NOI eliminating transit options. (1090, 1091)

**Response:** As stated in the Rescinded Notice of Intent (NOI) that appeared in the Federal Register, “FHWA, NYSTA, and NYSDOT propose to terminate the Tappan Zee/I-287 Corridor Tiered EIS and advance a project that will address the needs of the Tappan Zee Hudson River crossing alone.” The NOI was signed by both the FHWA and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA).

However, the decision to rescind the Tappan Zee Bridge/I-287 Corridor Project was based on financing constraints that exist at this time (see the White Paper in **Appendix A** for further discussion).

**Comment 159:** Riverkeeper requests status as an “interested or affected” person or party under the National Environmental Policy Act2 (“NEPA”), as an “interested” person or party pursuant to State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”) regulations, and as a “consulting party” under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. (1066)

**Response:** Riverkeeper is serving as a Consulting Party under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and will be advised of all project developments in accordance with NEPA and SEQRA requirements.

**Comment 160:** A number of commenters asked to be identified as a cooperating agency in the EIS. (1074, 1092, 1124).

**Response:** Cooperating agencies have been invited to participate in the Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing project in accordance with the procedures of SAFETEA-LU Section 6002. Other agencies will be invited as participating agencies. The EIS will identify the cooperating agencies.

**Comment 161:** Chart indicating Coordination Points should include dates of permit application submittals. (1094)

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**Response:** FHWA, NYSDOT, and NYSTA will coordinate with resource agencies to identify a schedule for permit deliverables.

**Comment 162:** Suggest omitting rationale for including NO BUILD ALTERNATIVE. (1095)

**Response:** The rationale is provided to identify the purpose of carrying a No Build Alternative for detailed environmental analysis.

**Comment 163:** I would like to understand better the process for South Nyack residents to provide input into the access points for the pedestrian walkway, the bike path, and the general on/off ramps. Is this process going on beyond November 15th? How does sitting down with the people who live in South Nyack, as you have done in the past, intersect with this Scoping period? (1100)

**Response:** During the scoping process, the public is provided an opportunity to offer comments on the project and the environmental review process. Subsequently, an EIS is prepared, taking into account comments received during the scoping process. Once published, the public is provided an opportunity to review and comment on the EIS.

**Comment 164:** It bothers me when state and federal officials want to plan a meeting for the people of Rockland County and they plan it in the Palisades Center. Many people from Rockland will not come here. I suggest that you look elsewhere for a venue to gather people of Rockland together. (1106)

**Response:** Comment noted.

**Comment 165:** It is recommended by the City of White Plains that the prior extensive Tappan Zee Bridge/I-287 Corridor Project studies and research completed to date be specifically listed in the Scoping Document as supporting documentation necessary to enable any discussion of public transit alternatives. The Scope states that the EIS will rely on previous relevant documents prepared for the Tappan Zee Bridge/I-287 Corridor Project. A more detailed explanation of how the Old Project's documents will be used must be included. (1115, 1120)

**Response:** The EIS will include references to such previous documents as appropriate and relevant.

**Comment 166:** The environmental, economic, and social implications of most of the alternatives presented are enormous and will substantially impact the Hudson River as well as the communities and environment of Rockland and Westchester Counties. Moreover, since the scope of the

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project has been modified to only include a 4-mile span, as opposed to the originally intended plan of the 30-mile I-287 Corridor, we are also concerned that the review process will be practically and legally insufficient and contrary to the requirements of NEPA and SEQRA. (1067)

**Response:** The EIS will provide detailed analyses of all potential environmental, social, and economic impacts of the project. The environmental review process will be conducted in compliance with NEPA and SEQRA.

**Comment 167:** Several comments focused on the need for transparency and adequate opportunities for public input during the environmental review. The range of comments is summarized below. (694, 1059, 1069, 1072-1073, 1103, 1123)

The project should heed local regional input. The previous process elicited significant and valuable local knowledge about the impacts of the project and how to make the project more community friendly. The new effort should not ignore the voluminous record documenting the serious impacts that a new bridge will have on Westchester, especially the Tarrytown/Greenburgh community.

As funding is being determined and design options are being weighed, it is critical for the state and federal governments to keep the lines of communication open with the local governments and communities that are directly affected by this project.

Central to the Environmental Impact Statement process is the full discussion and disclosure of available alternatives and their corresponding impacts. Public participation in this process must be meaningful and robust, and the lead agency(ies) must strictly carry out their obligations under NEPA and SEQRA as required by the legislation. Riverkeeper has grave concerns based upon the scoping materials and the public presentations that misguided efforts to “fast track” this project will lead to unacceptable breaches in federal and state statutory requirements. Riverkeeper fully intends to hold the project sponsors accountable for strict compliance with their environmental review obligations under federal and state law.

I am extremely disappointed with both the new outline of the Tappan Zee project and the public process. What is the point of having a public process if the public is ignored? This is now the third scoping process for this project. Am I to believe that my thoughts, comments, and suggestions are to be taken seriously this time? Will my participation in future forums on this project again be only for show?

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The new timeline is incredibly fast, with a draft EIS due to be completed in January 2012 and permits and approvals to be in place that summer. This aggressive timeline simply does not allow for adequate public and agency review of the environmental and community ramifications of this new version of the project. It is essential that those who will live with the ramifications of this new design for the next century or more have a meaningful voice in the plans.

It is vital that the project process provide ample opportunities for the public to express their input. Rockland County is pleased that the new crossing project can proceed expeditiously. However, we urge that both caution and transparency be exercised in the process.

**Response:**

The Tappan Zee Hudson River Crossing Project is committed to an open, participatory process to support continued feedback and open discussion throughout the environmental review. FHWA, NYSDOT, and NYSTA have and will continue to hold meetings with the villages and towns adjacent to the bridge, briefings with elected officials, and meetings with representatives of municipal governments, including the planning and transportation departments of Rockland and Westchester Counties, special interest groups, community groups, and other interested parties, as appropriate. The project's Stakeholder Committee, formed during the Tappan Zee Bridge/I-287 Corridor Project and including over 500 members, and Stakeholders' Advisory Working Groups, also formed earlier, have and will meet as appropriate. The project team will continue to coordinate and consult with involved agencies and interested parties.

The project will be conducted in compliance with NEPA and SEQRA requirements. The EIS will evaluate viable project alternatives and discuss the basis for the elimination of alternatives.