



SUMMARY OF MEETING ISSUES AND CONCERNS

Date: September 24, 2002

Project: **I-95 Branford to Rhode Island Feasibility Study**
Connecticut Department of Transportation

State Project No.: 170-2295
CHA Project No.: 11530

Location of Meeting: Guilford

Date of Meeting: September 12, 2002 - 1:00 p.m.

Subject of Meeting: Local Outreach Meeting No. 12

Project Overview by Jim Andrini of ConnDOT and Rod Bascom of CHA:

- This Study will identify practical, cost efficient improvements for I-95. It is building off of CTDOT's 1999 I-95 Southeastern Connecticut Corridor Study. The 1999 report was specific about the need to improve the capacity of I-95.
- We will look closely at costs and the environmental impacts of adding a 3rd lane and creating a better balanced transportation network including intermodal transit (bus, rail, etc.) At this time next summer we will be ½ way through and will be able to identify improvement alternatives.
- This Study is a high priority of the Transportation Strategy Board and will look at I-95 from Branford to the Rhode Island state line, including 85 intersections and some of the supporting road network.
- By 2008, 52 of the 59 corridor miles will be at or approaching capacity.
- The Study includes a sensitivity analysis for environmental resources, which means that we will be looking only at major impact areas, not detailed environmental reviews or quantification of potential impacts.
- Project recommendations will be prioritized by need (ranked by cost/benefit, etc.). The Study includes an Implementation Phase and will involve stakeholders in prioritizing improvement projects. This will allow ConnDOT to identify deficiencies that can be addressed and corrected in the short term.
- Public participation is an important part of the Study. The Study will include Public Outreach on 3 levels:
 - 1) A Study Advisory Committee established specifically for this project and consisting of local, regional and state stakeholders, including COG/RPA and town representatives and special interest groups (6 meetings to start in November).
 - 2) Local Outreach: Meetings with local towns (40 meetings) that will be advertised broadly to the public there (hear their questions and comments).

3) Public Informational Meetings (6 meetings)

- In addition, we will establish a 1-800 phone line, web page and Email address where people may learn more about the project and provide comments. The Email will be answered by Jim Andrini; all questions or comments will be answered.
- The outreach sessions will allow the Study team to learn about the specific conditions, issues and concerns locally and to better understand future traffic demand since we are requesting that Towns provide information relative to growth and land use (e.g. Plans of Development, major proposed developments, etc).
- Current I-95 projects in the study area (in planning phase or scheduled for construction) include:
 - 1) ITS (Intelligent Traffic Systems) projects: CONNDOT has two on-going incident management or ITS projects that will help manage congestion on I-95. These ITS projects will likely include: closed circuit TV traffic flow monitoring, pavement sensors to monitor traffic, highway advisory radio, and variable message signs. An elaborate fiber optics network will connect the ITS to both Bridgeport (control center operated by State Police) and CONNDOT headquarters. The ITS projects include:
 - Exit 54, Branford to Exit 64, Route 145. This project is in final design and is scheduled to begin construction in the summer 2003;
 - Exit 64 (Westbrook-Clinton Town line) to Rhode Island State Line plus portion of I-395 from I-95 to Route 2. This project is the development state (preliminary design). Project schedule calls for bidding in 2003 with construction starting in August of 2003.
 - 2) Route 11 Extension Project: will finish Final EIS by late Summer/early Fall with preferred alternative. Next step will be design.
 - 3) Contracts C & D of Q-Bridge Project: Includes adding a 3rd lane on I-95 from Woodward Avenue/Stiles to Exit 54, Cedar Street (except Saltonstall Bridge which is already wide enough for 3 lanes). Project will require 2 construction seasons; it began this summer. Contract C is interchange 50 to Saltonstall Bridge; Contract D is Saltonstall bridge to Exit 54.

Questions and Comments *(with ConnDOT or CHA's response in italics)*

1. The Transportation Strategy Board will present a plan for I-95 to the Legislature in January 2003; if our Study is not done, will their report be general? *They will only be presenting status of this study.*
2. There is a problem at Exit 60. There is no south-bound entrance ramp or northbound off ramp.
3. The Clapboard Hill District of Guilford has been growing and continues to grow; a full interchange or a new exit, would be very desirable.
4. It is almost impossible to turn left at Goose Lane exit. Icheban Restaurant is located where improvements need to be constructed, but there are also wetland constraints there.
5. Proposed residential subdivisions near Exit 59; 500-600 acre parcel owned by one family (40 acres of it will be purchased by the town for future town facilities).
6. Medical Office Building and Emergency Medical Clinic is proposed at Goose lane.
7. More commercial development is likely at Exit 57.
8. Bittersweet Farm property in Branford was purchased for new facility, other land along route 1 west of Exit 57 in Branford is also zoned commercial.
9. Exit 58 on Route 77, the town plans an emergency facility building (ambulances and emergency response, 4 bays).
10. Guilford mapping: Engineering has information on GIS availability.
11. Transportation Subcommittee of P & Z, completed Study for Guilford; a town resident wrote a separate proposal for improved rail service. It was proposed that there be a 3 year experiment to improve Shoreline East with new bus and train runs/connections on weekends. No formal discussion has been done on it.
12. The town is talking with CTDOT to buy land on north side of the train tracks for additional commuter parking to promote rail travel.
13. Additional train service on summer weekends is a big need.
14. Work force development is needed. More trains would help bring service job employees from New London and New Haven to where the jobs are in the Shoreline towns.
15. The Study Advisory Committee will hold a meeting on November 7th.
16. Additional traffic on Route 80 and Route 146, due to congestion on Route 1 and I-95, is an increasing problem.
17. There are problems on Route 146 between Branford and Guilford near Sachem's Head; there is no stop sign coming from Guilford at a dangerous intersection where the sight lines are obscured by a RR bridge. It is a 3 – way intersection with stops at only 2 legs, which makes it dangerous.
18. Route 146 at Route 1 is not a major problem.
19. Projects recommended by this Study have the ability to be fast-tracked; that is, constructed in advance of major highway improvements if they have minimum potential for environmental impact or property acquisition.

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