



TAPPAN ZEE BRIDGE/I-287 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

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NEWSLETTER - WINTER 2008

WHERE WE'VE BEEN AND WHERE WE'RE GOING

A Message from the Project Director

Westchester and Rockland Counties need a strong cross-county transportation link that can serve the region well into the 21st century. That, in a nutshell, is the reason for the Tappan Zee Bridge/I-287 Environmental Review. I am pleased to say that strong progress has been made on the study – progress that we want to tell you about in this newsletter, on our Web site– www.tzbsite.com – and at upcoming public meetings.



This study has been addressing important corridor needs, specifically to:

- Preserve the existing river crossing as a vital regional and national link.
- Provide a river crossing that has structural integrity, meets current design criteria and standards, and accommodates transit.
- Improve highway safety, mobility and capacity throughout the corridor.
- Improve transit mobility and capacity throughout the corridor and travel connections to the existing north-south and east-west transit network.

Working closely with the public, the study developed over 150 separate ideas for improvements to meet these needs. These ideas were combined into 16 scenarios, and then into 6 alternatives. These alternatives were presented to the public in February 2007.

Based on further analyses and significant public input, some additional options have been added to the alternatives (see page 3).

Astrid C. Glynn, the Commissioner of the New York State Department of Transportation, recently announced that the environmental review will continue on a two-tiered basis. An

initial Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will evaluate plans for improving the I-287 corridor (including the Tappan Zee Bridge) and assess transit options for the corridor, identifying a transit mode for the corridor, its general route and its beginning and end points. A second EIS will focus on the details of integrating that transit mode into the communities it will serve, including route specifics and transit station locations and designs. A final decision on the first EIS document, projected for early Spring 2010, will kick off work on the second.

Continuing the study in this way is expected to expedite the process, saving several years and at least \$500 million each year in project costs. Highway and bridge construction, including elements needed to support transit, will be underway while detailed transit plans are being developed through the second EIS. The transit system construction will follow once its details are reviewed and approved.

One thing that will not change is our commitment to continuous and meaningful public involvement. I want you to join us at our upcoming Public Scoping Update Meetings (see page 4) and at our Community Outreach Centers (see page 2). Furthermore, changes to federal legislation give you – the public – an even greater role in our study (see page 2).



On behalf of all the three key New York State agencies involved in this study – the New York State Department of Transportation, the New York State Thruway Authority, and MTA Metro-North Railroad – I want to thank you for your continued interest and participation in this study.

Michael P. Anderson, P.E.

Public Scoping Update Meetings - see Page 4



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WORKING IN THE CORRIDOR

New Tarrytown Community Outreach and Project Office

The Tappan Zee Bridge/I-287 Environmental Review Project Office and Community Outreach Center are officially open to the public. Located at **660 White Plains Road (Route 119), Suite 340 in Tarrytown**, the office opened in November 2007, and operates Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The new Outreach Center serves as a meeting site and a place to ask questions of project staff, make comments on the project, and review and obtain project documents.



In addition to the new outreach center, key project staff from all three agencies have their offices in the same facility.

The office is served by four bus routes (Loops F and T, as well as Routes T and 13) and has off-street parking available. You do not need to make an appointment to visit us.

To reach the new Community Outreach Center, call (914) 358-0612.

The Rockland County Community Outreach Center, located at 203 Main Street in Nyack, remains open to the public Wednesdays and Thursdays, 4:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. and Saturdays, from 11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Call (845) 348-7714 to contact this office.

HOW CHANGES IN FEDERAL LAW AFFECT THIS PROJECT

More Public Input, Faster Studies, and Greater Likelihood of Implementation

Recent changes in the federal legislation that governs studies like the TZB/I-287 Environmental Review will provide a “win-win-win” situation for the people in this region: more opportunities for public involvement, a more expeditious study process, and greater likelihood that approved decisions can move quickly into construction.

You will hear project team members and various stakeholders refer to these changes as “**Section 6002 regulations.**” This refers to changes made a few years ago to federal transportation legislation – namely **Section 6002 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU).**

Key features of Section 6002 include:

- Increased opportunity for comment and involvement from agencies and the public. The public and agencies may comment on the following items (in addition to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and the Final Environmental Impact Statement):
 - ◆ Public and Agency Coordination Plan
 - ◆ Purpose and Need
 - ◆ Range of Alternatives
 - ◆ Methodologies

These are found in the Scoping Update Package (February 2008) on the TZB/I-287 Environmental Review Web site (www.tzbsite.com).

- Identification and engagement of Participating and Cooperating Government Agencies that have an interest in or jurisdiction over this study.
- A formal process for agencies to resolve issues.



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ALTERNATIVES AND OPTIONS UNDER REVIEW

Three Options Added to Six Alternatives – Based on Public Input and Other Studies

Based on continued studies and continuous public input, three new options have been added to the six alternatives already under review as part of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement. Below are the six alternatives already presented to the public:

- **Alternative 1** – No-Build
- **Alternative 2** – Bridge Rehabilitation with Transportation Demand Management (TDM) and Transportation Systems Management (TSM)
- **Alternative 3** – Full Corridor Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) with a new Bridge and highway improvements in Rockland
- **Alternative 4A** – Full Corridor Commuter Rail Transit (CRT) with a new Bridge and highway improvements in Rockland
- **Alternative 4B** – Manhattan-bound CRT with Light Rail Transit (LRT) in Westchester and with a new Bridge and highway improvements in Rockland
- **Alternative 4C** – Manhattan-bound CRT with BRT in Westchester and with a new Bridge and highway improvements in Rockland

The three new options are as follows:

- **Option 3A** – This enhanced version of Alternative 3 includes a more robust BRT service plan and has the BRT operate along the corridor more like a trunk route, similar to a rail system.
- **Option 3B** – This option includes the enhanced BRT service plan/trunk route of Option 3A and replaces the combination of dedicated bus lanes on local arterials and busway sections in Westchester County (from Alternative 3) with a high-speed busway along I-287 between the Tappan Zee Bridge and Port Chester.
- **Option 4D** – This option combines full corridor BRT and Manhattan-bound CRT service. It includes the BRT system of Option 3A and CRT between Suffern and Tarrytown, with a direct CRT connection to the Hudson Line.

Please review the Scoping Update Package (February 2008) on the TZB/I-287 Environmental Review Web site (www.tzbsite.com) for more details on the six alternatives and three options.

WANT TO KNOW MORE? JOIN OUR MAILING LIST!

Please fill this form out and mail it to:

**Tappan Zee Bridge/I-287 Environmental Review Study
660 White Plains Road, Suite 340
Tarrytown, NY 10591**

Name _____

Organization _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____



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JOIN US IN FEBRUARY 2008 AT PUBLIC SCOPING UPDATE MEETINGS

The public is invited to three meetings in February to find out the latest about the study. We're calling them "Public Scoping Update Meetings" and you'll be able to review large scale maps and boards, talk with study personnel, listen to a formal presentation, and provide oral and written comments for the record.

If you have any questions or special needs, contact us at:

- Call 877-TZB-DOT5 (or 877-892-3685)
- Email info@tzbsite.com

For directions to meetings and to review relevant documents, visit the Web site:

www.tzbsite.com

Tuesday, February 26, 4pm – 9pm

SUNY Purchase Performing Arts Center
735 Anderson Hill Road
Purchase, NY

Wednesday, February 27, 4pm – 9pm

Orange-Ulster BOCES Special Education Building
53 Gibson Road
Goshen, NY

Thursday, February 28, 4pm – 9pm

Palisades Center, Adler and
Raso Community Rooms (4th Floor)
1000 Palisades Center Drive
West Nyack, NY

**Presentation at 5pm
Repeated at 7pm**