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**APPENDIX M:  
PUBLIC OUTREACH AND SCOPING MEETING**

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M.1 Draft Scoping Document

M.2 Notices in Federal Register

M.3 Summary Report for 2004 Scoping Meetings

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Appendix M.1  
Draft Scoping Document

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**DRAFT SCOPING DOCUMENT  
FOR EIS PREPARATION  
IN CONJUNCTION WITH  
PROPOSED REPLACEMENT OF  
THE GOETHALS BRIDGE**

Project is Identified as the  
Goethals Bridge Modernization Program (GBMP) EIS

Prepared for:

United States Coast Guard

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## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (the Port Authority) has proposed a Goethals Bridge Modernization Program (GBMP), featuring a new crossing to replace the existing Goethals Bridge. The Goethals Bridge provides a direct connection between Staten Island, New York, and Elizabeth, New Jersey (see Figure 1). It facilitates mobility between the two states as part of the Port Authority's Interstate Transportation Network, comprised of the George Washington Bridge, the Holland and Lincoln Tunnels, and the three Staten Island Bridges (i.e., Goethals Bridge, Outerbridge Crossing and Bayonne Bridge). In addition, the bridge is considered a primary path of travel within the Southern Corridor, connecting Interstate 278 (the Staten Island Expressway) near Staten Island's north shore with the New Jersey Turnpike (Interstate 95) and U.S. Routes 1 and 9 in New Jersey.

The existing bridge has substandard 10-foot-wide lanes, no emergency shoulders, and escalating repair and maintenance costs. The functional obsolescence of the 76-year-old bridge impedes efforts to improve safety and reliability, accommodate current vehicle sizes, maintain efficient traffic operations and improve incident response. The design of the proposed new facility would reflect current traffic design standards, modern structural and seismic codes, national-security safeguards, and technology enhancements. It would also incorporate operational flexibility, which is not feasible with the existing bridge, in order to facilitate future transit-service opportunities. By ensuring the ability to meet current and future interstate travel demand, the GBMP is expected to support long-term economic growth and improved mobility for the local communities, as well as enhance overall performance, flexibility and reliability of the transportation network serving the greater metropolitan area.

The Port Authority notified the U.S. Coast Guard (Coast Guard) by letter of June 3, 2004, of its intent to submit a formal application for a Bridge Permit under the General Bridge Act of 1946. Accordingly, the Coast Guard assumed the role of the Federal lead agency for preparation and issuance of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for this project, in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969.

This Draft Scoping Document has been prepared as part of the formal scoping process pursuant to NEPA and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR Part 1500 et seq.). The Draft Scoping Document provides information to the public and agencies on the Draft EIS (DEIS) process, issues and alternatives that will be addressed, and analytical methodologies that will be employed. The broader purpose of the scoping process is to provide opportunity for the public and agencies to comment on and provide input to the scope of the DEIS as it is initiated.



**Goethals Bridge  
Modernization Program EIS  
REGIONAL LOCATION**

Figure 1

## **2.0 EIS OVERVIEW**

### **2.1 Initiating the EIS Process**

Figure 2 highlights the general steps in the EIS process. The process officially began with the Port Authority's submittal of a Letter of Intent to File a Bridge Permit Application to the Coast Guard for the GBMP. In response to this letter, the Coast Guard, as Federal lead agency, published a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare a DEIS in the *Federal Register* (August 10, 2004). This initiated the scoping process.

### **2.2 EIS Scoping Process**

The purpose of the scoping process is to provide an opportunity for agencies and the general public to comment on and provide input to the scope of issues to be addressed in the DEIS and in the identification of the significant issues related to the proposed action. Agency and public scoping meetings will be held to review the study scope and approach and to receive comments and suggestions for consideration from agencies and the general public. Federal, state, and local agencies were invited by letter to participate in the scoping process; the general public, elected officials, special interest groups and other potential stakeholders will be invited to participate via various advertising and outreach mechanisms.

The agency scoping meeting will be held on September 14, 2004, at the offices of the U.S. Coast Guard, First Coast Guard District, One South Street, Battery Building, New York, NY. Two sets of public scoping meetings will be held in October 2004, one on Staten Island, NY, and one in Elizabeth, New Jersey.

Scoping comments may be made orally at the scoping meetings, or in writing throughout the scoping process, and will be accepted for a minimum of 30 days following the scoping meetings.

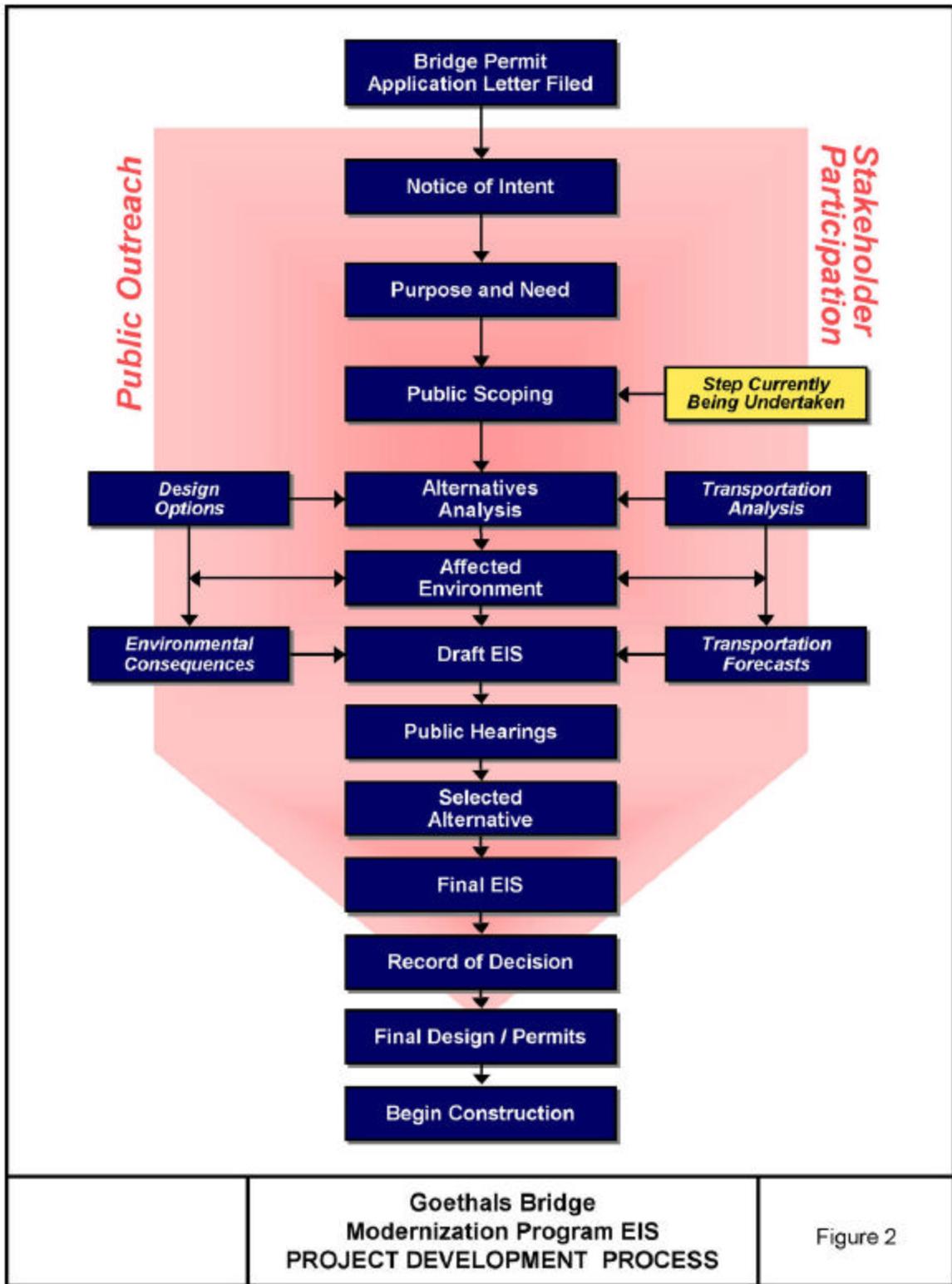
### **2.3 DEIS Preparation**

The GBMP DEIS will be prepared in accordance with NEPA regulations designed to identify significant environmental issues at an early stage and promote cooperative consultation among agencies before the DEIS is prepared. The DEIS will specifically follow the CEQ regulations implementing NEPA (40 CFR Part 1500 et seq.).

After its publication, the DEIS will be available for public and agency review and comment for a minimum 45-day period. Public hearing(s) will be held to receive comments from the public and agencies on the document; comments may be provided orally at the hearing(s) or in writing during the DEIS comment period.

### **2.4 EIS Study Areas**

Potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts of the proposed project will be evaluated within the boundaries of primary, secondary and regional study areas. Within these study areas, existing conditions will be examined and described, and future conditions and potential impacts without and with the proposed project will be assessed. The primary study area for evaluation of potential direct impacts is proposed to encompass approximately one square mile of industrial waterfront in New Jersey, principally in Elizabeth, with a smaller portion in Linden, and nearly two square miles of less-developed acreage in northwestern Staten Island, New York. More specifically, the prospective primary study area is expected to parallel the immediate right-of-way of the Goethals Bridge corridor, extending between 400 and 500 feet north and south of the existing Goethals Bridge and approach alignments. The secondary study area,



within which indirect, or secondary, project-related impacts may occur, is proposed to extend approximately one-half mile in all directions from the Goethals Bridge corridor. These proposed study area limits will be further refined and expanded, if necessary, following identification of project alternatives for detailed evaluation in the DEIS.

Recognizing the Goethals Bridge's role in the metropolitan area's transportation network, a larger regional study area is proposed for the assessment of traffic and transportation, and related air quality conditions and potential impacts. Potential cumulative impacts of the proposed project, as well as other major transportation and development projects in the Goethals Bridge corridor's vicinity and in the region, will also be assessed. The regional study area will likely encompass the 23 counties in New York and New Jersey that are included in the Best Practice Model (BPM), a multi-modal travel-forecasting model developed by the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) for use in transportation studies in the New York metropolitan area. The BPM is currently being updated and modified (BPM-Goethals) by the EIS Consultant to provide greater specificity for the Goethals Bridge/Outerbridge Crossing Southern Corridor, for use in the traffic and transportation analyses for this EIS.

In addition to the regional study area for the traffic and air quality assessments, individual analysis sites will be selected at major roadways in the vicinity of the proposed project and at other major travel routes in the region where localized impacts may occur.

## **3.0 PURPOSE AND NEED**

### **3.1 Overview of Purpose and Need**

The purpose of the GBMP is to eliminate the functional and physical obsolescence of the current Goethals Bridge and address the aging structure's escalating maintenance, repair, and structural retrofit needs, and associated costs. The GBMP, which features the proposed replacement of the Goethals Bridge (the project), would also serve to improve traffic flows; safety conditions and management of traffic incidents on the bridge; and overall performance, reliability, flexibility, and redundancy of the transportation network serving the greater New York/New Jersey metropolitan area.

The principal factors that underlie the need for the project are:

- the existing bridge's functional and physical obsolescence due to inadequate design features, including narrow lanes, no emergency shoulders, and substandard alignment, resulting in worsening traffic service, safety conditions, and management of traffic incidents on the bridge;
- the existing bridge's age, including the bridge deck, which is past its normal service life and requires ongoing maintenance, repair, and rehabilitation costs, and the need for a seismic retrofit of the substructure and superstructure;
- the existing bridge's deficiency as a reliable transportation link for system redundancy within the Staten Island Bridges system and, more broadly, the New York/New Jersey region in the event of emergency;
- increasing traffic volumes, including truck traffic, across the existing Goethals Bridge, resulting in worsening traffic conditions and relatively higher accident levels on the facility; and
- the layout of the existing bridge and its approaches, which limits the ability to maximize traffic flow improvements afforded by E-ZPass technology, and which is inadequate to provide for priority-lane treatment or dedicated capacity for potential future transit service on the facility.

The project is intended to address each of these critical factors and thereby provide for an adequate, efficient, and safe crossing in the Goethals Bridge corridor to meet present and anticipated future transportation system needs.

## **3.2 Background**

### **3.2.1 Introduction**

The Goethals Bridge was constructed in the 1920s to span the Arthur Kill and provide a roadway connection between Staten Island, New York, and Elizabeth, New Jersey. The two other roadway connections between Staten Island and New Jersey are the Bayonne Bridge, connecting northern Staten Island with Bayonne, New Jersey, and the Outerbridge Crossing, connecting southern Staten Island with Perth Amboy, New Jersey. These three bridges, which comprise the Staten Island Bridges system, are owned and operated by the Port Authority.

### **3.2.2 Traffic Growth Trends**

The importance of the Goethals Bridge within the regional roadway network grew with the opening in 1964 of the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge. The two bridges, connected by the Staten Island Expressway (part of I-278), became elements of an increasingly busy travel corridor between and including New Jersey, Staten Island, and geographic Long Island (i.e., Brooklyn, Queens, and Nassau and Suffolk counties). In the larger regional transportation context, I-278 serves as a critical spine within New York

City's expressway system, linking the City to northern and central New Jersey via the Goethals Bridge, and to Long Island, upstate New York, and New England via the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge and, for northern destinations, via subsequent connection to I-95.

The opening of the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge and the resultant population growth on Staten Island had a substantial impact on traffic patterns and volumes across Staten Island. Traffic across the Goethals Bridge increased an average of 33 percent annually between 1964 and 1973. Traffic during the weekday peak periods (i.e., 6:00 to 10:00 AM and 3:00 to 7:00 PM) grew at an even steeper rate throughout these years. Compared to 1964 peak-period traffic volumes of approximately 7,100 vehicles (both directions), the bridge currently carries approximately 18,000 to 20,000 vehicles (both directions), with approximately 10,500 vehicles in the peak direction during the weekday peak periods. This totals approximately 76,000 vehicles (both directions) on a daily basis<sup>1</sup>.

The ratio of truck traffic to overall traffic also increased as the Goethals Bridge became a critical component in the regional network of expressways. Regional and national trends toward more spatially dispersed manufacturing and distribution facilities and a shift in goods movement toward more shipments by truck rather than rail led to an increasing proportion of trucks as a component of overall traffic. These factors and trends are reflected in the changing makeup of Goethals Bridge traffic over time. For example, in 1953, trucks represented less than two percent of all traffic across the bridge, and tractor-trailers constituted only one-tenth of all truck traffic. In contrast, the Port Authority's 2003 traffic survey indicated that nine percent of trips across the span were by truck.

In addition, recent national trends toward increased motor-vehicle heights, widths, and lengths have limited truck movements through the Lincoln and Holland Tunnels (Port Authority, *Interstate Goods Movement Study*, 1992). As a result, the Port Authority's interstate bridges, including the Goethals Bridge, have taken on increased importance as routes for goods movement in the New York/New Jersey metropolitan region.

As traffic volumes have grown, travel conditions have become increasingly congested and traffic flows on the Goethals Bridge have begun to operate below acceptable service levels during peak travel periods.

### 3.2.3 Previous Studies

In response to these trends, the Port Authority initiated its Staten Island Bridges Program (SIBP) in 1989 to investigate potential improvement concepts for the Staten Island Bridges system. In 1992, an environmental review of alternative improvement concepts that appeared to best address identified needs was completed. In accordance with NEPA, a comprehensive environmental analysis of the SIBP was undertaken by the U.S. Coast Guard in conjunction with its bridge permitting responsibilities, resulting in the completion of the DEIS for the SIBP in 1995; the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was completed in 1997.

The SIBP DEIS identified two primary alternative Goethals Bridge improvement concepts: 1) a parallel bridge to the north of the existing Goethals Bridge; and 2) a parallel bridge to its south. Both of the parallel-bridge options were proposed to operate in conjunction with the existing bridge. In addition, an enhancement that was considered for both alternatives was provision of one concurrent high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) lane on the new bridge, as well as one on the existing bridge. These alternatives sought to address the transportation deficiencies articulated in the 1997 SIBP FEIS purpose and need documentation.

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<sup>1</sup> Current figures are based on 2003 traffic counts conducted by the Port Authority, part of a series of surveys conducted at its vehicular toll facilities to determine inter-zonal commuter usage between New York and New Jersey.

The environmental analyses concluded that the preferred alternative for addressing the SIBP purpose and need was the construction of a new bridge, parallel and to the south of the Goethals Bridge, to operate in conjunction with the existing bridge. A Record of Decision (ROD) for that project was not issued, due to various unresolved issues.

### 3.3 The Need for Replacement of the Goethals Bridge

In the years since the 1997 SIBP FEIS, the project purpose and need have evolved, reflecting physical and operational changes to the Goethals Bridge, existing and future transportation needs, and enhanced focus on needs for system redundancy and improved security. The Port Authority has recently reassessed the operational conditions identified in the earlier analyses and has now proposed a replacement of the Goethals Bridge as an important element of the GBMP to address the expanded purpose and need.

The GBMP seeks to provide for a new Goethals Bridge crossing that will:

- have structural design that eliminates the span's functional obsolescence;
- address concerns about the structure's age and related repair, maintenance, and rehabilitation needs and associated costs;
- enhance security and transportation system redundancy;
- improve traffic service, including incorporation of the expanding use of E-ZPass toll collection to improve traffic flow;
- improve travel safety and the ability to manage traffic incidents on the bridge;
- facilitate safe and reliable access for wider trucks currently using the Goethals Bridge crossing; and
- provide capability to accommodate and promote transit services and other alternatives in lieu of single-occupant-vehicle (SOV) commutation.

Each of these elements of the GBMP is described below.

#### 3.3.1 The Need to Provide Standard Features and Address Design Deficiencies

As the Goethals Bridge was designed and constructed in the 1920s for narrower vehicles and significantly lower traffic volumes than currently exist, several of the existing bridge's physical features are now functionally obsolete, in terms of current highway design standards defined by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). These deficiencies contribute to reduced traffic efficiency, traffic service levels, and safety conditions on the bridge, resulting in diminished traffic performance, driver safety, and increased operational concerns.

The following substandard design features adversely affect traffic operations on the Goethals Bridge:

- *Ten-Foot Lane Widths.* The travel lanes on the Goethals Bridge and its approaches are 10 feet wide. AASHTO now recommends a standard lane width of 12 feet, a standard which is applied by the Federal Highway Administration. Further, increasing numbers of larger-sized trucks and buses now cross the Goethals Bridge. Typical truck-trailer and full-size passenger bus widths are now 102 inches (8.5 feet). When lane widths are less than 12 feet and lateral clearances are less than 6 feet due to physical obstructions such as roadway barriers, typical driver reaction is to reduce speed due to uncomfortable driving conditions, and to lengthen the distances between vehicles in the same lane. Drivers often hesitate to pass slow-moving trucks or buses because of limited sight

distances and constrained lateral clearances due to the bridge's narrow lane widths. Therefore, traffic queues often build up in both lanes behind slow-moving trucks and buses.

- *Lack of Emergency Shoulder Lanes.* Stalled vehicles and minor accidents on the Goethals Bridge frequently result in significant delays. Due to the narrow lane width and lack of emergency shoulders, clearing accidents sometimes requires blocking all traffic in the affected direction or closing one lane to through traffic. The lack of a shoulder breakdown lane on the bridge main span and approaches also degrades safety conditions, as stalled vehicles themselves become safety hazards.
- *Approach Span Grade and Alignment.* There is a pronounced bend in the alignment of the New Jersey approach span of the Goethals Bridge at a point approximately 2,300 feet from the western bridge abutment. To maneuver through the bend, drivers of wider trucks and buses traveling in the right lane often encroach on the left travel lane, making it difficult for vehicles operating in the left lane to pass slower-moving trucks. This phenomenon results in slower travel speeds for all vehicles and reduced bridge capacity.

### 3.3.2 The Need to Enhance Structural Integrity and Reduce Life-Cycle Costs

Based on review of the most recent inspection report prepared for the Goethals Bridge (*2002 Biennial Inspection Report*) and on recent (May 2004) visual structural verification and inspection conducted on the bridge and its approach structures as part of this EIS effort, the existing structure is currently in overall good to satisfactory condition. Significant expenditures, averaging approximating \$6.7 million per year, for maintenance and repairs to extend the structure's effective life span have been made in the period from 1987 to fiscal year 2005.<sup>2</sup> A substantial portion of the total expenditures has been spent since 2001, including repainting of the entire structure, replacement of the existing sidewalks, and performance of miscellaneous structural and deck repairs.

Based on these data, the repair costs associated with the Goethals Bridge can be expected to continue to increase in future years, despite the work that is being performed under a current rehabilitation and repair contract (\$63 million) begun in 2004. The 76-year old bridge is well past its normal service life; the current major rehabilitation work will provide interim repairs that are expected to extend the life of the bridge 7 to 10 years. After that period, a complete deck replacement and seismic retrofit will most likely be required to keep the bridge in service. The cost of the deck slab replacement could range from \$104 to \$226 million (in 2001 dollars), depending on the type of deck system employed, construction-period traffic staging schemes, and deck replacement schemes. In addition to the deck replacement, various superstructure and substructure maintenance repairs may also be required at that time.

Other significant repair, maintenance, and rehabilitation contracts will continue to be required every 20 to 25 years, contributing to the increasingly high cost of extending the structure's life span, while also inconveniencing travelers with construction-related delays. However, as none of the repairs will correct the bridge's deficient geometry, needs related to traffic service, safety, emergency response, and system redundancy will not be addressed. Also, while it will be feasible to re-open the bridge walkway to pedestrians following the completion of current repairs<sup>3</sup>, safety/security issues may preclude this without, at minimum, implementation of safety- and security-related modifications at additional costs. Finally, future repairs will also not provide any ability to fully capitalize on traffic flow improvements that could be afforded by E-ZPass technology, nor to accommodate potential future transit on the Goethals Bridge, should future travel patterns warrant such consideration.

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<sup>2</sup> These expenditures are based on Port Authority data on repair contracts.

<sup>3</sup> Pedestrian access has been unavailable for nearly a decade due to deterioration of the sidewalk deck and supports.

### 3.3.3 The Need to Provide System Redundancy and Resilience

Operational redundancy of the region's transportation network, including the system of bridges serving Staten Island and providing bi-state access, is a critical need. In March of 2004, a fatal accident on the Goethals Bridge involving four trucks and a car necessitated that the Port Authority shut down the bridge in both directions. A second five-vehicle accident on the Outerbridge Crossing, possibly attributed to additional volume diverted from the accident scene, created an extensive traffic backup for several miles and several hours of congestion and delays. As a result of these two separate but chronologically overlapping incidents, the potential for traveling between Staten Island and New Jersey was virtually eliminated for an extensive period, despite the continued operation of the Bayonne Bridge.

While such a dual-accident scenario is rare, it demonstrates the importance of having adequate lane widths to alleviate the pressure from trucks and buses using the facility between Staten Island and New Jersey, and to provide relief in the event of any type of incident<sup>4</sup> involving one or more of the existing bridge crossings. More broadly, adequate operational flexibility and safe travel conditions in the Goethals Bridge corridor are critical to accommodate traffic diverting from other transportation facilities during closure incidents in other corridors.

### 3.3.4 The Need to Improve Traffic Service

#### 3.3.4.1 Existing Travel Conditions

To understand current travel conditions on the Goethals Bridge, a comprehensive review was initiated of available traffic-related data sources and the results of traffic surveys performed in 2000, 2002, and 2003 by the Port Authority. Average weekday traffic volumes on the bridge, as determined from the Port Authority's 2003 Spring/Fall counts, were approximately 76,000 vehicles, with eastbound and westbound vehicular trips constituting 39,000 and 37,000 vehicles, respectively. The 2002 traffic survey indicated that 89 percent of total eastbound trips were by automobile and 11 percent were by truck. About 62 percent of the trips each weekday were work- and company business-related while about 20 percent were for personal business and 12 percent were for recreational purposes.

The peak directions of travel on the bridge are westbound (leaving Staten Island) in the morning, and eastbound (returning to Staten Island) in the afternoon. During the 6:00 to 10:00 AM peak period of travel, westbound traffic in 2003 (10,200 vehicles) was 34 percent higher than eastbound traffic (7,600 vehicles). During the 3:00 to 7:00 PM peak period of travel, 2003 eastbound volumes (10,700 vehicles) were 24 percent higher than westbound levels (8,600 vehicles). During the midday peak period, traffic flows were generally the same in both directions, with westbound traffic just slightly higher than eastbound traffic.

According to the 2002-2003 Port Authority traffic surveys, the average number of weekday trips to Staten Island was about equal to the number of through-trips that originated in or were destined for locations east of the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge. Of the through-trips, 36 percent were going to Brooklyn or Queens. During the typical weekend day, approximately 60 percent of trips have destinations east of Staten Island, primarily for recreational purposes.

Statistics on truck trips, according to the Port Authority's 2000 truck commodity and cordon survey study, were somewhat different, with 33 percent of truck trips across the Goethals Bridge during an average

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<sup>4</sup> Such incidents could be related to an accident, a bridge closing due to emergency or routine maintenance or repairs, or an emergency condition.

weekday (in November 2000) bound for destinations in Staten Island, while 35 percent were destined for Brooklyn, 14 percent for Queens, and the remainder for Long Island.

The quality of traffic service provided by a roadway facility is typically characterized for peak-period travel conditions and measured in terms of levels of service (LOS).<sup>5</sup> In the Port Authority's 2001 *Staten Island Bridges Access Study*, traffic volumes in the peak travel hour were counted and analyzed. The analysis of volumes, which are similar to today's volumes, indicate that the Goethals Bridge operates at LOS "E" in the westbound peak-travel direction during the weekday AM peak period. The bridge operates at LOS "F" in the eastbound peak-travel direction during the weekday PM peak period.

This profile of traffic service on the Goethals Bridge changes markedly during the weekend, when approximately 87 percent of all trips across the bridge are non-work-related. On a typical Saturday, average traffic volumes on the Goethals Bridge exceed weekday levels, with 41,000 eastbound and 37,500 westbound automobile trips; on a typical Sunday, the average traffic volumes are somewhat less, with 40,700 eastbound and 31,900 westbound trips. However, the non-work-related weekend trips are more evenly dispersed over the day. With less pronounced peaking patterns during the weekend, LOS conditions remain relatively stable throughout the day, with the exception of Saturday and Sunday evenings, particularly during summer months, when many residents return to Staten Island and other New York communities from points in New Jersey.

### 3.3.4.2 Future Traffic Growth and Travel Conditions

Population and employment forecasts prepared by the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC)<sup>6</sup>, the Port Authority, and other entities indicate that the regional economy and population will continue to grow in the foreseeable future. Projected growth in some of the areas served by the Goethals Bridge is expected to continue to place increasing traffic demands on the existing crossing, which will likely result in further deterioration of traffic conditions in future years. In addition, with the recent redevelopment and forecasted growth of the Howland Hook Marine Terminal in the northwestern corner of Staten Island, the importance of the Goethals Bridge, already a critical link for truck-based cargo transport in the region, will likely be reinforced, even with current and planned rail freight improvements.

NYMTC has developed a set of transportation models to meet federal requirements for long-range planning. NYMTC's travel-forecasting model, the Best Practices Model (BPM), was developed as the regional model to be used for sub-regional, corridor-level and conformity-related travel demand forecasting. The model's study area includes 28 counties in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut and includes over 3,600 transportation analysis zones. The model also includes the study area's transit route system, comprised of more than 1,180 routes, including commuter rail, subway, express bus, local bus, and ferry services. The model has recently been updated to reflect year 2002 socioeconomic characteristics in the region, based on 2000 U.S. Census data. The model is also being updated and modified by the Consultant for this EIS for the Goethals Bridge/Outerbridge Crossing Southern Corridor (BPM-Goethals) to provide more network and zonal information to better reflect actual conditions and forecast future growth.

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<sup>5</sup> Level of service (LOS), as defined by the Transportation Research Board, ranges from level "A" to level "F," where LOS "A" indicates free-flowing traffic conditions with high travel speeds and LOS "F" describes breakdown conditions with excessive congestion and delays. LOS "C" indicates stable traffic flows and overall good conditions and is generally used as an optimal design objective. LOS "D" represents heavy traffic flow conditions without excessive delays and is considered to be the minimum acceptable operating condition for urban areas. LOS "E" is defined as the theoretical capacity of the roadway, or the maximum stop-and-go flow of vehicles, given existing physical conditions. It is generally considered that LOS E and LOS F are below the threshold of acceptable operating conditions.

<sup>6</sup> NYMTC is the metropolitan New York region's Metropolitan Planning Organization.

Preliminary travel forecasts developed by NYMTC as part of its regional modeling update indicate that by 2025, traffic is likely to grow by as much as 20 to 25 percent during the peak travel periods. Given this increase, it is projected that traffic operations will continue to deteriorate during both the AM and PM weekday peak periods, resulting in unstable traffic flows, queues on the Goethals Bridge and its approaches, and increased safety problems potentially resulting in more accidents and traffic-delaying incidents. It is anticipated that without improvements, traffic service on the Goethals Bridge will deteriorate to LOS "F" in both the AM and PM peak hours, with extremely unstable, breakdown traffic operations. Accidents and traffic incidents on the bridge will likely increase while truck flows across the bridge and regional access and connectivity will become further constrained. These delays in travel across the bridge would lead to reduced productivity and corresponding higher user costs for all trip purposes.

These preliminary travel forecasts will be refined and updated as part of the comprehensive EIS process for the proposed project, using the BPM-Goethals travel-forecasting model to verify and refine forecasts of future conditions.

### 3.3.5 The Need to Provide Safer Operating Conditions and Reduce Accidents

Accident data for the Goethals Bridge has been compiled by the Port Authority for the period from 2000 through 2003. The total number of accident occurrences on the bridge over the four-year period and the number of accidents per millions of vehicle miles traveled is shown below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>No. of Accidents</u>	<u>No. of Accidents/MVM</u>	<u>Volume (Millions)</u>
2000	214	4.23	27.78
2001	226	4.36	28.47
2002	222	3.89	31.36
2003	186	3.59	28.49

The number of accident occurrences during each year is substantially higher than the annual levels reported in the 1997 SIBP FEIS for the three-year period from 1993 to 1995; annual accident occurrences reported during that earlier period totaled 139, 170, and 158 during 1993, 1994, and 1995, respectively.

Accident rates on the Goethals Bridge are the highest among the three Port Authority's Staten Island Bridges and are higher than the normal statewide rates for four-lane highways in both New York and New Jersey. The average accident rate for the four-year period from 2000 through 2003, based on accidents per million vehicle miles (MVM), is 4.02 for the Goethals Bridge. Similar to the trend in accident occurrences, this rate is higher than it was in the mid-1990s, when the 1997 SIBP FEIS reported the average accident rate for the three-year period from 1993 to 1995 as 3.53 accidents per MVM.

Despite some reduction in the last two years, the accident rates on the Goethals continue to be the highest of the three Staten Island Bridges and are well above the averages for similar facilities in New York and New Jersey. For example, the overall average rate is markedly higher than the latest 2002 New York statewide average of 1.09 accidents per MVM for four-lane divided access-controlled urban mainline highways, as compiled by the New York State Department of Transportation. The overall average rate on the Goethals Bridge is also above the 2002 average accident incident rate of 3.75 accidents per MVM in New Jersey for four-lane, median barrier divided, full-access-controlled state and interstate highways with no shoulders, as compiled by the New Jersey Department of Transportation. The comparatively high number of accidents on the Goethals Bridge can be attributed to the undesirable combination of narrow lane widths, lack of emergency shoulders, and steep grade constraints.

### **3.3.6 The Need to Provide for Safe, Reliable Truck Access for Regional Goods Movement**

The Goethals Bridge serves as a key freight link with several roles: serving Staten Island and nearby New Jersey consumer and business needs; connecting distribution centers in New Jersey with businesses and consumers in Brooklyn, Queens, and the Long Island suburbs; and connecting the Howland Hook Marine Terminal with the mainland interstate highway system through a direct connection with the New Jersey Turnpike. Significant growth in cargo volume is forecast for the entire Port of New York and New Jersey, including the Howland Hook Marine Terminal. This trend will heighten the Goethals Bridge's importance for goods movement.

Vehicle classification counts (Port Authority, 2002) indicate that the westbound, peak-period mix of truck traffic on the Goethals Bridge is relatively evenly split between small (2 - 3 axle) and large (3-axle or more) trucks. A total of approximately 4,500 trucks crossed the Goethals Bridge on a typical weekday in November 2000. The Goethals Bridge is used principally for truck trips originating near Port Newark and Port Elizabeth, the South Kearny freight yards, and Middlesex County.

Truck traffic on the Goethals Bridge is already constrained by the physically obsolete configuration of the Goethals Bridge, notably narrow lanes and no emergency shoulder. Slow-moving truck traffic further exacerbates inefficient traffic service on the span by affecting passenger vehicle flows, as autos queue behind trucks navigating the narrow lanes.

The Port Authority and the City of New York are making investments to restore mainland rail freight connections to the Howland Hook Marine Terminal. While this and other rail freight improvement projects are anticipated to result in some shift of goods movement from truck to rail, truck-based goods movement is nevertheless expected to increase to/from Howland Hook and within and through the region. Goods movement in the Goethals Bridge corridor will become increasingly constrained and inefficient with increasing demand.

### **3.3.7 The Need to Provide for Potential Future Transit in the Corridor**

The existing configuration of the Goethals Bridge precludes consideration of accommodating a transit system or priority-lane treatment for transit/ridesharing vehicles on the structure in the future, should travel patterns and ridership forecasts indicate that these would be feasible transportation options in the Goethals Bridge corridor. The structure's overall narrow width and its limited number of lanes for vehicular travel do not provide any excess space that could be dedicated for a transit system. The preferred alternative in the SIBP FEIS (1997) included a proposed structure with cross-sectional design that could accommodate potential future introduction of transit service on the new bridge, at such time as it might have been warranted. Since that earlier study, the New York/New Jersey region's transit network has grown, evidenced most recently with implementation of the Hudson-Bergen LRT system; further transit system expansions are under study throughout the region. However, given the existing structure's constrained layout, consideration of future transit system enhancement in the Goethals Bridge corridor would not be a viable option.

## **3.4 Project Goals**

Project goals have been defined on the basis of the stated purpose and need for the proposed project. The project goals, in turn, serve as the basis for: 1) identifying potential project alternatives; and 2) defining criteria and related performance measures that will be used to select reasonable and feasible alternatives that may best satisfy the project goals, address the project purpose and need, and, therefore, warrant detailed evaluation in the EIS.

Based on the purpose and need for the Goethals Bridge Modernization Program, the following project goals have been defined:

- Address the functional obsolescence of the existing Goethals Bridge.
- Address structural integrity issues associated with the aging bridge.
- Reduce roadway congestion and delays and enhance mobility on the Goethals Bridge.
- Improve the flow of goods to and from Staten Island and New Jersey and in the New York/New Jersey region.
- Correct the inability of the existing bridge to physically accommodate transit services and other single-occupant-vehicle commuting alternatives.
- Restore and enhance pedestrian access and provide for bicycle access.
- Implement measures to improve bridge structural security.
- Minimize environmental consequences of the improvement.

### **3.5 Related Studies and Projects**

There are a number of recently completed and ongoing studies, projects, and programs from which the GBMP EIS will obtain data and information and with which the EIS studies will be coordinated, as necessary. These include studies of facility-specific and more regional transportation improvements and land use development projects in the study area. A comprehensive list of these studies will be included in the DEIS.

Projects that are programmed and committed to be implemented prior to the time that the GBMP alternatives would come on line will be incorporated in the definition of the No-Action alternative to be assessed in the EIS. Programmed and committed projects will also be addressed in the evaluation of cumulative effects.

The list of related studies and projects will be compiled with input principally from the scoping process and from the other studies' and projects' sponsoring agencies, as well as from technical literature reviews being conducted for the EIS. A partial list of key related studies and projects includes:

- Staten Island Expressway median bus lane extension, Staten Island;
- West Shore Expressway Corridor/Service Road improvements, Staten Island;
- North Shore Railroad reactivation for freight rail and connection to the Chemical Coast Line, Staten Island and New Jersey;
- Comprehensive Port Improvement Plan for the Port of New York and New Jersey;
- Gowanus Expressway viaduct replacement, Brooklyn, New York;
- Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) limited access highway improvements, New York City;
- Elizabeth Ferry Terminal and service, Elizabeth, New Jersey;
- Portway extensions transportation improvements, New Jersey;
- Cross Harbor Freight Movement Project, New York and New Jersey.

## 4.0 ALTERNATIVES

Project alternatives that will be evaluated in detail in the DEIS will be selected through a tiered screening evaluation of potentially reasonable and feasible alternatives. Preliminary alternatives will be identified and screening criteria and related performance measures will be defined based on the purpose and need of the GBMP. Comments and input received during the scoping process relative to alternatives will be considered in the formulation of the list of preliminary alternatives and the screening criteria to reflect pertinent agency and public issues and concerns. Subsequent public meetings will be held to present and discuss the alternatives screening process, pertinent data and information, analysis results, and conclusions. Categories of alternatives that are anticipated to be considered, and the alternatives screening process, are described below.

### 4.1 Preliminary Alternatives and Initial Screening Analysis

Preliminary alternatives will be identified through:

- review of previous studies prepared of the Goethals Bridge, the broader Staten Island Bridges system (i.e., Goethals Bridge, Outerbridge Crossing, Bayonne Bridge), and other transportation facilities (e.g., Staten Island Expressway, North Shore Railroad) in the study area;
- review of the alternatives analysis conducted for the Staten Island Bridges Program Modernization and Capacity Enhancement Program EIS (1997);
- analysis of the study area's existing transportation infrastructure and technology to identify significant system gaps or deficiencies; and
- the EIS scoping process through which agency and public comment and input is solicited.

The preliminary alternatives will represent a broad range of modal solutions that have the potential to address the purpose and need and respond to the project goals. They will include both structural and non-structural alternatives, as well as the No-Action alternative, as described below:

*No-Action Alternative:* The No-Action alternative defines future baseline conditions, inclusive of major rehabilitation of the existing Goethals Bridge to extend its service life, and transportation projects and improvements that are programmed and committed, but not including replacement of the Goethals Bridge.

*Project Sponsor's Proposal:* The Port Authority's preferred proposal is to replace the existing Goethals Bridge. Incorporated into the design of the proposed new facility will be elements to reflect current traffic design standards, modern structural and seismic codes, national security safeguards and technology enhancement, and operational flexibility to facilitate future transit-service opportunities. A replacement bridge may be considered south of or within the existing alignment, with subsequent demolition and removal of the existing span.

*Goethals Bridge Rehabilitation for Significant Life-Span Extension:* While the Goethals Bridge is currently undergoing a \$60 million major structural rehabilitation program to extend the span's service life for an additional 7 to 10 years, significant additional, ongoing rehabilitation would be required to extend the existing facility's service life for a period comparable to what would be anticipated with a replacement bridge.

*Other Structural Alternatives:* Other structural alternatives may include, but not be limited to: a replacement bridge north of the existing Goethals Bridge; a parallel bridge in conjunction with the existing bridge either north or south of the existing Goethals Bridge; twin replacement bridges, one either north or south of the existing bridge and one in the existing bridge's right-of-way, following demolition and removal of the existing structure; a tunnel crossing to replace the existing bridge; fixed-guideway

transit (light rail transit, commuter rail), roadway-based transit (bus rapid transit, high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) facility for ridesharing, car/van pools), and/or ferry services.

*Non-Structural Alternatives:* Non-structural alternatives may include new and/or modified congestion pricing strategies at the Goethals Bridge and/or other transportation facilities in the study area; other Travel Demand Management (TDM) programs designed to reduce recurrent peak-period traffic congestion; Transportation System Management (TSM) programs designed to maximize use of existing transportation facilities to improve efficiency of traffic operations; and transit options that do not require new infrastructure (expanded local and/or express bus services and routes).

The identified preliminary alternatives will be screened against an initial set of criteria to determine each one's fundamental feasibility and likely ability to satisfy the project purpose and need. Preliminary alternatives that are clearly infeasible or unreasonable due to identifiable major flaws, or do not have the potential to minimally satisfy the majority of project goals, will be eliminated from further consideration. Preliminary alternatives that warrant further investigation will be advanced to the next phase of the screening process.

## 4.2 Intermediate Alternatives and Comparative Screening Analysis

Alternatives surviving the initial screening analysis will be further developed in terms of alignments, system components, operations, ancillary facilities, institutional requirements for implementation and operation, and other characteristics. Certain individual intermediate alternatives may be combined to create multimodal alternatives with the expectation that combinations of complementary transportation improvements would more fully address the project purpose and need.

The further definition and screening of intermediate alternatives will be focused, rather than encyclopedic, to provide necessary and sufficient information for selection of a short list of alternatives that warrant detailed evaluation in the DEIS.

The second screening phase will compare the intermediate alternatives against criteria and associated evaluation measures to assess the alternatives':

- transportation performance in the Goethals Bridge corridor, including considerations of capacity, congestion, system reliability, and safety;
- effect on enhancing the Staten Island Bridges' transportation system redundancy;
- effect on goods movement through the Goethals Bridge corridor and in the region;
- relevance to and potential effect on the existing bridge's structural integrity;
- local and regional environmental considerations of primary concern; and
- practical construction and cost considerations.

The comparative screening analysis will serve to identify principal advantages and shortcomings of each alternative; highlight key differences among the alternatives; and determine the respective merits of each. Evaluation matrices will be prepared both to display discrete findings of the screening evaluation for each alternative, and to highlight their comparative performance relative to each criterion and their responsiveness in satisfying the project purpose and need.

In addition to the No-Action alternative, build alternatives that satisfy the project purpose and need will be advanced for detailed evaluation in the DEIS. The future baseline No-Action alternative will be supplemented with the congestion pricing alternative that is judged, via the comparative screening, to best satisfy the project purpose and need related to reduced congestion and delays on the Goethals Bridge.

## 5.0 SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

The social, economic, and environmental setting for the area potentially affected by the alternatives will be described. This description will be of sufficient scope to assess all potential effects of the alternatives, including their direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts. Data and analyses commensurate with the importance of the impact will be included. It is assumed that the Affected Environment Study Area limits will be coincident with identified project alternatives.

The following sections present the technical disciplines that will be addressed with descriptions of the approach to characterizing existing conditions and the means of analyzing impacts and mitigation.

### 5.1 Traffic and Transportation

#### 5.1.1 Comprehensive Traffic Count and Analysis Program

This study, conducted in the Spring and Fall of 2004, will update a traffic count program and access study for the Goethals Bridge previously conducted in 1993 and 2000. The major roadways providing access to the Staten Island bridges include the Staten Island Expressway (Interstate Route 278), the West Shore Expressway (SR- 440), the New Jersey Turnpike (Route I-95), the Garden State Parkway, Routes 1/9 and 169 in New Jersey, and Victory Boulevard, Richmond Avenue, Richmond Parkway, and Hylan Boulevard on Staten Island. In support of the DEIS and for the purpose of updating this comprehensive traffic count program and access study, the region has been segregated into fourteen (14) Primary Traffic Study Areas (PTSAs) (see Figure 3).

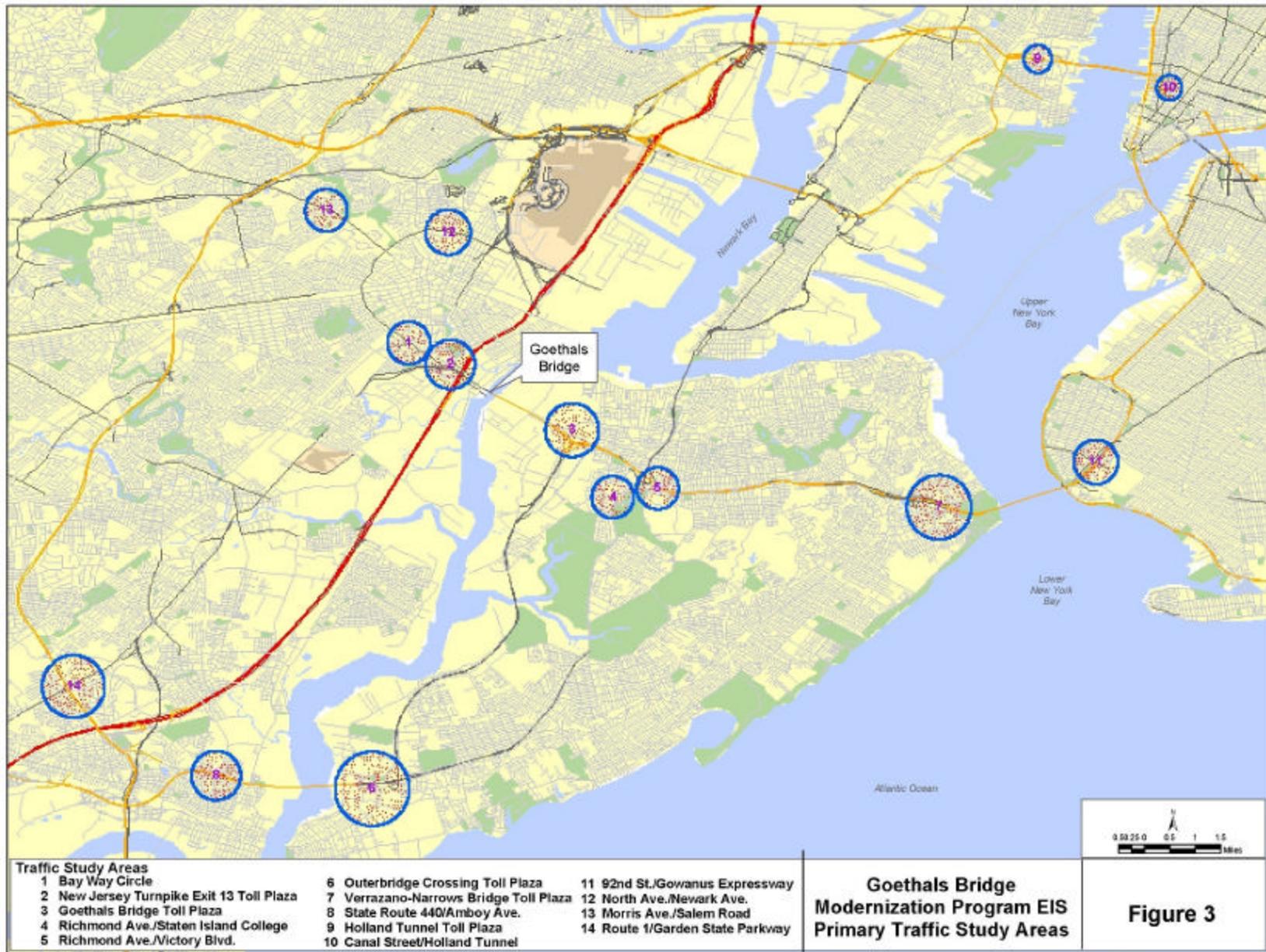
In each of the 14 PTSAs, signalized and unsignalized intersection locations will be analyzed. Key intersection locations were chosen based on their proximity to access and egress ramps of the arterial highways and to major approach travel routes. The resulting dataset will provide the ability to determine changes in traffic conditions within the Staten Island corridor, as well as in the region.

The initial task activities include:

- Manual counts and Automatic Traffic Recorders (ATRs) to collect the traffic data.
- Obtaining the Port Authority's 24-hour, westbound traffic counts at its four bridges and two tunnels taken during the spring and fall of each year. This information for prior years will be needed along with the corresponding eastbound traffic volumes.
- Speed and delay surveys along 10 corridors for the air quality studies.
- Up to 40 detailed classification counts for the air quality and noise studies.
- Collecting 3 years of accident data for the three Staten Island Bridge crossings.

Once the initial data collection has been completed, the following analyses will occur:

- Staten Island Bridges 2004 traffic volumes will be developed.
- Existing (2004) level of service at the signalized and unsignalized intersections in the primary study area will be determined for the peak hour(s) within the 6:00-10:00 AM and 3:00-7:00 PM weekday periods.
- Staten Island Expressway capacity analyses for the existing condition (2004) will be determined for the peak hour(s) within the 6:00-10:00 AM and 3:00-7:00 PM weekday periods.
- Accident statistics for each of the three Staten Island Bridges from 2001 to 2003 will be developed. The Port Authority will provide raw accident information.



### 5.1.2 Forecasts of Future Traffic Conditions and Assessment of Alternative Improvement Strategies

The regional BPM is being updated and modified (BPM-Goethals) by the EIS Consultant to improve the model's calibration specifically for analysis of the Goethals Bridge and the Southern Corridor. General model parameter adjustments are focused on total person travel, origin-destination flow (peak period, 24-hour volumes), mode shares, and on overall performance of the model in the Southern Corridor. Model refinements to create the BPM-Goethals include:

- Updating to include NYMTC's incorporation of 2002 US Census information;
- Adjustments using the updated set of traffic counts; and
- A comprehensive review of the existing and potential future applications of congestion pricing (by mode, type of day, time of day) to reduce vehicular trips in the study corridor will be made and a congestion pricing subroutine will be incorporated into the BPM-Goethals.

After base conditions have been developed, the study will focus on modeling and forecasting future conditions. This will include:

- Identifying primary, secondary, and local streets for modeling based on their significance to the overall vehicular movements/capacity in the Southern Corridor;
- Inputting network coding such as capacity, speed, number of lanes, etc.;
- Coordinating with transportation agencies, including the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) and the New Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA), to review the list of committed and expected highway and transit projects that should be included in the future network;
- Adding all roadway and transit projects that are not presently in the model; and
- Performing traffic modeling for existing conditions and for No-Action and project alternatives.

The forecasting effort will assume the following:

- No-Action Year 2030
- No-Action Year 2030 with congestion pricing
- Project alternatives to be determined through the scoping process and alternatives analyses, including transit alternatives or alternatives with a transit component.

The BPM-Goethals assignment outputs will be used to develop base year and future year traffic volumes for the AM and PM peak hours for each of the alternatives. The future analyses will include:

- Using the methodologies outlined in the latest Transportation Research Board Special Report 209, the *Highway Capacity Manual*, level-of-service (LOS) estimates will be developed for major Port Authority crossings and key critical links, for AM and PM peak hours in both directions.
- Highway Capacity Software (HCS) will be used to determine traffic and operational characteristics for existing and future years.

For potential transit alternatives, or alternatives with a transit component, the BPM-Goethals will include coding of transit modes (e.g., commuter rail, light-rail transit (LRT), bus, subway, PATH, etc.) and will be used to forecast future transit ridership and multi-modal travel demand. The coding of transit modes will include transit routes, service plan, headways, travel time, transit fares, access and egress links, transfer links, and route passenger capacity. Based on the BPM-Goethals' multi-modal transportation networks, the model will be used to forecast future multi-modal travel demand and will permit comprehensive assessment of the effects of alternatives on person-trip generation, trip destination choice, travel-mode choice, and travelers' route choice (through highway and transit trip assignments). The modeling of a potential transit alternative will forecast potential ridership with the alternative and

resultant change (e.g., reduction) in vehicle trips due to shifts in travelers' mode choices (e.g., travelers who shift from auto to transit for commutation).

For the base conditions and for each of the alternatives, a traffic simulation model will be developed that will evaluate traffic operations in the corridor between NJ Routes 1/9 and the Route 440 interchange on Staten Island for the future years. The model will be a VISSIM simulation that will use existing conditions to calibrate the model operational analysis. This will be used to compare the results of future traffic conditions.

## 5.2 Air Quality

Analyses will be conducted to estimate the following:

- Pollutant levels near heavily traveled roadways and congested intersections that may be affected by the proposed alternatives under existing and future No Action conditions;
- Pollutant levels near heavily traveled roadways and congested intersections that may be affected by the proposed alternatives under future conditions with the proposed project alternatives, and the potential localized impacts associated with project-generated changes in traffic volumes or traffic patterns;
- Changes in the amounts of vehicular emissions generated in the NY and NJ portions of the study area under each of the proposed alternatives, with respect to the requirements of each State Implementation Plan (SIP); and
- Potential impacts associated with the construction phase of the proposed alternatives.

The pollutants to be considered in this analysis include:

- Carbon monoxide (CO), particulate matter less than 10 microns (PM10) and less than 2.5 microns (PM2.5) for the localized (microscale) mobile source analyses; and
- CO, PM10 and ozone precursors [i.e., nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) and hydrocarbons (HCs)] for the regional (mesoscale) analysis.

Existing and future CO and PM10 pollutant levels will be compared with established National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) and, where applicable, the NYCDEP's "de minimis" criteria for CO and Significant Threshold Values (STV) for PM2.5, and with one another to determine impacts of the Project Alternatives.

Analysis sites will include critical heavily congested roadways, interchanges, and intersections that may be affected by the proposed project alternatives. Sites will be selected for analysis as follows:

- Traffic data (volumes, levels of service, etc.) at the major intersections affected by the proposed project will be reviewed and those that will be subject to a screening level analysis will be selected. The selection of these screening level sites will be based on criteria outlined in EPA's Guideline for Modeling CO from Roadway Intersections (EPA-454/R-92-005) and the New York State Department of Transportation's Environmental Procedures Manual (NYSDOT's EPM). Intersections that have level of service (LOS) designations of D, E or F, or will change to D, E or F as a result of the proposed project, will be considered for detailed modeling.
- Each of the screened sites will be ranked by LOS, volumes, and distances to sensitive land uses to determine those locations most likely to have elevated pollutant levels. This will provide an estimate of the potential of project alternatives to significantly impact air quality levels near these sites, based on projected Build and No-Build levels of service. Intersection locations will be ranked by LOS and overall approach volume and air quality sites will be selected for detailed CO analysis; and
- The CO analysis sites will be further screened to select sites that have a high percentage of truck traffic for detailed PM10 and PM2.5 analysis.

Emission factors for CO, volatile organic compounds (VOC) and NO<sub>x</sub> will be estimated using the EPA MOBILE 6 mobile emission factor algorithm model, which was released by the EPA on January 29, 2002. Mobile 6.2 (the currently most updated version), which includes emission factors for particulate matter, was released November 12, 2002.

For the analysis sites located in the New York portion of the study area, the following inputs will be applied:

- NYSDEC input files with default engine operating parameters;
- SUVs will be assumed to be light-duty gasoline trucks (LDGTs) that have the same engine operating parameters as automobiles;
- Emission factors for LDGTs will be based on data supplied by the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC), which will be converted to MOBILE 6.2 formats.
- An average winter temperature of 52.5° F will be used, as calculated using the methodology approved by NYCDEP and NYSDEC.

For analysis sites located in the New Jersey portion of the study area, the most current NJDEP inputs, including vehicular age-distribution rates, inspection/maintenance (I/M) and anti-tampering program (ATP) credits, and low emission vehicle (LEV) program will be used.

PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> emission factors will also be estimated using EPA's MOBILE 6.2 emission model. Exhaust, brake, and tire wear emissions from moving vehicles will be estimated for all vehicle types; idle emissions, however, will be estimated only for heavy-duty diesel trucks and buses, because this information is estimated only for these vehicles (PM idle emissions from other vehicle types are considered trivial).

Emissions of fugitive dust will be estimated using the latest AP-42 equation (dated December 2003) for paved roads. The following silt loading factors will be used:

- 0.16 for collector roadways with more than 5,000 vehicles per day (vpd);
- 0.10 for principal and minor arterials with more than 5,000 vpd;
- 0.4 for roadways with fewer than 5,000 vpd; and
- 0.015 for expressways.

An average vehicle fleet weight of 6,000 pounds will be used for most of the mobile source analyses; this weight may be changed at locations with very high or low truck percentages.

Vehicle classification data required to determine composite emission factors will be based on traffic survey data for the following categories: light duty gasoline vehicles (LDGVs), sport utility vehicles (SUVs), light-duty trucks, heavy-duty trucks, and buses. Light duty gasoline trucks will be divided into four groups (LDGT1 through LDGT4) based on local registration data.

Vehicle classification data required to determine composite emission factors will be based on traffic survey data and include percentages of LDGVs, SUVs, light-duty trucks, heavy-duty trucks, and buses. SUVs will be classified as light-duty gasoline trucks and 75 percent of SUV emissions will be considered as LDGT1&2, while the remaining 25 percent will be LDGT3&4. Light duty gasoline trucks will be divided into four groups (LDGT1 thru LDGT4) based on local registration data. The registered split between LDGT1&2 and LDGT3&4 is 73 percent to 27 percent, respectively.

For analysis sites located in New York, the split between heavy-duty gasoline vehicles (HDGVs) and heavy-duty diesel vehicles (HDDVs) will be based on NYSDEC's registration for MOBILE 6 for each appropriate analysis year. For analysis sites located in New Jersey, the split between heavy-duty gasoline vehicles (HDGVs) and heavy-duty diesel vehicles (HDDVs) will be developed using MOBILE 6 and

NJDEP's forecast for vehicle classification and registration data. All buses will analyzed as heavy-duty diesel vehicles (HDDVs).

For sites located in New Jersey, CO emission factors will be estimated using MOBILE 6 model national default values (20.6% of all vehicles will be in the cold-start engine operating mode and 27.5% of vehicles in the hot-start mode). For sites located in New York, CO emission factors will be estimated using NYSDEC input files with default engine operating parameters.

SUVs will be assumed to be light-duty gasoline trucks (LDGTs) that have the same engine operating parameters as automobiles. Emission factors for LDGTs in New York will be based on data supplied by the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC), which will be converted to MOBILE 6.2 formats.

Pollutant estimates will be made for existing conditions (2004), the project's first year of operation, and its design year. Future year analyses will be conducted with and without the proposed roadway alternatives. Weekday AM and PM peak time periods will be evaluated for each of these analysis years.

Mobile source dispersion modeling will be conducted using:

- EPA's CAL3QHC, with worst-case meteorological data and the use of persistence factors, to estimate one-hour and eight-hour CO concentrations; and
- EPA's CAL3QHCR, with five years of actual meteorological data from Newark Airport, to estimate peak 24-hour and annual average PM10 concentrations, and peak project-generated 24-hour and annual average PM2.5 impacts.

The analyses will follow EPA's Intersection Modeling Guidelines for modeling methodology. All major roadway segments (links) within approximately 1,000 feet from each analysis site (i.e., congested intersection) will be considered. So as not to double count queued vehicles at intersections downstream of an analysis site, CAL3QHC-estimated queues will be truncated at the end of each roadway link.

For the CAL3QHC CO microscale analyses the following set of reasonable worst case meteorological conditions will be utilized to estimate peak one hour concentrations:

- Wind Speed: 1 m/s
- Stability Class: D
- Mixing Height: 1000 Meters
- Wind Angles: 5 degree increments from 0 to 360
- Surface Roughness Factor: 108 cm

For the CAL3QHCR PM10 and PM2.5 microscale analyses, a set of five consecutive years of recent meteorological data from Newark Airport will be used.

Eight-hour CO concentrations will be obtained by multiplying the highest peak-hour CO concentration by the EPA-recommended default persistence factor for urban area of 0.7. This factor accounts for the fact that over eight hours (as distinct from a single hour) vehicle volumes will fluctuate downwards from the peak, vehicle speeds may vary, and meteorological conditions including wind speed and wind direction will vary as compared to the very conservative assumptions used for the single hour.

Twenty-four hour and annual PM10 and PM2.5 concentrations will be estimated directly using five years of meteorological data.

Applicable background CO and PM10 concentrations will be added to the modeling results to obtain total pollutant concentrations at each receptor site for each analysis year. These background values used in the analysis will be determined in consultation with NYCDEP and NJDEP.

The 8-hour CO level, and 24-hour, and annual PM10 levels estimated using the methodologies described above will be added to appropriate background levels, and the resulting total pollutant concentrations will be compared with NAAQS standards to determine whether any of the proposed alternatives have the potential to cause or exacerbate an exceedance of an air quality standard. Project-generated changes in PM2.5 levels will be compared with Significant Threshold Values (STV).

A regional (mesoscale) emissions analysis will compare transportation-related emissions (CO, NOx, VOCs, and PM10) generated in both the New York and New Jersey portions of study area under each alternative under the future analysis years. The analysis will be for the same study area boundaries utilized in the transportation analysis.

A qualitative impact assessment of the potential construction-phase impacts will be conducted and appropriate mitigation measures will be considered.

### **5.3 Noise and Vibration**

Coast Guard directions require that all authorized bridge construction work must comply with the provisions of the Noise Control Act of 1972 (42 USC 4331), as amended.

Noise impact data requirements are directly related to two key elements: sensitive receptors and traffic noise generation. Sensitive receptors must be cataloged and identified as part of the land use data collection effort. Noise generation from traffic sources is directly obtained from the traffic data and is correlated to vehicle classification mix, speeds, time of day, and distance from sensitive receptors. A noise study will be conducted and the findings documented, as specified below and in accordance with the FHWA, NYSDOT, NJDOT, NYS SEQRA and NYC CEQR, as well as with the methodology refined through collective scoping with the pertinent agencies. If a major transit infrastructure alternative is included among the three build alternatives, FTA's *Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment* (1995) methodology will also be applied.

Existing land use maps will be reviewed and field surveys will be conducted in order to identify existing activities, developed lands, and undeveloped lands for which development is planned, designed, and programmed. Existing land use along both sides of all roads within the project limits will be determined and a land use area (rather than each site or set of points) will be assigned to a corresponding Activity Category as defined by the guidance mentioned above.

Sensitive individual noise receptors, such as schools, churches, residences, libraries, auditoriums, parks, recreational/preserved natural areas, hospitals, senior citizen homes, rehabilitation centers, etc., located within the study area will be identified. A distance of 500 feet from the right-of-way will be used to define each impact zone for the purpose of identifying these uses.

Existing noise levels throughout the project study area will be determined by field-measuring noise levels using the procedures specified in the NYSDOT manual *Field Measurement of Existing Noise Levels*, and FHWA and FTA guidelines. The measurement results and existing noise levels will be provided in a format acceptable to applicable agencies. A total of 12 locations in the study area within Staten Island and the cities of Elizabeth and Linden are initially assumed for this noise-monitoring effort. The selection of the locations will be based on the preliminary traffic study findings, land use and activity categories, as well as the noise-sensitivity of the specific locations.

The noise monitoring effort will include site locations receiving 24 hour measurements (assume 4 locations) and/or short-term measurements (assume 8 locations at 20 minutes during noise-critical hours) during weekday periods.

Future traffic noise levels will be calculated within the project study area for each alternative (including any transit component) and the No-Action alternative. The site locations will each be representative of a community or neighborhood. These predictions will be consistent with the FHWA Highway Traffic Noise Prediction Model (Report No. FHWA-RD-77-108) and will use the FHWA Traffic Noise Model Version 1.1. In predicting noise levels and assessing noise impacts, traffic characteristics that will yield the worst-case hourly traffic noise impact on a regular basis for the design year will be used. In the case of transit components, noise levels will be evaluated based on FTA guidelines.

The potential noise impacts for each design alternative and the No-Action alternative will be determined. The determination of impact will include both the type (e.g., residential, nonresidential, and others) and number or extent of receptors impacted by each design alternative and the No-Action alternative.

For the impacted areas, alternative noise abatement measures will be evaluated to reduce or eliminate the noise impact. In accordance with the FHWA Noise Regulation 23 CFR 772, NYSDOT, and NJDOT, the acoustical and cost effectiveness of the various abatement measures will be analyzed and measures which are feasible and reasonable will be determined. In addition, for those noise impacts for which no apparent solution is available, discussion will be provided as to why abatement will not be recommended.

Toll plaza noise levels will be estimated at nearby sensitive receptors. If noise impacts are identified, suitable mitigation measures will be recommended, as applicable.

Construction noise caused by the project will be analyzed and specific appropriate construction noise abatement measures for the plans and specifications will be recommended, as applicable.

## **5.4 Waterway Navigation**

Through the use of navigational charts and other publications such as the United States Coast Pilots, and through interviews with local and regional commercial users and user organizations, the following will be evaluated: existing waterway characteristics, channel conditions, requirements for ship movements, profiles for vessel and barge utilization, special restrictions on marine traffic, existing and proposed navigational aids, natural and man-made obstacles, and hazards to navigation. The long-term navigational uses and requirements on the Arthur Kill will be characterized on the basis of information to be provided by the USCG, the USACE (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers), Sandy Hook Pilots, New York Harbor Ops, and commercial users interviewed.

The possible effects that the various schemes may have on such factors as pilot/vessel response time and control distance, channel visibility, water currents, turning radii of vessels, restrictions on waterborne traffic, such as speed and vessel or flotilla size, and restrictions on or interference with activities of waterfront operators will be assessed. The potential effects are likely to be most important in terms of temporary obstructions or interference with navigation due to construction methods and durations for different structural schemes.

Construction methods and durations will be developed to avoid and minimize potential impacts to waterway traffic in the Arthur Kill. Bridge piers/dolphin locations will be developed to avoid and minimize potential impacts to waterway traffic in the Arthur Kill.

## 5.5 Energy

Direct and indirect energy expenditures associated with construction and operation of project alternatives will be estimated. Direct energy expenditures involve fuel consumption by vehicles operating on roadways and, if project alternatives include transit element(s), fuel consumption by transit vehicles in transit rights-of-way. Indirect expenditures represent the one-time, non-recoverable energy costs associated with constructing new roadway or fixed-guideway transit infrastructure.

Energy consumed by vehicles operating on the affected roadway network will be estimated using data from the project traffic analysis on vehicle miles of travel (VMT) in the study area and average travel speeds. Direct energy consumption figures will be calculated using speed-sensitive formulae presented in the FHWA report entitled, *A Method for Estimating Fuel Consumption and Vehicle Emissions on Urban Arterials and Networks* (FHWA-TS-81-210). These formulae are available for different vehicle types; separate calculations will be made for automobiles and gasoline- and diesel-powered trucks. Vehicle classifications will be obtained from the traffic analyses, as a percentage breakdown of vehicles by type, e.g., automobiles, light trucks, and heavy trucks. The analysis will make an allowance for anticipated improvements in vehicle fuel efficiency, based on information from FHWA best-practice consumption guidance. Fuel consumption with each of the project alternatives will be measured in gallons consumed, and will be compared with anticipated consumption levels with the future No-Action and future No-Action with Congestion Pricing alternatives.

Propulsion requirements for transit alternatives will be estimated for rail transit vehicles using per-car-miles, based on industry standards and readily available data from transit system operators (e.g., New Jersey Transit, Metropolitan Transportation Authority). The estimates will include provision for the operation of signals, communications, and stations, as appropriate. Annual direct energy consumption for operation and maintenance of rail alternatives will be estimated based on conceptual operating plans developed for a given alternative.

Indirect construction energy requirements for project alternatives will be estimated, by dividing the total number of lane or track miles to be constructed at grade, on retained fill, as an elevated structure, or in a tunnel for a given alternative by the length of all new roadways or rail lines to be built with that alternative. These figures will then be multiplied by Joule factors approximating the amount of energy necessary to construct one lane-mile of the various types of construction. These factors will be derived from the Congressional Budget Office's December 1977 report *Urban Transportation and Energy: The Potential Savings of Different Modes*, which is the most current source for roadway energy construction factors. This analysis provides an estimate of the one-time, nonrecoverable construction energy expenditure for each alternative. A pay-back period for construction energy will also be derived by dividing the total construction energy by anticipated annual savings in fuel consumption by vehicles operating in the project area.

## 5.6 Topography, Geology, and Soils

The topography, geology, and soils within the study area will be described from existing data. The sediment quality of the Arthur Kill will be characterized from existing data, including those developed by applicants for dredge permits. Information in the Goethals Bridge area will be supplemented with the results of any environmental borings conducted by the Port Authority, as available.

The potential for increased sedimentation around bridge abutments will be evaluated using bathymetric data from the environmental borings and the bathymetric survey conducted by the Port Authority and available tidal current velocity data.

Impacts associated with disposal of dredged materials will be discussed. Construction impacts resulting from resuspension of sediments will also be discussed. The use of containment devices such as silt curtains and sheet piles will be discussed in conjunction with the discussion of potential water quality impacts.

Potential construction mitigation methods will be evaluated. Disposal alternatives for dredged material will also be addressed.

## **5.7 Flooding, Floodplains, and Hydrology**

Appropriate Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate maps and state/local flood surveys will be reviewed to determine the presence and location of floodplains in areas surrounding the proposed build alternatives.

Potential impacts on floodplains and flood storage capacity resulting from the build alternatives will be assessed and documented. Potential impacts include project fills that reduce flood-detaining capabilities, as well as changes in infiltration/runoff resulting from changes in area and location of pervious/impervious surfaces, and any alternatives placed within flood-prone areas.

Appropriate mitigation measures to increase infiltration capability and capacity or to create water retention to counterbalance loss in floodplain capacity will be identified. This effort will be coordinated with the wetland mitigation program to incorporate flood storage capacity as part of the creation/enhancement design.

## **5.8 Water Resources**

### **5.8.1 Surface Water**

Existing conditions in the Arthur Kill and Old Place Creek will be reviewed, including existing water and sediment quality data. Information from prior mathematical modeling and field studies performed in the waterways and information from previous reports will be used to document existing conditions. Sources of data available include:

- Tide gauge, current velocity and wind measured in Arthur Kill during December 2000, and March 2001
- 3-D hydrodynamic and water quality model (MIKE3) simulations
- NYCDEP Harbor Survey water quality data

Water Quality Standards and criteria applicable to the area will be identified, including New York and New Jersey Phase II Stormwater Regulations, which went into effect January 2003 and February 2004, respectively.

Available bathymetric survey data stored by the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the U.S Army Corps of Engineers will be obtained to show existing conditions in the Arthur Kill and Old Place Creek.

Construction impacts will be analyzed including those resulting from resuspension of sediments. The impacts of temporary and localized increases in turbidity and suspended sediment concentrations caused by in-water construction activities (e.g., pile driving, dredging), as well as land-based construction site and staging area disturbance will be addressed. This will include application of the criteria set forth in the Standards and Specifications for Erosion and Sediment Control Plans (NYSDEC February 2004 draft document) and Technical Manual for Stormwater Permitting (NJDEP 1999), Section 404(b) (1) of the

Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 USC 1251 I), water quality standards, and stormwater discharge permits.

Potential impacts during construction on water quality will be analyzed using methods of analysis such as the Revised Universal Soils Loss Equation (RUSLE), Soil Conservation District permit requirements and the time-variable water quality model (MIKE3).

Post-construction impacts of stormwater runoff on water quality will be analyzed under existing and future conditions for road surface areas using number of vehicles, data on the water quality (total suspended solids, nutrients, oil & grease, metals, total organic carbon (TOC), and polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) and the time-variable water quality model (MIKE3).

Construction impacts will be mitigated in accordance with a stormwater management plan, which includes an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan, developed in compliance with stormwater discharge permit requirements. The major components of this plan will be summarized in the DEIS. Use of full-depth and partial-depth silt curtains will be evaluated to control turbidity and suspended sediments during in-water construction activities such as pile driving and dredging operations, along with other alternatives such as sheet piles. Methods to stabilize slopes with mulch, vegetation, and/or riprap where appropriate will be evaluated.

The potential for the alternatives to alter the hydraulics in the Arthur Kill will be assessed by comparing the size of the within-water structure of the existing bridge to the alternative designs; key size features are the cross-sectional area and the bottom surface area. The long-term future condition, when the existing bridge is removed and the new bridge is in place, will be assessed for each alternative. The potential for the alternatives to alter sediment scour and deposition in the Arthur Kill will be assessed by evaluating the alteration in hydraulics and the changes in solids loading due to construction activities and post-construction conditions.

Mitigation effects on the water quality impacts of highway runoff will be estimated. If mitigation is required, the type(s) of systems will be recommended for the collection of stormwater and means of removing suspended sediment and oil and grease prior to discharge. Mitigation defined in the surface water and ground water sections will also be considered for hydraulics and bathymetry.

## **5.8.2 Ground Water**

In order to clearly define groundwater resources, existing data will be collected and reviewed. The relationship between wetlands, streams, and superficial aquifers will be inferred from maps of soil types, elevations, and hydrogeological studies of the area. The basic data will be used to assist in the selection and design of wetland mitigation alternatives, if such mitigation is necessary. The data will also be used to identify areas that should not be used for vehicle and material storage or temporary roadways during construction periods (to protect against contamination by oil, grease, and other substances).

Groundwater recharge criteria that are applicable to the project, such as the stormwater infiltration criteria in New Jersey's recently updated Stormwater Management Rules (N.J.A.C. 7:8), will be identified.

The potential for the alternatives to alter the quantity of water available to recharge existing groundwater will be assessed, such as alterations due to any increase in impervious surface area. Changes to the quality of recharge water, if any, will be described.

The potential use of porous pavement to maintain groundwater recharge will be evaluated, if necessary. Detention basins and other storm water management systems will be discussed, as appropriate.

## 5.9 Biological Resources

### 5.9.1 Vegetative Communities

Available information and data will be researched and reviewed concerning the potentially affected vegetative communities in both New York and New Jersey in the vicinity of the project site. Past project-specific studies concerning vegetative communities will be reviewed along with site-specific topographic survey maps, and aerial photographs.

A field investigation survey will be conducted to confirm existing conditions, previous studies, and historical information on vegetative communities. The assessment of the vegetation will be conducted in concert with the tidal and freshwater wetlands field survey and the wildlife habitat field reconnaissance survey. Based on the field surveys and available data, a vegetative cover map will be prepared showing the major vegetative communities within both New York and New Jersey in the vicinity of the project site.

Following review of construction plans, vegetative communities will be identified that will be lost or modified resulting from the project. Impacts will be described in terms of acres directly affected by vegetative community type as well as indirect affects from potential project impacts including runoff, shading and temporary construction impacts.

In order of priority, mitigation measures will include the following: 1) avoidance through changes in project design; and 2) minimization of impacts. Design changes may potentially be made to avoid certain impacts. Having exhausted avoidance possibilities, concentration will be placed on minimizing impacts through shifting of alignments or reducing cross-sectional width of access roads. If, after avoidance and minimization options have been exhausted, there are still certain unavoidable impacts, then the acreage and value of those impacted vegetative communities will be identified. This will serve as the basis for developing a generic mitigation plan.

To compensate for unavoidable impacts, mitigation options will be assessed for the project including creation, enhancement, and restoration opportunities, as well as regional mitigation banks with service areas covering the project site.

### 5.9.2 Tidal and Freshwater Wetlands

Available data will be researched and reviewed concerning the potentially affected wetlands in both New York and New Jersey in the vicinity of the project site. Past project-specific studies concerning the wetlands will be reviewed along with National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) maps, NYSDEC and NJDEP wetland maps, site-specific topographic survey maps, and aerial photographs.

Wetland boundaries will be delineated within the study area. The limits of wetland boundaries will be marked in the field with sequentially numbered flags or stakes in accordance with the 1987 Federal Manual for Delineating Wetlands, as required by the Corps; the 1989 Federal Wetland Manual procedures as required by the NJDEP; and NYSDEC procedures and mapping for delineating the extent of tidal wetlands and adjacent areas. The location of wetland markers will be surveyed using Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and plotted on a topographic map.

The direct and indirect impacts of the proposed project will be determined as defined by the type, area, and functions performed by the area wetlands. All observations of degraded/damaged wetlands will be entered on the site(s) maps. Also, the invasion of wetlands by common reed grass (*Phragmites australis*) is quite common in the New York-New Jersey area. Reed grass tends to form dense monocultures that

alter the wildlife value, marine food production, and recreational capabilities of the wetland. All wetland areas consisting of common reed grass monocultures will be noted on the site(s) maps.

In order of priority, mitigation measures will include the following:

- Avoidance through changes in project design;
- Minimization of impacts; and
- Mitigation of unavoidable impacts through restoration, enhancement, creation, preservation or banking.

For this project, design changes may potentially be made to avoid certain impacts. Having exhausted avoidance possibilities, concentration will be placed on minimizing impacts through shifting of alignments or reducing cross-sectional width of access roads. If, after avoidance and minimization options have been exhausted, there are still certain unavoidable impacts, then the acreage and value of those impacted wetlands will be identified. This will serve as the basis for devising a mitigation plan.

An Interagency Mitigation Group (IMG) will be formed. The IMG was formed in the course of the previous Staten Island Bridges Program specifically for wetland mitigation, which proved highly successful in the development of a consensus among the various regulatory agencies on the level and type(s) of mitigation during the permitting process.

Mitigation options available for the project will be assessed including creation, enhancement, preservation, and restoration opportunities, as well as regional mitigation banks with service areas covering the project site. Potential mitigation sites will be evaluated for environmental and political suitability for conversion to or enhancement of wetland systems, either equivalent to or of greater value than those lost due to the project. Field inspections of the potential mitigation sites will include an assessment of existing vegetation, soils, hydrology and current land use.

If necessary, a wetland mitigation/enhancement plan will be prepared to compensate for unavoidable loss of wetlands resulting from the project. This wetland mitigation/enhancement plan will be prepared in coordination with the resource agencies.

### **5.9.3 Wildlife**

Previous wildlife and waterfowl studies will be compiled and information on wildlife resources in the project area will be updated. Existing data will be reviewed to identify wildlife species that are known to use the project site and surrounding area. This information will provide a historical reference, assist in establishing baseline conditions and serve as a guide for field reconnaissance activities.

A field reconnaissance survey will be conducted to confirm existing conditions, previous studies and historical information on wildlife habitat, and the likelihood of species occurrence and use of the study area. The ecological community and habitat occurring in the project and surrounding area will be described, including the seasonality and utilization (nesting, breeding, feeding, migration) of selected species and groups of species occurring or likely to occur in the study area.

Following review of project alternatives and construction plans, wildlife will be identified, based on their occurrence and habitat requirements, which may be temporarily or permanently displaced from the area(s) as a result of the project. The presence of similar suitable habitat adjacent to or near the project area will be considered when determining relative magnitude of the impact. The seasonality of the proposed disturbances (land clearing, grading, and construction) will be evaluated in terms of their impact on wildlife using the study area and surrounding areas.

Potential project impacts to regional wildlife movements, as well as potential habitat fragmentation effects, will be assessed. Of particular concern will be waterfowl in the region, including harbor heron populations.

Potential impacts of bird strikes will be addressed and will focus on the effects of bridge design components, including cables and lighting.

Mitigation measures will be evaluated to avoid, eliminate, or reduce project related impacts (construction and operational) to wildlife, including seasonal restrictions on certain activities, control of construction materials and runoff, reduced work area, off-site staging areas, use of visual and noise barriers, and others to be identified and considered.

Where applicable, areas will be identified and considered for habitat creation, restoration, or enhancement to increase the value of undisturbed upland areas and disturbed and undisturbed lowland and wetland areas for wildlife. Habitat improvements should consider: permanent and temporary pools (freshwater and brackish) for potential amphibian breeding and as foraging areas for shore birds and wading birds, sand and gravel areas for potential mud turtle and northern diamondback terrapin nesting sites, wildlife food and cover plantings, marsh enhancement to increase abundance of forage species including meadow voles and forage fish, and others.

#### **5.9.4 Aquatic Biota and Essential Fish Habitat**

Existing literature on the aquatic resources in the Arthur Kill and Old Place Creek will be reviewed, including existing fish and invertebrate data. Information from prior field studies performed in the Arthur Kill and adjacent waters and the 1995 DEIS and 1997 FEIS will be used to document existing conditions.

Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) will be identified for those species actively managed under Federal fishery management plans (FMPs) as defined under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA) (PL 94-265), as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act (SFA) of 1996 (PL 104-267).

Based on existing data, the aquatic community and habitat occurring in the project and surrounding area will be determined and described, including the seasonality and utilization (e.g., spawning, feeding, and migration) of selected species and groups of species occurring or likely to occur in the study area.

Species occurrence and life history information will be used to predict the habitat use before and after construction by temporary and permanent resident species and those that use the area as a migratory corridor. This will be supplemented with historical data on specific species. For example, habitat preference data for striped bass will be used to assess the value of habitat for striped bass under different conditions of water depth, current velocity, water quality, and other habitat features.

An analytical model will be used to predict impacts associated with shading, including evaluation of incident light, light attenuation in the water column, transit time for planktonic organisms, and mitigating factors. This analysis can be used to evaluate both the potential for loss of organisms and the loss of primary productivity in the region.

Existing bathymetric data will be used to estimate the areas (square footages) of new hard surface habitat created by bridge piers and fenders. Existing and future habitat value for fish species (based on depth preference criteria) and effects of shadowing on light penetrating to bottom and new structures will be evaluated.

An EFH assessment will be prepared as per the NMFS guidelines for all designated species located in the project area. The assessment will begin with a summary of the life history information for each EFH-designated species. This information will be used to identify impacts specific to the habitat used by EFH species and forage species critical to EFH species that may result from the project. Anticipated sources of impacts include the loss of benthic and vertical habitat resulting from bridge abutments, loss of wetland and marsh habitat, a temporary increase in local turbidity resulting from dredging operations and/or the temporary loss of habitat from equipment and cofferdams. These impacts include:

- Direct impacts: those that would directly affect the habitat of the EFH species, or cause direct mortality. These impacts include physical alterations to the useable habitat for each species.
- Indirect impacts: potential direct impacts to the forage species of the EFH designated species in the form of displacement, temporary loss of forage species habitat and/or temporary loss of forage species individuals.
- Cumulative impacts: those impacts on the habitat of the EFH species resulting from the project and other simultaneous projects in the area. These impacts would be a combination of the direct and indirect impacts to habitat associated with each project.

Strategies to mitigate for construction impacts to aquatic resources will be developed through consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Mitigation measures may include the use of potential work windows to minimize impact during critical periods (e.g. spawning) for fish species.

### 5.9.5 Endangered and Threatened Species

Previous studies will be compiled and information will be updated on endangered and threatened species likely to occur in the project area. Sources of information will include:

- Data collected from literature and field surveys for the 1995 DEIS and 1997 FEIS
- New York State Natural Heritage Program
- New Jersey Endangered and Nongame Species Program
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- NOAA Fisheries National Marine Fisheries Service

Existing data will be reviewed to identify endangered or threatened species that are known or likely to use the project site and surrounding area. This information will provide a historical reference, assist in establishing baseline conditions and serve as a guide for field reconnaissance activities.

A field reconnaissance survey will be conducted to confirm existing conditions, previous studies and historical information on endangered or threatened species occurrence and likelihood of using the study area. The field reconnaissance survey would be conducted once over a 2-3 day period.

The habitat occurring in the project and surrounding area will be described, and the potential for endangered or threatened species to occur in the study and surrounding area will be identified. If species are known to occur or are likely to occur, the seasonality and habitat utilization (nesting, breeding, feeding, migration) of these species in the study area will be determined and evaluated. Endangered or threatened species likely to occur in the study area include: peregrine falcon, northern harrier, short-eared owl, pied-billed grebe, and eastern mud turtle. Special concern and rare species will also be considered, including: northern diamondback terrapins (nesting and foraging sites), eastern spadefoot toads (potential presence), southern leopard frog, and others.

Following review of project alternatives and construction plans, endangered or threatened species will be identified, based on their occurrence and habitat requirements, that may be temporarily or permanently displaced from the area(s) as a result of the project. The presence of similar suitable habitat adjacent to or near the project area will be considered when determining relative magnitude of the impact.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NMFS will be contacted for Section 7 Consultations on federally listed species present in the project area.

Mitigation measures will be evaluated to avoid, eliminate, or minimize project-related impacts (construction and operational) to wildlife. Mitigation actions could include seasonal restrictions on certain activities, control of construction materials and runoff, reduced work area, off-site staging areas, use of visual and noise barriers, and others to be identified and considered.

Where applicable, areas will be identified to be considered as habitat creation, restoration, preservation, or enhancement sites to increase the value of undisturbed upland areas and disturbed and undisturbed lowland and wetland areas for endangered or threatened species and special concern species.

If project-related impacts can not be mitigated, species, habitat requirements, and areas outside the project area suitable for potential relocation of endangered or threatened species and special concern species of limited mobility from the area of direct impact will be identified.

### **5.9.6 Shading Created by Structure**

Shadows will be modeled from the existing bridge and other nearby structures on the surrounding area, for four days of the year (March 21, June 21, September 21, and December 21) and at three times per day (9AM, 12 Noon, and 3PM).

Shadows from the proposed alternatives will be modeled and will include the existing structures nearby for the same days and periods listed above. The shadow diagrams will show the extent of shadows cast by each of the alternatives. The discussion of impacts will focus on any effects on parks and other areas regularly used by the public in the vicinity. Any effect related to natural resources, particularly aquatic biota within the Arthur Kill, will be evaluated in the assessment of aquatic biota.

Design options will be evaluated to minimize shadow impacts on natural resources.

## **5.10 Land Use, Zoning and Recommended Development Initiatives**

The study area is defined as the area within ½ mile of affected bridge approaches or transportation nodal points of selected alternatives. The general land use patterns in the Borough of Richmond, and the cities of Linden and Elizabeth, as well as a more specific description of existing land use patterns and zoning regulations within the study area will be provided.

The inventory of current land uses and zoning regulations for the potentially affected communities will be conducted not only via a review of available documents/databases/maps/studies/plans, but also via field reconnaissance surveys and interviews with local planning officials and affected parties in order to reflect current conditions and trends, as well as any changes that have occurred since the publication of the 1997 SIBP FEIS.

A brief development history and trends analysis of the study areas, including a description of recent development trends and proposed development initiatives will be prepared. The 1997 SIBP FEIS will be consulted for determining trends. Land use constraints and opportunities along the affected traffic corridor of the study area will be identified in order to provide input to the screening of the preliminary alternatives. Any New Jersey planning efforts and initiatives within the study area under the Smart Growth Plan as well as the NJ State Development and Redevelopment Plan, both implemented by the NJ

Department of Community Affairs (NJDCOA) will be identified. Additionally, the Staten Island Growth Management Task Force Final Report (December 2002) will be reviewed.

Changes that may occur with the No Action alternative will be described. These changes may result from expected growth in population due to planned residential developments or increases (or decreases) in local manufacturing or commercial activity. Pending zoning actions will be identified, as well as land use plans and other public policy actions that could affect land use in the study area. Smart growth and development initiatives and planned developments in the area will be identified, such as transportation projects, highway projects, and housing projects.

The changes that may occur in land use patterns and zoning regulations in the study area as a result of the build alternatives will be identified and analyzed. Issues will include compatibility of each alternative with the surrounding land uses; potential for induced residential, commercial, and industrial development; consistency with zoning and other public policy; and their effect on development trends in the area.

An assessment will also be conducted to determine the proposed project's consistency with public policy in Elizabeth, Linden and Staten Island. This will entail inventorying applicable policies and approved plans, and documentation of any potential inconsistencies through consultation with local planning officials.

The land use impacts of the ramp alignment alternatives with the market value of the respective surrounding land and the potential land use changes induced by the proposed action and other alternatives under consideration will be investigated.

All reasonable and practicable mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate significant project-induced impacts related to land use; zoning; and development initiatives will be identified and discussed. While evaluating the alternatives for their consistency with community plans and policies, consideration will be given to measures to reduce or mitigate the severity of these impacts, if any.

## **5.11 Residential or Business Displacement**

Property acquisition needs will be quantified and evaluated, including:

- Full property takings – an acquisition that involves the taking of the original parcel in its entirety.
- Partial property takings – an acquisition in which the original property is severed to form two parcels, leaving a remainder.
- Construction and or utility easements – an interest in land of another entitling the owner of that interest to a limited use of the land in which it exists, or a right to preclude specified uses in the easement area by others.

Utilizing preliminary design drawings developed during the EIS phase of the proposed project (which would depict existing property lines and existing buildings, as well as proposed right-of-way lines and proposed toe-of-slope lines), all potentially affected properties will be visually identified. Once identified and compiled, each parcel will be digitized to obtain its total land area. For each identified parcel, its assessed value and tax liability will be obtained from the appropriate tax assessor's office in either Elizabeth or Richmond County.

The existing uses of properties to be potentially acquired will be field-verified. The field visits will confirm the use and occupancy of residential properties, and the nature of affected businesses, details of tenants, and whether the site is active or derelict. This information will be presented in table form in the DEIS.

The proposed right-of-way line and proposed toe-of-slope line will be overlain onto the parcels and digitized, with the result being a parcel-specific list of segments to be acquired for right-of-way and for slope easements. Once the area of each segment proposed for acquisition is known, its percentage of each parcel will then be calculated. For properties where no buildings are impacted, the percentage to be acquired will be applied to that property's assessed value (land only) to derive the assessed value of the acquisition. For properties where buildings are impacted, it is assumed that the entire parcel would be acquired; therefore its total assessed value would be utilized. If the extent of acquisition is unclear at the time of the DEIS, in order to assess potential impacts conservatively, a full taking would be assumed.

The areas of proposed easements will be calculated in the same way, although the resulting percentages will not be applied to the property's assessed value because the cost of an easement is entirely variable and not wholly dependent upon assessed value. Consequently, only the area of the easement will be reported in the DEIS.

The sum of the assessed values of all affected segments will then be compared to the total ratable base in both Elizabeth and New York City to derive the percentage of each municipality's ratable base that would be removed from local property tax rolls as a result of the proposed project. The direct fiscal impact of property acquisition for the proposed project will be estimated based upon an analysis of the tax revenue changes from the loss of these tax-paying properties. Total taxes paid for the most recent fiscal year will be summed for all affected properties. This total represents the net loss of fiscal revenue to either Elizabeth or New York City due to property acquisitions.

In order for a direct displacement to create a significant adverse effect on the local community, the displaced residents or businesses must represent a defining element of the character of the area. This evaluation will consider land-use adjacent to acquired properties in order to determine the potential for the residential and commercial property acquisitions to disrupt the character, unity, and cohesiveness of an existing neighborhood.

All reasonable and practicable mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate significant project-induced impacts related to residential or business displacement will be identified and discussed.

## **5.12 Socioeconomics**

### **5.12.1 Demographics**

A profile of the population of the region and the study area will be prepared. Based on 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000 Census data, population trends in the affected counties (e.g., Union and Richmond Counties) and cities (e.g., Elizabeth, Linden, Richmond Borough) will be described. A demographic profile of the study area (i.e., within one half mile of affected bridge approaches or transportation nodal points of the alternatives) will be developed to include population, age, racial and ethnic composition, household characteristics, income and poverty status, employment, and housing characteristics.

The assessment of potential socioeconomics effects will focus principally on the project alternatives' comparative benefits in terms of generated economic activity, tax revenues, and construction and related jobs.

As part of this analysis, those neighborhoods within the project area that are clearly defined by physical/economic/ethnic boundaries, or community facilities, as supported or defined under local master plans or community boards will be identified and described. This discussion will also serve to identify specific cohesive elements that serve to define neighborhood communities that are not clearly defined.

Based on planned or proposed projects identified in the land use/zoning/community facilities data collection effort and on population estimates derived from the traffic modeling forecasts, future conditions with the No Action alternative, including estimates of population will be assessed. Residential properties that would be affected by the build alternatives will be identified and direct impacts, if any, on their respective residents will be described.

The potential of the alternatives, including No Action, to stimulate secondary (or indirect) impacts on existing residents in the area will be analyzed, particularly in terms of displacement of low and moderate income residents who may be vulnerable to displacement pressures.

All reasonable and practicable mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate significant project-induced impacts related to demographics will be identified and discussed.

### **5.12.2 Economics**

In conjunction with the land use task, current economic activity in the study area will be described, including a discussion of key industries and types of employment. Businesses within the study area will be identified, as necessary. Additional effort will be conducted during the public outreach process in order to identify all existing businesses. Economic data from local economic development agencies (e.g., Staten Island Economic Development Corporation, Union County Economic Development Corporation) will also be reviewed.

Based on planned development projects and an assessment of predominant development trends, changes that can reasonably be expected in the economic base of the study area in the future with the No Action alternative will be described.

Short-term impacts resulting from construction of the build alternatives, including direct and generated employment, wages and salaries, and city and state tax revenues (exclusive of real property-related taxes), will be determined using the Regional Input-Output Modeling System II (RIMS) developed by the U.S. Department of Commerce.

The potential loss of existing businesses in the study area resulting from No Action, as well as proximity impacts related to any of the build alternatives will also be determined.

All reasonable and practicable mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate significant project-induced impacts related to economics will be identified and discussed.

### **5.12.3 Community Facilities**

All community facilities and public services within the study area, defined as the area within ½ mile of affected bridge approaches or transportation nodal points of selected alternatives, will be identified, inventoried, and described. Field reconnaissance surveys and interviews will be conducted in order to supplement and/or corroborate the findings of public documents and maps.

Community facilities include facilities such as parks, schools, churches, libraries, institutional residences, hospitals, and health care facilities, as well as public services such as police, ambulance and fire stations. Any future or planned community facilities will also be identified in order to evaluate their potential interactions of the proposed project and its respective design alternatives.

The changes and impacts that may occur on community facilities and public services in the study area as a result of the build alternatives will be identified and analyzed. Issues could include compatibility of each alternative on public services and their effect on community facilities in the area.

All reasonable and practicable mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate significant project-induced impacts related to community facilities and public services will be identified and discussed. Consideration will be given to measures for reducing or mitigating the severity of these impacts, if any.

#### **5.12.4 Neighborhood Character and Cohesion**

Neighborhood character is generally comprised of physical features and social qualities that contribute to the continuity and integrity of a particular geographic area. Factors that influence neighborhood character include land use, demographic and ethnic characteristics, density, scale, architectural style of residential, commercial, industrial buildings, street and sidewalk conditions, traffic, views, noise, employment opportunities, transportation network, and open space, among others.

The inventory of clearly identifiable neighborhoods and existing communities, and the assessment of potential impacts to neighborhood character within the project area will be based and supported by the results of the other impact assessments (e.g., land use, visual quality, traffic, air quality, noise, etc.). Those potential impacts are anticipated to be incremental rather than significant, given the setting of the existing Goethals Bridge. For this evaluation, the neighborhood character analysis encompasses not only the study area, but also a region of greater extent into New Jersey and Staten Island.

All reasonable and practicable mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate significant project-induced impacts related to neighborhood character and cohesion will be identified and discussed.

### **5.13 Parkland and Public Recreation Areas**

The detailed alternatives will be reviewed to determine an appropriate study area for parkland and public recreation analysis. Data from available city and state resources will be collected. Detailed data on open space and parkland uses such as active play areas, passive uses, natural features or visual buffers will be gathered within the study area. Weekday and weekend park utilization will be observed at selected locations. The respective state and local agencies including the New Jersey State Park Service, the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, the Union County Department of Parks and Recreation, the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation and the Elizabeth Department of Parks and Recreation will be consulted.

All pertinent state, county, and local agencies/departments will be contacted to collect information on future plans for parks in the study area. Proposed or planned park improvements will be described, including vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian access, as appropriate; which will provide the basis for a profile of future conditions in the study area with the No Action alternative. How the inventoried parks would be directly or indirectly affected by the selected alternative will be assessed, largely in terms of potential changes to use/access, noise, and aesthetics.

All reasonable and practicable mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate significant impacts to parks and open space will be identified and discussed.

### **5.14 Human Health**

Potential impacts to human health will be assessed, taking into consideration construction as well as operational impacts associated with the selected alternative. Impacts to human health will be assessed in conjunction with potential impact vectors, including effects attributable to changes in quality of soil, air, water and noise resources. All reasonable and practicable mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate significant impacts to parks and open space will be identified and discussed.

## 5.15 Cultural Resources

### 5.15.1 Historic Resources

Any known historic resources within the land use study area(s) will be identified and described. Historic resources will include any New York City Landmarks, pending New York City Landmarks, sites listed on or determined eligible for inclusion on the State (New York and New Jersey) and/or National Registers of Historic Places (NRHP), and National Historic Landmarks.

A map indicating the location of any historic resources within the land use study area(s) will be prepared. A reconnaissance or “windshield” survey will be conducted. The areas proximal to the alternatives’ rights-of-way and abutments (to a maximum of one block or 400 feet from the rights-of-way) will be surveyed for potential historic resources. Available surveys, including any information available from the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC), the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office (NJHPO), and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) will also be used. A report listing potential historic resources and a map identifying their locations will be prepared.

For the SIBP FEIS, the Goethals Bridge was determined by the State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs) to be eligible for listing on the NRHP under Criteria C and A. The documentation which addressed the eligibility and the significance of the bridge for the New York and New Jersey SHPOs will be reviewed and updated, if necessary.

Inventory forms will be prepared for sites along the alignments that were surveyed. Photographs of such sites will also be obtained.

The length of time that has lapsed between the 1997 Staten Island Bridges Program EIS and the present time necessitates a review of documentary resources from all relevant repositories. This includes an examination of all historic resources added to the New York City Landmarks, pending New York City Landmarks, or sites listed on or determined eligible for inclusion in the State (New York and New Jersey) and/or National Registers of Historic Places, and National Historic Landmarks since the initial research was conducted for this project. Additional historic properties/sites may be added to existing inventories included in the 1997 EIS.

Any potential physical, contextual, or visual impacts on any historic resources within the land use study area(s) will be assessed. If impacts are identified and dictate that a case report be prepared for submission to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the case report will consist of four sections excerpted from the EIS: the project description, cultural resources, visual resources, and discussion of the selection and conceptual development of alternatives. It will contain information about the cost and feasibility of alternatives that would mitigate any impacts to historic resources.

Potential mitigation measures will be identified for any potentially adverse impacts to historic resources, and consultation with the SHPOs of New York and New Jersey and the National Historic Preservation Office will occur in accordance with the Section 106 procedures of the National Historic Preservation Act and with state regulations.

### 5.15.2 Archaeological Resources

Known archaeological resources will be identified and the potential for finding archaeological artifacts within the proposed right-of-way will be based on information obtained collected previously for the Staten Island Bridges Program FEIS prepared in 1997. If necessary, the information will be supplemented

by limited documentary and cartographic research and an on-site reconnaissance and walkover of the right-of-way. A contextual assessment of cultural resources will also be derived from earlier reports.

Archaeological reports for the surrounding areas will be reviewed. Research will be conducted at the New York and New Jersey State Historic Preservation Offices (NYSHPO, NJHPO), the New York and New Jersey State Libraries, the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (NYCLPC), the New York City Library, the New York Historical Society Library, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the Elizabeth Library, the Linden Library, and the Staten Island Library.

Cartographic research will be conducted to examine the numerous historical maps and atlases in the one-tenth mile study area(s) of the alternatives corridor. The presence of standing structures and features within the study area and throughout documented history, as well as prehistoric topographic and environmental conditions, will be established. Maps and atlases will be reviewed at 5- to 10-year intervals, since buildings that stood for shorter durations would probably not contribute greatly to the archeological record. In addition, short-term temporary structures standing less than 5 to 10 years usually lack permanent subterranean foundation and, therefore, do not cause substantial disturbance.

The NYCLP will be contacted for information on culturally significant areas previously identified in the study area(s) and within a one-half mile radius of the other alternatives corridor. Site files will be reviewed at the New York State Museum, New Jersey State Museum, the NYSHPO, and the NJHPO.

A Phase IB Archaeological Site Survey, including soil sampling throughout the project area, will be conducted to determine the presence/absence of any intact archaeological deposits and/or features. The NJSHPO and NYSHPO recommend a Phase IB survey if a proposed project could result in significant changes in the character of archaeological properties and such properties may be located in the area of potential effect (APE). Projects that could result in such changes usually involve earthmoving, but also include construction staging areas and areas where fill is to be borrowed.

The length of time that has lapsed between the 1997 Staten Island Bridges Program EIS and the present time necessitates a review of documentary resources from all relevant repositories. This includes an examination of all archaeological resources added to the New York State Museum, New Jersey State Museum, the NYSHPO, and the NJHPO since the initial research was conducted for this project.

All cultural resource reports for projects conducted after the 1997 EIS report will be reviewed to create an updated predictive model for site archaeological sensitivity. Any archaeological sites identified on or near the project area will be added to the existing map of known sites.

Based on the conceptual development of the selected alternatives and the Phase IB inventory of archeologically sensitive locations in the alternatives vicinities, the potential for any disturbance and of the need for further investigation will be assessed. The analysis will be documented in a technical report including a definition of the study area(s), a prehistoric and historic overview, a discussion of the data sources, a consideration of potential impacts in the project area(s) and recommendation for further study, as needed.

## **5.16 Visual Resources/Aesthetics**

The visual environment that exists in the vicinity of the three build alternatives will be described and analyzed in coordination with the land use, cultural resource, and parkland studies, etc. Any sensitive visual resources such as significant views and view corridors, etc. will be identified. A total of four existing views will be produced as a baseline for comparison with the proposed alternatives. These views

would be taken of and from the existing bridge, as well as from points potentially affected by the alternatives and used as the basis for photosimulations.

In coordination with the related studies mentioned above, any changes that are proposed to occur in the study area will be assessed and described for the two No-Action alternatives.

The potential change in the visual environment will be analyzed, projected, and described for each of the build alternatives, including a discussion of proposed bulk, height, design and scale of the new construction. The discussion will be supported with photosimulations of four views for each build alternative. As part of this analysis, motorists' views will be described from the bridge and build alternatives, as well as visual conditions at night, when new structural alternatives would be lit and visible from the surrounding areas.

Potential mitigation scenarios will be assessed such as design options to reduce potential impacts on aesthetic resource(s) within the project's viewshed.

## 5.17 Solid Waste Management

The volume of solid waste generated by the existing bridge operations will be estimated, including sand blast grit, and the current solid waste disposal practices of bridge operation will be quantified from information obtained from the Port Authority.

The volume of construction debris will be estimated for a bridge replacement alternative.. In addition, this volume's effect on the capacity of existing construction debris facilities will be assessed. Transport options (i.e., trucking versus barging) of demolition debris to disposal facilities will be evaluated.

The volume of solid waste generated from construction activities will be estimated and this volume's effect on the capacity of existing construction debris facilities will be assessed.

Future solid waste disposal practices will be documented, including the status of landfilling and resource recovery plants, in New York and New Jersey. The volume of solid waste from new bridge operations will be estimated, including sand blast grit, in order to assess the impact of new solid waste generation on the disposal system. Options to minimize solid waste generation from the preferred alternative will be assessed.

## 5.18 Infrastructure

The existence, availability, capacity and encumbrances of the infrastructure located in the project area will be documented. Infrastructure to be inventoried will include water, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, combined sewers, electricity, natural gas, telecommunications and fiber optic/cable.

Utility data will be compiled based on as-built information and other data collected from available services, including:

- PSE&G Electric
- PSE&G Gas
- NUI Gas
- Elizabethtown Water
- The Joint Meeting of Essex and Union Counties
- Verizon
- ATT
- Con Edison

- NYCDEP
- Transco Pipeline

As the project's engineering progresses, additional information would be incorporated into the infrastructure evaluation. This information would be supplemented by field verification. All inventoried infrastructure will be mapped.

Potential impacts to local infrastructure resulting from construction and operation of the proposed project will be identified and discussed such as service disruption, displacement or relocation. The discussion will also include any planned improvements or expansion of infrastructure services, as well as the adequacy and capacity of the infrastructure to support any secondary and cumulative impacts resulting from the proposed action.

All reasonable and practicable mitigation measures to reduce or eliminate significant project-induced impacts to infrastructure will be identified and discussed.

## 5.19 Contaminated Materials

The area surrounding the bridge will be classified into different categories as described below. Each classification of property will require a different level of effort with regard to the contaminated materials evaluation. The three property classifications are:

- Class 1 – Property located within 500 feet of either side of the bridge site that will not be acquired by the Port Authority or directly impacted by construction;
- Class 2 – Property to be either acquired by the Port Authority or directly impacted by construction.
- Class 3 – Special properties as identified by the USCG and/or the Port Authority.

### Class 1 Properties

For Class 1 properties, a *Screening-Level Analysis* will be conducted that would enable the USCG to assess, at a preliminary level, each property's potential to impact the proposed action. The screening will not include sampling or testing of soil, groundwater, or structures. Specific tasks to be performed include the following:

- *Historical Review* – A review of available historical aerial photography and mapping to identify potential areas of concern (AOCs) (e.g., landfills, areas of illicit dumping, etc.). Aerial photography to be reviewed would include existing data, to be supplemented by commercially available photographs and photography located at NJDEP's Bureau of Tidelands Management and in the collections of the Elizabeth Public Library, the Newark Public Library, the New Jersey State Library, the New York City Public Library and the New Jersey Historical Society. Mapping to be reviewed would include Sanborn Fire Insurance maps; historical atlases prepared by Bromley, Beers and others located in the collections of the Elizabeth Public Library, the Newark Public Library, the New York City Public Library, the New Jersey State Library and the New Jersey Historical Society.
- *Regulatory Review* – A review of a commercially-prepared regulatory agency database to identify any listed sites (e.g.; CERCLIS, NPL, Known Contaminated Sites List) located within the study area.
- *Site Reconnaissance* – A windshield reconnaissance, from exterior public areas only, to observe general site conditions, including neighboring land uses, aboveground storage tanks, hazardous materials storage, septic/disposal fields, and other evidence of on-site contamination, or threat of a release of contamination. The reconnaissance will also "ground-truth" sites identified through the historical and regulatory reviews.

### Class 2 Properties

For each Class 2 property, a *Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA)* will be conducted. Each ESA will seek to identify, to the extent feasible, the presence or likely presence of contaminated materials on or near each Class 2 property. Potential contaminants of concern include polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), heavy metals, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), semivolatile organic compounds (SVOCs), asbestos and petroleum storage tanks. Each ESA will conform to the American Society for Testing and Materials' (ASTM) *Standard Practice for Phase I Environmental Site Assessments (E 1527-00)*, in accordance with the "due diligence" regulations of the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA), and in accordance with Section 9601 (35)(b) of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA), which requires that "all appropriate inquiry" be made into the presence or potential presence of contaminated substances on each site. Specific tasks to be performed include the following:

- *Project Setting* – An evaluation of the physical setting of the project (in terms of topography and drainage; geology and soils; groundwater, and surface water) for use in assessing specific hazards presented, as well as to evaluate information obtained through performance of the historical and regulatory reviews.
- *Historical Review* – A review of available historical information as described in the screening-level analysis above, back to at least 1944, as available.
- *Regulatory Review* – A review of a commercially-prepared regulatory agency database will be conducted to identify any Class 2 sites that are listed with state and federal regulatory agencies (US EPA, NJDEP, NYSDEC, NYCDEP). Follow-up with Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests and agency file reviews which will be undertaken on a site-by-site basis, as appropriate.
- *Site Reconnaissance* – A physical inspection of each property will be undertaken subject to receipt of property owner permission to enter said property. During the inspection, present conditions, as well as evidence of past uses and conditions of the property and adjacent properties will be observed. Evidence of the use, treatment, storage or disposal of petroleum or potentially contaminated materials will be examined, and physical indicators of possible contamination, such as discolored soil; stressed vegetation; storage tanks; fill or vent pipes suggesting underground storage tanks; presence of chemical or petroleum storage drums; strong or pungent odors; pits, ponds or lagoons; transformers or other potentially PCB-contaminated electrical equipment; water or discharge wells; solid waste; and any other indications of potential contamination that are observed will be reported. Appropriate photographs of significant visible indicators will be taken.
- *Interviews* – The purpose of the interview process is to collect unrecorded information concerning past usage of and activities associated with each property and adjacent properties. To the extent possible, interviews with the owners of each property or their representatives, neighbors, tenants and local government officials who would have knowledge of the site will be conducted.
- *Identification of Areas of Concern (AOCs)* – Through performance of the Project Setting, Historical and Regulatory Reviews, Site Reconnaissance, and Interview subtasks, AOCs will be identified. Their locations, nature of the environmental concern and potential impacts to the proposed work will be presented and discussed.

### Class 3 Properties

For any additional properties, as identified by the USCG or the Port Authority, a level of effort tailored to each individual request (e.g., undertake a review of NYSDEC's files on the R.T. Baker property) will be developed.

For each property, the conclusions of the Project Setting, Historical and Regulatory Review, Site Reconnaissance, and Interview subtasks will be reviewed so that a judgment can be made as to the likelihood of contamination present at each site, if any.

Construction activities will then be considered with respect to those contaminants in order to assess potential risks to public health and the environment. This assessment is based on a review of the degree of toxicity of the contaminants, the likelihood of exposure for workers and the public, and the potential extent of exposure.

## **5.20 Environmental Justice and Community Impact Analysis**

### **5.20.1 Environmental Justice**

The Environmental Justice (EJ) analysis will generally follow the guidance of the US EPA Region 2's Interagency Working Group (IWG) on Environmental Justice, the CEQ's Environmental Justice Guidance under NEPA, the USDOT/FHWA/FTA guidance on EJ, and the USDOT Final Order on Environmental Justice. The major steps in the assessment process are:

- Identify the study area;
- Compile population characteristics and identify locations with populations of concern for environmental justice;
- Conduct public outreach;
- Identify adverse effects on populations of concern; and
- Evaluate project's overall effects.

The principal focus will be the existing minority and low-income populations in the cities of Elizabeth and Linden as well as in the study area of Staten Island, including the Goethals Mobile Home Park. Depending on any geographically broader impact findings with the build alternatives (e.g., traffic, air quality), the study area for EJ analysis may need to be expanded. The EJ analysis will be conducted in conjunction with the findings from the land use/zoning/community facilities, socioeconomics/demographic, residential/business displacement, air/noise, traffic, water/natural resources, construction, and visual/aesthetic analyses in order to determine the degree of any direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to EJ populations.

It will be necessary to definitively determine the limits of the study area for field reconnaissance efforts and GIS analysis related to EJ issues. At this time, it is assumed that the geography for EJ will include the census blocks/block groups of the project study area with additional reference to sub-municipal, municipal, and county census areas (e.g., City of Linden or Elizabeth, and Union County).

Minority and low-income populations will be identified through the use of the 2000 census data (race, income, percent poverty, etc.) with respect to the overall population distribution and characteristics surrounding the study area. The locations of EJ populations will be depicted graphically. In locations where census geographic units are too large to identify small areas of EJ population concentration, information gathered through the public outreach and/or discussion with local planners will supplement the census data analyses.

In the event that no EJ populations are identified, the EJ analysis would be deemed completed with the finding that the project would have no disproportionately high and adverse impacts on minority and low-income populations.

Analysis of EJ impacts will be coordinated closely with the public outreach and stakeholder participation effort, within which certain techniques/strategies will be used to target EJ populations to encourage their participation in the EIS development and process. Public involvement is an essential element for this EJ analysis in order to ensure that any potentially affected minority and low-income populations are

effectively engaged in the process. Highlights of the public involvement process and recorded feedback from EJ populations will be presented.

For each project alternative, the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to EJ populations will be assessed as identified through the other EIS analyses in order to determine whether these impacts meet a “high and adverse” threshold. The evaluation of any potential impacts will be supported with the review of the engineering drawings (CADD and GIS files) for all ramp alignment alternatives including their respective rights-of-way with respect to existing EJ populations. For each project alternative, any potential offsetting beneficial effects (such as jobs, local economic activity) attributable to the proposed project will be identified.

An analysis of disproportionately high and adverse effects for each alternative will be prepared. Consideration will be given to measures for reducing or mitigating the severity of these impacts, if any. If necessary, final mitigation, enhancement, or avoidance strategies to address any identified EJ concerns will be developed, using input from the community involvement as appropriate.

A disproportionately high and adverse effect to EJ populations may only be carried out if further avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures are deemed not practicable. In determining whether a measure is “practicable”, the social, economic, and environmental effects of avoiding, minimizing or mitigating the adverse effects will be taken into account and the rationale for findings will be documented in the EIS document.

### **5.20.2 Community Impact Analysis**

A community impact assessment (CIA) will evaluate the cumulative effect that the range of potential beneficial and adverse effects the proposed Goethals Bridge project may have on the local communities, their resources, and populations. This task will be based on the evaluation of the potential for impacts examined in other tasks, particularly land use/zoning/community facilities, socioeconomics/demographic, residential/business displacement, air/noise, traffic, construction, visual/aesthetic, and environmental justice. This task will also be closely integrated with the public outreach program to ensure that the decision-making process encompasses considerations important to surrounding communities and that the proposed alternatives are compatible with the surrounding communities’ needs and vision for the future.

The evaluation of potential community impacts will be conducted in accordance with the general steps outlined in the USDOT Community Impact Analysis Handbook (1996), as follows:

- Community Identification – To encompass the broad range of trends and issues, the context for presentation of data and discussion of potential impacts will be the study area utilized in the evaluation of land use and socioeconomic impacts and the larger communities of which the study area is part.
- Review of Social and Economic Characteristics – Current community demographic and employment conditions will be presented along with future trends and projections so that the present character of the community and its character at the time of operation of the proposed alternatives will be considered.
- Inventory of Community Features – A key indicator of socio-economic impacts is the effect that the proposed alternatives will have upon local land use patterns. A land use analysis assesses the distribution of residential, commercial, and institutional and community facility land use in the area, and projects future baseline conditions in order to highlight potential impacts of the proposed alternatives on the land use mix of the neighborhood. Existing and projected changes in land use also assist in establishing the assessment parameters of other forms of environmental impacts, such as economics, air quality, noise, vibration and vehicle traffic.

- Identification Community Issues and Attitudes – Complementary to a discussion of land use is a summary of public policy in relation to the study areas, which will determine the compatibility of the proposed alternatives with the neighborhood’s own vision of its future state. Policies and plans will be reviewed along with the comments received during the public outreach program.
- Evaluation of Impacts/Identification of Solutions – The effects of the proposed alternatives on the character of the community will be evaluated as described below. As necessary, solutions to promote the avoidance, minimization, or mitigation of significant adverse effects or the enhancement of beneficial impacts will be presented.

Data for the community profile will be collected using data sets, master plans, maps, and other existing documents. Field surveys, interviews, and public involvement will be fundamental components in the data collection process as well. Community input received as part of the public outreach program will also be a source of information for the resource inventory.

For each project alternative, the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts identified in other tasks will be evaluated for their potential effect on the character, economy or land use composition of the community as a whole. Potential impacts for consideration include:

Potential impacts on the character of a community:

- The displacement and relocation of community facilities or residents
- Changes in the use of community facilities
- Changes in the population or demographic composition of the community or parts of the community
- A change to the perceived quality-of-life in the community
- Changes in the aesthetic character of the community
- Changes in pedestrian, bicycle, or vehicle mobility
- Changes related to safety in the community

Potential impacts on economic conditions:

- Business displacements and relocations
- Changes in the employment trends in the community
- Economic impacts of construction and operations on local businesses
- Fiscal impacts of project alternatives on the community
- Property value changes
- Changes in the tax base
- Changes in the economic base

Potential land use impacts:

- Introduction of physical barriers to movement in the community
- Changes to the existing infrastructure in the community
- Changes to the land use patterns or zoning contrary to community plans and policies.
- Impacts of the project on proposed or planned development projects

A discussion of potential benefits, adverse impacts, and practical mitigation/avoidance alternatives will be integrated into the public outreach process while making special efforts to encourage the participation of a wide range of community residents. The alternatives will be evaluated for their consistency with community plans and policies. Consideration will be given to measures for reducing or mitigating the severity of these impacts, if any.

The final mitigation, enhancement, or avoidance strategies will be summarized to address any impacts identified in other tasks that would mitigate community impacts.

## 5.21 Construction Impacts

The DEIS will present a description of the bridge construction process for the purposes of quantification of impact-causing activities as it is not intended to describe the precise construction methods that may ultimately be used nor is it intended to dictate or confine the construction process. As such, where the scope of the design, the likely construction methods, and the sequencing of activities is uncertain, the DEIS will assume the reasonable worst-case scenario for the purpose of impact analysis. Where a variety of construction methods or techniques could be utilized, the analysis evaluates the method that is considered to have the greatest potential for adverse environmental impact. This approach ensures that, irrespective of the methods ultimately used to construct the replacement of the Goethals Bridge, the potential environmental impacts that could be associated with construction actually will have been analyzed.

The DEIS will include a detailed assessment of the potential impacts of the project's construction and demolition activities for each of the technical areas covered in the document. The analyses will consider the potential effects of the various stages of construction, as well as the cumulative effects of other projects under construction at the same time. This analysis will identify any potential for significant adverse impacts and identify specific mitigation measures.

## 5.22 Indirect and Cumulative Impacts

Indirect and cumulative impacts result when the effects of an action or project are added to or interact with other effects in a particular place and within a particular time. The cumulative impacts of an action or project can be viewed as the total effects on a resource, ecosystem, or human community of that action or project and all other activities affecting that resource no matter what entity is taking the actions. Indirect and cumulative impacts may occur outside the immediate study area and may be generated as a result of changes in development patterns. These impacts may include increases in traffic volumes outside the study corridor, or changes in population, housing, employment, tax base, or other land use changes.

The indirect and cumulative impact analysis will follow existing CEQ guidance (1987, 1997) as well as other suggested considerations or supporting documents from USEPA (1999), FHWA (2004), and others.

The potential for indirect and cumulative impacts will be assessed primarily using information collected from, but not limited to, findings of the land use, zoning, construction, socioeconomic, air, noise, water quality, wildlife, traffic, human health, and environmental justice analyses. Past trends will also be evaluated in order to evaluate all range of cumulative impacts.

The indirect and cumulative impact analysis will proceed on a case-by-case basis for each of the specific resources of concern, and will include the following steps:

- Clearly identify and establish the most appropriate geographical and temporal boundaries for each of those potential issues in order to evaluate adequately any indirect and cumulative impacts. This determination will be based on all resources of concern and of all the actions that may contribute, along with the project direct effects, into indirect and cumulative impacts. The selection of the geographical and temporal boundaries will be, whenever possible, based on the boundaries of the resources of concern and the period of time that the proposed action's impacts will persist, even beyond the project life.
- Identify the other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions that have impacted or will impact these same resources. Such actions may include planned or proposed transportation

projects in the region and Arthur Kill deepening or waterfront development projects in the vicinity. All these other actions and respective descriptions will be extracted from the contemplated future actions and other planned or developed activities that have already been identified within each respective EIS section. The impacts' nature and the extent of those other actions will be described, as well as their overall impact from the accumulation of the other actions.

- Through consultation with the Environmental Task Force (see Section 6.0), corroborate preliminary findings on other actions, as well as define the assessment goals, techniques, and methodology for analysis of the identified potential indirect and cumulative effects for the proposed project and its alternatives.

The consideration of indirect and cumulative impacts will ensure that the range of actions will include not only the proposed project and its design alternatives but also all actions that could contribute to cumulative impacts and/or result with indirect impacts. During this process, the following mitigating considerations should be taken:

- While identifying any initial project alternatives to avoid and minimize harm to the natural and built environment, consideration will be given to any alternatives that have the potential to minimize indirect and/or cumulative impacts. This will be based upon inter-agency coordination and extent of the indirect and cumulative impacts in order to focus attention on real issues while de-emphasizing consideration on minor issues.
- While the preliminary corroboration of the work plan and preferred alternatives with key reviewing agencies is critical; a continued coordination should also be performed in order to revisit certain issues as new information becomes available and eventually mitigate for some of the identified impacts.

## 6.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND INTERAGENCY COORDINATION PROGRAM

Throughout the course of the environmental analyses and documentation for the EIS, the Coast Guard will conduct a program for public participation and interagency coordination. The overriding goal of the program is to engage a diverse group of public and agency participants in order to solicit relevant input and provide timely information throughout the environmental review. In order to best accomplish this, the following objectives will be pursued:

- Establish ongoing, inclusive and meaningful two-way communication with stakeholders, agencies, and the general public.
- Educate the public about the environmental review process and the role of government, stakeholders and the general public.

The principal program activities bracket the development of the DEIS:

- DEIS scoping, including interagency and public scoping meetings, at the outset of the environmental review process to provide information about the proposed project and the environmental review process, and elicit agency and public input and comment; and
- DEIS public hearings, to present the results of the environmental review of the No-Action and project alternatives, and elicit agency and public comments for consideration in selection of a preferred alternative and completion of the Final EIS (FEIS).

Between DEIS scoping and public hearings, multiple additional mechanisms and opportunities for public participation and interagency coordination will be available for periodic dissemination of project information and continued receipt of public comment and input. Public participation mechanisms and opportunities will include, at minimum:

- EIS website ([www.goethalseis.com](http://www.goethalseis.com));
- periodic issuance of newsletters to the project's mailing list and through convenient public repositories (e.g., libraries, communities);
- periodic press releases;
- public open houses, preceded by meeting announcements on the website, to the mailing list, and at public repositories; and
- a Stakeholder Committee, to be comprised of a cross-section of key stakeholders, organizations, and interests, which will meet periodically to provide an open forum for discussion about the proposed project, as it progresses. Stakeholder Committee members will agree to bring their members' concerns to the attention of the project team, and bring project information back to their membership.

Interagency coordination will be effected through:

- an Environmental Task Force (ETF) comprised of federal, state, and local agencies with jurisdiction and expertise in all environmental categories, other than traffic/transportation and mobile-source air quality and noise (which will be the focus of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), described below), to provide guidance on environmental issues through the course of EIS development; and,
- a TAC comprised of federal, state, local, and Metropolitan Planning Organization (NYMTC, NJTPA) agencies to provide guidance on the traffic/transportation and mobile-source air quality and noise issues through the course of EIS development.

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## Appendix M.2

### Notices in Federal Register

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- Notice of Intent in the Federal Register
- Notice of Public Scoping in the Federal Register

*Time:* 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

*Agenda:* To review and evaluate grant applications.

*Place:* National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Bethesda, MD 20892 (Telephone Conference Call).

*Contact Person:* Tina McIntyre, PhD, Scientific Review Administrator, Center for Scientific Review, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 4202, MSC 7812, Bethesda, MD 20892, 301-594-6375, [mcintyrt@csr.nih.gov](mailto:mcintyrt@csr.nih.gov).

This notice is being published less than 15 days prior to the meeting due to the timing limitations imposed by the review and funding cycle.

*Name of Committee:* Center for Scientific Review Special Emphasis Panel, Azurin-p53 Interaction.

*Date:* August 10, 2004.

*Time:* 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

*Agenda:* To review and evaluate grant applications.

*Place:* National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Bethesda, MD 20892 (Telephone Conference Call).

*Contact Person:* Timothy J. Henry, PhD, Scientific Review Administrator, Center for Scientific Review, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 3212, MSC 7808, Bethesda, MD 20892, 301-435-1147, [henryt@csr.nih.gov](mailto:henryt@csr.nih.gov).

This notice is being published less than 15 days prior to the meeting due to the timing limitations imposed by the review and funding cycle.

*Name of Committee:* Center for Scientific Review Special Emphasis Panel, Congenital Heart Block.

*Date:* August 17, 2004.

*Time:* 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

*Agenda:* To review and evaluate grant applications.

*Place:* National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Bethesda, MD 20892 (Telephone Conference Call).

*Contact Person:* Russell T. Dowell, PhD, Scientific Review Administrator, Center for Scientific Review, National Institutes of Health, 6701 Rockledge Drive, Room 4128, MSC 7814, Bethesda, MD 20892, 301-435-1850, [dowellr@csr.nih.gov](mailto:dowellr@csr.nih.gov).

This notice is being published less than 15 days prior to the meeting due to the timing limitations imposed by the review and funding cycle.

(Catalogue of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Nos. 93.306, Comparative Medicine; 93.333, Clinical Research, 93.306, 93.333, 93.337, 93.393-93.396, 93.837-93.844, 93.846-93.878, 93.892, 93.893, National Institutes of Health, HHS)

Dated: July 30, 2004.

**LaVerne Y. Stringfield,**

*Director, Office of Federal Advisory Committee Policy.*

[FR Doc. 04-18281 Filed 8-9-04; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4140-01-M**

## DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

### Coast Guard

[CDG01-04-108]

### Draft Environmental Impact Statement; Goethals Bridge Modernization Program

**AGENCY:** Coast Guard, DHS.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Coast Guard, as the Federal lead agency, and in cooperation with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANY&NJ), intends to prepare and circulate a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for a proposed new bridge to replace the existing Goethals Bridge which crosses the Arthur Kill between Staten Island, New York and Elizabeth, New Jersey and is part of the Goethals Bridge Modernization Program. This Notice of Intent is a necessary part of the Environmental Impact Statement process as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The Coast Guard issues this Notice of Intent to provide notice of the prospective project and to seek comments to ensure that all significant issues are identified and the full range of alternatives and impacts of the proposed project are addressed.

**DATES:** Comments must be received on or before September 9, 2004.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments may be mailed to Commander (obr), First Coast Guard District, Battery Park Building, One South Street, New York, New York, 10004.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Gary Kassof, Bridge Program Manager, at the address above or by telephone at (212) 668-7165.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This notice of intent is published as required by regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality at 40 CFR 1501.7.

The proposed project constitutes the PANY&NJ's Goethals Bridge Modernization Program (the "Program"). The Program proposes to replace the existing Goethals Bridge, which has substandard geometrics and is experiencing escalating deterioration, thereby causing safety and reliability concerns.

The design of a proposed new facility would reflect current traffic design standards, modern structural and seismic codes, national-security safeguards and technology enhancements. It would also add the

operational flexibility to facilitate future transit-service opportunities.

A Coast Guard bridge permit authorizing the location and plans for the bridge project, which crosses navigable waters of the United States, is required before construction may begin. Based on available information, the Coast Guard has determined that an EIS would be the appropriate level of environmental documentation for assessing the potential impacts of the proposed project under Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended.

In addition to the no-build alternative (no-action), the selection of alternatives to be evaluated in the DEIS may include: alternative alignments within the existing bridge corridor; alternative bridge designs; provision of high-occupancy vehicle or express bus lanes; intelligent vehicular highway system options; congestion pricing options; consideration of transit alternatives such as potential light rail, commuter rail, bus and/or ferry routes and services; as well as all other reasonable alternatives identified by the public.

Potentially significant issues to be evaluated include: displacement of residential, commercial and industrial properties; disruption of contaminated properties located within the proposed project right-of-way; existing and future land use and traffic patterns; threatened and endangered species, and critical habitat; historic and archeological resources, including the existing historic Goethals Bridge; wetlands; water quality; noise; air quality; navigation; construction impacts; and cumulative impacts.

A formal interagency scoping meeting with federal, state, and local agencies with environmental expertise is planned for early September 2004. In addition, public scoping meetings in both Staten Island and Elizabeth are planned for October 2004. The dates for the public scoping meetings will be announced locally as well as in the **Federal Register**.

All interested parties are invited to submit written comments to ensure that all significant issues are identified and the full range of alternatives and impacts of the proposed projects are addressed.

Dated: July 30, 2004.

**John L. Greiner,**

*Captain, U.S. Coast Guard, Acting Commander, First Coast Guard District.*

[FR Doc. 04-18205 Filed 8-9-04; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910-15-P**

receptor antagonist to a patient is effective in the treatment of autoimmune disorders. Examples in the patent applications show that a humanized antibody to the interleukin-2 receptor alpha chain (IL-2R $\alpha$ ) (humanized anti-Tac antibody), daclizumab, is effective in treating MS. In particular, it has been discovered that patients who failed to respond to therapy with interferon-beta showed dramatic improvement when treated with daclizumab, with patients showing both a reduction in the total number of lesions and cessation of appearance of new lesions during the treatment period. Pending claims in the above-referenced patent applications are directed to methods of treating a patient with multiple sclerosis (MS) by administering a therapeutically effective amount of an IL-2 receptor antagonist. IL-2 receptor antagonists can be antibodies, peptides, chemical compounds, and small molecules.

The prospective co-exclusive license will be royalty-bearing and will comply with the terms and conditions of 35 U.S.C. 209 and 37 CFR 404.7. The prospective co-exclusive license may be granted unless within sixty (60) days from the date of this published notice, the NIH receives written evidence and argument that establish that the grant of the license would not be consistent with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 209 and 37 CFR 404.7

Applications for a license in the field of use filed in response to this notice will be treated as objections to the grant of the contemplated co-exclusive license. Comments and objections submitted to this notice will not be made available for public inspection and, to the extent permitted by law, will not be released under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552.

Dated: September 27, 2004.

**Steven M. Ferguson,**

*Director, Division of Technology Development and Transfer, Office of Technology Transfer, National Institutes of Health.*

[FR Doc. 04-22147 Filed 9-30-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4140-01-U

## DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

### Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services

[CIS No. 2333-04]

#### Termination and Re-designation of Liberia for Temporary Protected Status; Correction

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security.

**ACTION:** Notice of correction.

**SUMMARY:** The Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services (BCIS) is correcting a notice that was published in the **Federal Register** on August 25, 2004 at 69 FR 52297 which announced the termination and re-designation of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for nationals of Liberia. In the supplemental information to the notice, BCIS inadvertently misstated that the termination would be effective, and benefits obtained through the Liberia TPS designation will expire, on October 1, 2004. However, under section 244(b)(3)(B) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (Act), a TPS designation may be terminated no earlier than 60 days after publication of the termination notice in the **Federal Register**. Pursuant to section 244(a)(2) of the Act and 8 CFR 274a.12(a)(12), persons granted TPS retain that status and employment authorization until the effective date of termination unless their TPS is withdrawn before then.

Therefore, BCIS is notifying affected Liberians and their employers that termination of the Liberian TPS designation is effective October 24, 2004, sixty (60) days after the August 25, 2004 termination notice. Accordingly, BCIS is extending until October 24, 2004 the validity of Form I-688B employment authorization documents issued to Liberian TPS beneficiaries that bear an expiration date of October 1, 2004 and a notation of "274a.12(a)(12)" or "274a.12(c)(19)." The effective date of the re-designation remains October 1, 2004.

**DATES:** This correction is effective October 1, 2004.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Jonathan Mills, Residence and Status Services, Office of Programs and Regulations Development, Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services, Department of Homeland Security, 111 Massachusetts Avenue, NW., 3rd floor, Washington, DC 20529, telephone (202) 514-4754.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

### Need for Correction

As published in the **Federal Register** on August 25, 2004 (69 FR 52297), the notice contains an error that is in need of correction.

### Correction of Publication

Accordingly, the publication on August 25, 2004 (69 FR 52297), of the notice that was the subject of FR Doc. 04-19448 is corrected as follows:

1. On page 52297, in the second column, in the third line under **SUMMARY** the date "October 1, 2004" is corrected to read: "October 24, 2004"

2. On page 52298, in the third column, the paragraph under the heading "If I Currently Have TPS Through the Liberia TPS Designation, Do I Have to Register for the New TPS Designation?" is corrected to read:

Yes. If you already have received TPS benefits through the Liberia TPS designation, your benefits will expire on October 24, 2004. Accordingly, BCIS is extending until October 24, 2004 the validity of Form I-688B employment authorization documents issued to Liberian TPS beneficiaries that bear an expiration date of October 1, 2004 and a notation of "274a.12(a)(12)" or "274a.12(c)(19)."

After October 24, 2004, individual TPS beneficiaries must comply with the registration requirements described below in order to maintain their TPS benefits through October 1, 2005. TPS benefits include temporary protection against removal from the United States, as well as employment authorization, during the TPS designation period and any extension thereof. 8 U.S.C. 1254a(a)(1)."

Dated: September 29, 2004.

**Richard A. Sloan,**

*Director, Regulatory Management Division, Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services.*

[FR Doc. 04-22198 Filed 9-29-04; 10:08 am]

BILLING CODE 4410-10-P

## DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

### Coast Guard

[CGD01-04-125]

#### Announcement of Public Scoping Meetings for Environmental Impact Statement Preparation in Conjunction With Proposed Replacement of the Goethals Bridge

**AGENCY:** Coast Guard, DHS.

**ACTION:** Notice of public scoping meetings.

**SUMMARY:** The U.S. Coast Guard, as the federal lead agency, and in cooperation with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANY&NJ), hereby advises of the dates for public scoping meetings to be held in conjunction with preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement for the replacement of the Goethals Bridge. A Notice of Intent published in the **Federal Register** on August 10, 2004, announced that hearings would be held; however, dates for the scoping meetings were not finalized at that time. Public scoping meetings will be held in Staten Island, New York and Elizabeth, New Jersey, on October 5 and 6, 2004, respectively.

**DATES:** Public scoping meetings will be held in Staten Island, New York and Elizabeth, New Jersey, on October 5 and 6, 2004, respectively.

**ADDRESSES:** The October 5, 2004, meetings will be held at the Staten Island Hotel, Harbor Room and Ballroom, located at 1415 Richmond Avenue, Staten Island, New York 10314. The October 6, 2004, meetings will be held at the City of Elizabeth City Hall, in the Council Chambers on the Third Floor, located at 50 Winfield Scott Plaza, Elizabeth, New Jersey 07201.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Mr. Gary Kassof, Bridge Program Manager at Commander (obr), First Coast Guard District Battery Building, One South Street, New York, NY 10004-1466 or at (212) 668-7021.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** This notice of public scoping meetings is published in accordance with the regulations of the Council on Environmental Quality at 40 CFR 1506.6.

The U.S. Coast Guard, as the lead Federal agency for the oversight of the Environmental Impact Statement to be prepared for the Goethals Bridge replacement project, is teamed with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANY&NJ). The U.S. Coast Guard, with the cooperation of PANY&NJ, will hold public scoping meetings regarding this project. These meetings seek to involve the public in preparing and implementing NEPA procedures.

Meetings will be held on October 5 and 6, 2004, with two separate sessions each day. A formal presentation will be given during each of the sessions. The schedule and location is as follows. On October 5, 2004, the meetings will be held at the Staten Island Hotel, Harbor Room and Ballroom, located at 1415 Richmond Avenue, Staten Island, New York 10314. The two sessions include an afternoon session and an evening session. The afternoon session will start

at 2 p.m. and end at 5 p.m., with a formal presentation at 2:30 p.m. The evening session will begin at 5:30 p.m. and end at 8:30 p.m. with formal presentation at 6 p.m.

On October 6, 2004, the meetings will be held at the City of Elizabeth City Hall, in the Council Chambers on the third Floor, located at 50 Winfield Scott Plaza, Elizabeth, New Jersey 07201. The two sessions include an afternoon session and an evening session. The afternoon session will start at 2 p.m. and end at 5 p.m., with a formal presentation at 2:30 p.m. The evening session will begin at 5:30 p.m. and end at 8:30 p.m. with formal presentation at 6 p.m.

Dated: September 17, 2004.

**David P. Pekoske,**

*Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard, Commander, First Coast Guard District.*

[FR Doc. 04-22140 Filed 9-30-04; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 4910-15-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

### Federal Emergency Management Agency

[FEMA-1549-DR]

#### Alabama; Amendment No. 1 to Notice of a Major Disaster Declaration

**AGENCY:** Federal Emergency Management Agency, Emergency Preparedness and Response Directorate, Department of Homeland Security.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This notice amends the notice of a major disaster declaration for the State of Alabama (FEMA-1549-DR), dated September 15, 2004, and related determinations.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** September 23, 2004.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Magda Ruiz, Recovery Division, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Washington, DC 20472, (202) 646-2705.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The notice of a major disaster declaration for the State of Alabama is hereby amended to include the following areas among those areas determined to have been adversely affected by the catastrophe declared a major disaster by the President in his declaration of September 15, 2004:

Barbour, Blount, Bullock, Calhoun, Clay, Cullman, Dale, Etowah, Fayette, Franklin, Lamar, Lawrence, Lee, Macon, Marshall, Marion, Pike, St. Clair, Tallapoosa, Walker, and Winston Counties for Individual Assistance.

Autauga, Bibb, Chilton, Choctaw, Coosa, Dallas, Elmore, Greene, Hale, Jefferson,

Lowndes, Marengo, Montgomery, Perry, Pickens, Shelby, Sumter, Talladega, Tuscaloosa, and Wilcox Counties for Individual Assistance (already designated for debris removal and emergency protective measures (Categories A & B) under the Public Assistance Program including direct Federal assistance, at 100 percent Federal funding of the total eligible costs for a period of up to 72 hours.)

(The following Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Numbers (CFDA) are to be used for reporting and drawing funds: 97.030, Community Disaster Loans; 97.031, Cora Brown Fund Program; 97.032, Crisis Counseling; 97.033, Disaster Legal Services Program; 97.034, Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA); 97.046, Fire Management Assistance; 97.048, Individuals and Households Housing; 97.049, Individuals and Households Disaster Housing Operations; 97.050, Individuals and Households Program—Other Needs; 97.036, Public Assistance Grants; 97.039, Hazard Mitigation Grant Program)

**Michael D. Brown,**

*Under Secretary, Emergency Preparedness and Response, Department of Homeland Security.*

[FR Doc. 04-22062 Filed 9-30-04; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 9110-10-P**

## DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

### Federal Emergency Management Agency

[FEMA-1545-DR]

#### Florida; Amendment No. 7 to Notice of a Major Disaster Declaration

**AGENCY:** Federal Emergency Management Agency, Emergency Preparedness and Response Directorate, Department of Homeland Security.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** This notice amends the notice of a major disaster declaration for the State of Florida (FEMA-1545-DR), dated September 4, 2004, and related determinations.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** September 23, 2004.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Magda Ruiz, Recovery Division, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Washington, DC 20472, (202) 646-2705.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The notice of a major disaster declaration for the State of Florida is hereby amended to include the following areas among those areas determined to have been adversely affected by the catastrophe declared a major disaster by the President in his declaration of September 4, 2004:

Alachua, Brevard, Clay, Gilchrist, Nassau, Pasco, Putnam, and Sumter Counties for (Categories C-G) under the Public Assistance

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Appendix M.3  
Summary Report for 2004 Scoping Meetings

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**GOETHALS BRIDGE REPLACEMENT (GBR)  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS)**

**TASK G – SCOPING  
SCOPING SUMMARY REPORT  
VERSION 3.0**

**Prepared by:**  
*The Louis Berger Group, Inc./Parsons Brinckerhoff JV*

**December 1, 2008**

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document is the Scoping Summary Report for the Goethals Bridge Replacement Environmental Impact Statement (GBR EIS). This document is intended for use by the United States Coast Guard (USCG), the Port Authority of New York & New Jersey (Port Authority), and the Environmental Consultant. Once this report is complete, a newsletter will be prepared, which will include a succinct overview of the comments received and responses to those comments. This newsletter will be distributed to the GBR EIS mailing list.

The USCG is preparing an EIS for the proposed Goethals Bridge Replacement and other alternatives to address the functional and physical obsolescence of the existing Goethals Bridge, and other issues related to the bridge. The Port Authority has proposed the action to address existing deficiencies and improve conditions of the bridge crossing.

The Port Authority notified the USCG by letter of June 3, 2004, of its intent to submit a formal application for a Bridge Permit under the General Bridge Act of 1946. Accordingly, the USCG assumed the role of the Federal lead agency for preparation and issuance of an EIS for the proposed project, in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969.

A detailed Draft Scoping Document describing the various analyses to be undertaken as part of the Draft EIS (DEIS) was distributed by the USCG to relevant federal, state, regional and local agencies. In addition, a less detailed Public Scoping Information Packet was provided to elected officials, interest groups and members of the general public.

A series of scoping meetings was held to solicit comments from these agencies, groups and individuals on the adequacy of the proposed scope of studies for the DEIS. An Agency Scoping meeting was held at the USCG offices at the Battery Building, One South Street, New York, NY on September 14, 2004. Public Scoping meetings were held at the Staten Island Hotel on October 5, 2004, and at Elizabeth City Hall on October 6, 2004. In addition, written comments on the scope of the DEIS studies were officially accepted by the USCG through November 5, 2004, although comments received after that date were also accepted.

This document summarizes all comments received in writing (via letter, comment sheet, e-mail, and memoranda) and all comments made at the agency and public scoping meetings, as documented in the minutes of the Agency Scoping meeting and the official transcripts of the Public Scoping meetings. The individual topic-specific comments have been categorized and grouped by subject matter. Each comment has been numbered within each category and the person making the comment is identified, along with the source of the comment. The following list indicates the nomenclature used to identify the source of each comment:

- “ASM” refers to the Agency Scoping Meeting;
- “PSM” refers to the Public Scoping meetings with “SI1” and “SI2” referring, respectively, to the first (afternoon) and second (evening) sessions of the Public Scoping meeting in Staten Island, and “E1” and E2” referring to the first and second sessions of the Public Scoping meeting in Elizabeth;
- “CS” refers to comment sheets received at the Public Scoping meetings, and via fax or mail;
- “L” refers to letters received;
- “EM” refers to e-mails; and
- “M” refers to memoranda.

For each source of comments, each commenter has been assigned a number. The notation following each comment source designation and commenter number refers to the page number(s) where the specific comment occurs in a transcript or other source. For instance, PSM S11 1:32 refers to the Public Scoping meeting in Staten Island, first session, first speaker, and his comment is found on page 32 of the transcript for that particular meeting. Following each grouping of comments is a response providing an overview of how the environmental analyses and the DEIS will address the issues raised.

Overall, a total of 335 distinct comments were received and identified among the 259 speakers at the Agency/Public scoping meetings or individuals/agencies that provided comments via letters, comment sheets, emails, and memoranda during the scoping period. The table below summarizes the number of speakers / commenters and number of distinct comments that were compiled by category in this document:

	Speakers/Commenters	Distinct/Individual Comments
Agency Scoping Meeting of 09/14/04	8	15
Staten Island’s Public Scoping Meeting of 10/05/04	22	69
<i>Afternoon Session Subtotal</i>	16	57
<i>Evening Session Subtotal</i>	6	14
Elizabeth’s Public Scoping Meeting of 10/06/04	11	29
<i>Afternoon Session Subtotal</i>	8	28
<i>Evening Session Subtotal</i>	3	3
Comment Sheets	186	152
Letters	27	62
E-Mails	4	6
Memoranda	1	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>335</b>

The alphabetical index of commenters by last name can be found after the Scoping Comments Summary.

## 2.0 COMMENTS AND RESPONSES, BY CATEGORY

### 2.1 Alternatives

#### 2.1.1 Bridge Alternatives

1. *Assemblyman Matthew Mirones, NYS Assembly, 60<sup>th</sup> AD. PSM SII 1:32*  
He strongly supports the expeditious construction of a new bridge, approached in a coordinated and comprehensive effort with consideration of the Gowanus corridor.
2. *Teresa Toro, Tri-State Transportation Campaign. PSM SII 2:34-35*  
*Damien Newton, Tri-State Transportation Campaign. PSM EI 3:37*  
The Campaign was critical of the 1990's proposal to "twin" the Goethals Bridge, but believes that this current effort emphasizes fixing the functional problems of the existing bridge with a new bridge, rather than creating a major increase in roadway capacity. This creates room for common ground. The number of lanes on the crossing should match, not exceed the lane capacity of the roads leading to it. Building more than three general purpose lanes in each direction would invite increased truck traffic.
3. *Jane Vredenburg, Community Board #1. PSM SII 4:42*  
The bridge needs to be improved and/or rebuilt to 21<sup>st</sup> Century standards. There needs to be at least six lanes, three in each direction, and possibly a seventh lane in the middle for emergency breakdowns. The more lanes the better as traffic will probably be much higher in 15-20 years.
4. *Michael Arvanites, Councilman Michael McMahan's Office. PSM SII 7:51-52*  
The bridge in any incarnation must have: a ramp for trucks exiting and entering the NY Container Port; a bus HOV lane for X31, X21, X22, and New Jersey-bound buses from Staten Island to Manhattan; pedestrian/bike access; shoulders, emergency and breakdown lanes; and wider lanes.
5. *Fred LeMoine, The Metallic Lathers and Reinforcing Ironworkers Union of New York. PSM SII 11:62.*  
The bridge needs to be replaced; it does not meet today's standards.
6. *LT CDR Michael Keane/ENS Charles Baxter, US Coast Guard. ASM 1:2*  
USCG recommends that air clearance below the bridge be maximized during the design phase due to increased vessel traffic at Howland Hook Marine Terminal, the deepening of the Arthur Kill, the Kill Van Kull and Newark Bay, the increasing size of vessels, and the need to maintain open navigation channels during future construction. The USCG responded to a recommendation from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation that any new bridge be sited sufficiently far south of the present bridge where: shorelines have been bulkheaded and/or hardened and developed; and wetlands are not present. The USCG recommends that a new bridge not be located too close to the petroleum and fuel oil facilities south of Howland Hook for security reasons. A new bridge design should provide additional measures of security.
7. *Kathryn McGuckin, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. ASM 3:3*  
A new bridge should be sited out of the recently restored wetland area to areas of hardened shorelines.
8. *Mike Vissichelli, US Army Corps of Engineers. ASM 6:4*

Potential impacts to the existing Federal navigation channel must be considered in designing any new bridge. In designing the bridge, consideration should be given to avoiding the placement of fill, and if fill were to be required, it should be minimized and mitigation would be required.

9. *David Stilwell, US Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service. L 4:3*  
The Service recommends that alternatives considered in the DEIS include bridge designs capable of carrying various types of cables (e.g. communications, energy) so that this type of infrastructure can be routed across the Arthur Kill in the future without further aquatic resource impacts.
10. *Jeffrey Elmer, General Contractors Association of New York. PSM SI2 1:30-31*  
It is clear that the Goethals Bridge is obsolete. Now there is a crying need for dedicated HOV bus lanes, bike and pedestrian access and future transit access to help address traffic congestion. A new bridge is the only way to fix these long standing problems. With the designation of Howland Hook as a Military Port of Embarkation, it is important that we have a bridge that can also accommodate the movement of large military equipment as well as freight. This is an urgent matter of national security.
11. *Lawrence Kudla, Local 282, Teamsters. PSM SI2 2:36*  
A new span is the only alternative to give easy flow between New Jersey and Staten Island. A bridge with a multitude of lanes that is easily accessible to motorists is needed.
12. *James Gavin, No affiliation identified. PSM SI2 5:42-44*  
A new bridge to replace the Goethals should be a ten-lane bridge with one side just for car traffic and with a lane for emergency vehicles and breakdowns as on the Route 35 bridge. The other side could be one or two lanes just for trucks, buses, and taxis, and then reserve enough room for freight trains, commuter trains, and light rail. It should also have a walkway for pedestrians and cyclists.
13. *Don Tomasino, No affiliation identified. PSM SII 13:68-69*  
Having worked on the bridge, and seeing how dangerous it is, he states that it needs to be redone quickly. It needs to be done for public safety and transportation.
14. *Leah Gebhardt, No affiliation identified. PSM SII 14:69-70*  
An emergency shoulder should accompany three lanes on each side of the bridge. Each lane should be twice the current width due to truck traffic and auto drivers intimidated to pass them.
15. *Meagan Devereaux, Staten Island Borough President's Office. PSM SII 15:74-78*  
Borough President Molinaro reasserts his strong position in support of replacing the Goethals Bridge with a new bridge with wider lanes that can handle Staten Island's traffic needs. He requests that the Port Authority look into the feasibility of a ramp that would separate truck traffic bound to and from the New York Container Terminal to allow for safe separation of trucks from vehicular traffic. The reality is that the existing bridge is obsolete and costing \$80 million to rehabilitate to survive another 10 years until a new bridge is built. You must not delay or ignore the inevitable. He urges the Port Authority to make the new bridge a top priority and find a way to expedite its planning, approval and construction.
16. *Dee Vanderburg, Staten Island Taxpayers Association. PSM SII 16:79*  
The bottom line is that traffic will not go away no matter what is done. She is hoping that this job can get done yesterday. We are working all over this Island to get our infrastructure up to speed and we need to get something done.

17. *T.L. Wolford, Conoco Phillips Company. CS 3:2*  
The existing vertical clearance of 135' must not be reduced during or after construction. Large tankers traveling under the bridge currently utilize all available space.
18. *Louise Vinciguerra, Westerfield Improvement Society. CS 7:2*  
The Society is in support of a new bridge, but suggests keeping the existing bridge for use as one lane each way for truck traffic only.
19. *Alan C. Epple, No affiliation identified. CS 1:2*  
He is in support of building a new bridge. The bridge is needed and will take years to complete so do not delay. Make the new bridge as wide as possible.
20. *Marie Bodnar, Community Board #3 CS 2:2*  
Community Board #3 supports the proposal to replace the Goethals Bridge.
21. *Ralph Marra, No affiliation identified. L 5:1*  
Building a new Goethals Bridge with at least six lanes is sorely needed and should have been done 20 years ago.
22. *Alex Garcia, Hispanic American Chamber of Commerce of Essex County. EM 2:1*  
The Chamber is in support of the bridge replacement. Elimination of structural deficiencies such as those required for hardening against terrorism and for seismic forces should be undertaken.
23. *John Surmay, City of Elizabeth. PSM E1 4:43*  
There is a great need for modernization of the existing bridge, including but not limited to, the construction of an entirely new bridge.
24. *Eric Larkin, Utility and Transportation Contractors Association of New Jersey. PSM E1 6:50-51*  
The Association is in total support of the rebuilding and/or total reconstruction of the Goethals Bridge. The current bridge is behind the times and an extremely dangerous structure to all of the patrons in over twenty-eight million vehicles per year that cross the bridge. The cost of maintenance and repair of the current bridge is escalating every year. The current layout is becoming increasingly dangerous and inefficient due to massive amounts of people who use the bridge. A new bridge and surrounding transportation infrastructure will greatly benefit the safety and lives of the public.
25. *Mayor J. Christian Bollwage, City of Elizabeth. PSM E1 1:30-31, L 7:1*  
As the plans now stand for the twinning of the Goethals Bridge, it adversely impacts the City of Elizabeth and the City would not support the existing plans. He sees no changes between 1998 and 2004 and hopes to see some change between 2004 and the final draft of the EIS in 2006.  
  
The City of Elizabeth opposes the Port Authority's Goethals Bridge Replacement process plan for expansion as it currently exists without essential concerns regarding increasing traffic and quality of life issues for Elizabeth residents being taken into consideration and the appropriate actions taken to remedy these critical situations.
26. *Don Donovan, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 30:2*  
*Elijah Mercado, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 29: 2*  
*Amoo Dimson, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 122:2*  
*Yolande Petit, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 37:2*

David Sweeney, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 44:2  
Edwin Alvarez, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 50:2  
Lonoy Bogant, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 65:2  
Pete Rodriguez Jr., Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 93:2  
Lord Monroe, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 98:2  
Kevin McLaughlin, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 121:2  
Matthew Angevine, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 148:2  
Edrick DeCastro, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 173:2  
Robert Kittelberger, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 10:2  
Jose Cardona, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 12:2  
Keith Storetveit, Local 46, Metal Lathers CS 43:2  
Kevin Green, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 142:2  
Christopher McCarthy, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 169:2  
Favla Arlee, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 150:2  
Ron Richardson, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 130:2  
Ed Obertlik, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 146:2  
Glennville Bassaragh, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 143:2  
Michael Reinhardt, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 135:2  
David Jenne, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 144:2  
David Ortiz, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 172:2  
David Brag, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 168:2  
Christopher Golden, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 165:2  
Scott Edler, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 100:2  
James Lamlo Jr., Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 113:2  
Robert Peccia, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 33:2  
Kevin Barbata, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 118:2  
Richard Ferraro, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 13:2  
John Saddique, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 21:2  
Michael White, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 117:2  
Dionne Wagner, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 40:2  
Edwin Jaramillo, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 41:2  
Bryan Moore, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 78:2  
Steven Califano, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 53:2  
Orlando Wynter, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 77:2  
Michael Natale, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 58:2  
Brian Carey, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 46:2  
Keith LewBow, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 94:2  
Joshua Rivera, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 105:2  
Tesfaye Hobombo, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 170:2  
Bob Godfrey, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 131:2  
Adam Kull, No affiliation identified. CS 115:2  
Michael Ross, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 129:2  
Michael Adams, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 136:2  
John J. Harris III, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 6:2 and CS 84:2

A new bridge should be built. It should be bigger, with wider lanes.

27. James R. Coyle, Gateway Regional Chamber of Commerce. L 8:1  
Replacing the bridge with one that is not only safer but has more and wider lanes, including breakdown lanes, has become the only viable solution. The Chamber strongly supports the project.

28. *John Hibbs, Local 472, Heavy and General Construction Laborer’s Union. L 10:1*  
The Union supports the Goethals Bridge replacement to improve traffic flow and public safety.
29. *Philip K. Beachem, New Jersey Alliance for Action. L 9:1*  
The Alliance for Action strongly supports replacing the Goethals Bridge. While it is important to continue promoting alternatives to automobile use, it is equally important to rebuild current infrastructure to accommodate motorists.
30. *Jeffrey Elmer, General Contractors Association of New York. PSM SI2 1:33*  
It is poor public policy to redeck, patch and fix the span without making a plan to replace the structure in the long run.
31. *Mark Kulewicz, Automobile Club of New York. L 13:1*  
The bridge is a key piece of the New York-New Jersey metropolitan highway network and is the gateway to the “southern corridor”. It is critical to the movement of people and passenger vehicles, and goods as well. At this early stage in the process, they are not endorsing any one specific bridge alignment or alternative. However, the bridge has many structural, operational, and technological difficulties that must be corrected. There is a need to address the inadequate lane widths and lack of shoulders and grades. Three general purpose lanes in each direction should be constructed as part of this project.
32. *Ranjit Walia, New Jersey Pedestrian Task Force. L 15:1*  
The replacement of the Goethals Bridge represents a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that must not be missed to improve livability and increase transportation options in the New York City region.
33. *Assemblyman Michael Cusick, NYS Assembly. L 23:1*  
Wider and increased lanes would definitely enhance traffic flow. He also supports a plan for a ramp which would separate truck traffic bound to and from the New York Container Terminal. This alternative would greatly increase safety and allow for a smoother flow of traffic.
34. *Pam Fischer, AAA New Jersey Automobile Club. EM 4:1*  
The AAA Clubs of New Jersey are in support of upgrading or replacing the Goethals Bridge. Although they do not endorse one specific bridge alternative, the project must address inadequate lane width, inadequate capacity, the substandard interchange with the NJ Turnpike, need for high-speed toll lanes, and variable message signs on both sides of the bridge to help motorists decide which crossing they should take.
35. *Douglas A. Currey, New York State Department of Transportation. L 20:1*  
NYSDOT concurs that there is a strong need to replace the substandard bridge in order to make the Staten Island Expressway corridor operate more efficiently.
36. *Raymond M. Pocino, Laborers’ International Union of North America. L 25:1*  
The Union supports the Port Authority’s preferred alternative to replace the functionally obsolete bridge. The new bridge should be engineered to reduce congestion even with increased traffic volumes, accommodate transit, provide a dependable freight link for the region, and provide a reliable alternative for the diversion of traffic in an emergency.
37. *Kenneth Koschek, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. L 26:2-3*  
The NJDEP agrees that a Goethals Bridge replacement is warranted, and suggest a double-tiered bridge, similar to the George Washington Bridge. This would allow construction to take place

while the existing bridge remains in place, reducing the environmental impacts from the construction of two bridges. Truck traffic could be limited to one level possibly reducing the upper level width. This design could reduce costs and reduce shading impacts of the water over the two bridge alternative. If this design is infeasible, NJDEP would favor a replacement in the existing footprint or one north or south of the existing bridge.

38. *Robert Menendez, US House of Representatives. L 27:1*

The City of Elizabeth will be impacted by this project no matter what alternative is chosen, but that impact will be severe if the preferred alternative increases the amount of traffic forced onto local streets. Even a replacement bridge with the same number of lanes as the existing bridge only wider would be expected to carry increased truck traffic, adding additional stress to the local infrastructure. The DEIS should consider what infrastructure improvements would be necessary as a result of the bridge replacement and include those improvements in the project.

***Response: A screening analysis of potentially reasonable and feasible alternatives will be performed to select a subset of alternatives, that would: 1) best satisfy the purpose and need for the proposed project; and 2) be advanced for detailed analysis in the DEIS. The preliminary bridge alternatives to be addressed in the screening analysis will include those suggested during the scoping process, per the comments identified above.***

***In the screening analyses of potential alternatives, various locations for new-bridge crossings will be considered (i.e., north or south of the existing bridge; within the alignment of the existing bridge; south of existing wetlands while avoiding conflict with existing petroleum and fuel oil facilities), as will a variety of bridge design options (i.e., existing bridge rehabilitation; bridge replacement; construction of a new bridge parallel to the existing bridge; construction of a double-tiered bridge). In addition, necessary physical characteristics (e.g., vertical and horizontal bridge clearances), potential environmental impacts (e.g., wetlands, need for fill, proximity to sensitive land uses, traffic effects), and safety/security concerns will be considered.***

***As articulated in the purpose and need for the proposed project and identified in the related project goals, bridge alternatives will be evaluated to determine their ability to provide features consistent with current design standards, including provision of adequate lane widths, shoulders, alignments, grades, and connections to the existing roadway network. Bridge alternatives will also be evaluated to determine their ability to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle access; transit, HOV, or other dedicated lane or priority treatment; improved mobility of truck traffic (including potential for direct or improved truck access to/from the Howland Hook Marine Terminal); high-speed toll facilities and variable message signing; and potential options for separating truck and vehicular traffic. Design features to accommodate various types of cables (e.g., communications and energy) will also be investigated.***

***The capacity of bridge alternatives (i.e., number of lanes) will be determined on the basis of travel demand forecasts of future traffic conditions, while addressing applicable regional air quality standards.***

***Throughout the environmental review process, the US Coast Guard and its environmental consultant will coordinate with other pertinent studies and projects and will consider other transportation facilities in the vicinity of the Goethals Bridge and in the broader regional network.***

## 2.1.2 Nonstructural Alternatives

1. *Ralph Barone, Staten Island Community Board #2. PSM SII 3:40*

Discounts should be given to Staten Island residents, seniors, and handicapped individuals who drive over the crossing.

2. *Robert Cassara, Gowanus Community Stakeholder Group. PSM SII 6:49*  
An easy first step to solving the problem would be to reinstate the two-way tolls on the Verrazano Bridge. The MTA is losing millions of dollars while the impacts to environment and infrastructure, including the Goethals, are greatly increased.
3. *Michael Arvanites, Councilman Michael McMahan's Office. PSM SII 7:50*  
The two-way tolls will not be reinstated as part of Federal and State law and the people of Staten Island have spoken uniformly on that item.
4. *Teresa Toro, Tri-State Transportation Campaign. PSM SII 2:35*  
*Damien Newton, Tri-State Transportation Campaign. PSM EI 3:37-38*  
The Campaign applauds the Port Authority's implementation of congestion-mitigating peak-period toll premiums, progress toward reopening the rail freight corridor across the Arthur Kill in the interim and pending plans for high-speed E-ZPass applications at its Staten Island bridges.
5. *Linda Baran, Staten Island Chamber of Commerce. PSM SII 10:57-59*  
The Port Authority must take advantage of the EIS and related planning and design processes to identify measures to provide much needed interim relief. The Chamber is looking forward to the draft EIS to provide information that may provide relief sooner rather than later, and urges a multi-prong strategy to the EIS, including truckers, shippers, businesses, consumers, commuters, and the public at large. Short term relief measures could make it safer to cross and allow swifter bridge crossing. The relief that congestion pricing may afford, and alternative lane schemes similar to that used on the former Interborough Parkway connecting Brooklyn, might facilitate crossing while a better crossing is developed.
6. *Mark Kulewicz, Automobile Club of New York. L 13:2*  
The interchange on the New Jersey side of the bridge with the New Jersey Turnpike needs to be rebuilt to allow for safer access between these two roadways. High speed toll lanes should be installed to allow for freer flow. Installation of variable message signs to inform drivers on either the Staten Island Expressway or New Jersey Turnpike as to whether the Goethals Bridge or Outerbridge Crossing is the better choice for motorists crossing to and from Staten Island would provide more efficient use of both bridges.
7. *Andrew J. Willner, NY/NJ Baykeepers. L 14:2-3*  
Natural resources and the public should not suffer as a result of a failed maintenance compliance record by the bridge's owner. If the fees for the commercial users of the bridge had been raised years ago, it would have increased the likelihood of alternatives, such as rail or a better maintenance schedule. A more efficient layout of the bridge could be constructed without further damage to public trust, natural resources, or the public's interests. There are alternatives to using this bridge during an emergency. Traffic should be diverted to the Verrazano-Narrows, Outerbridge Crossing, or Bayonne Bridges. Baykeeper asserts that there is no need to increase the footprint of the Goethals Bridge in its present location.
8. *Kenneth Koschek, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. L 26:3*  
Fishing access should be developed within or near the footprint of the bridge, including a fishing pier and/or a boat ramp.

***Response:*** The preliminary screening of alternatives will consider nonstructural alternatives, including those identified in the comments above. In general, different toll pricing strategies at the Goethals Bridge and/or other transportation facilities in the study area, other Travel Demand Management (TDM) programs designed to reduce recurrent peak-period traffic congestion and Transportation System Management (TSM) programs designed to maximize use of existing transportation facilities, as well as transit options that do not require new infrastructure (e.g., expanded local and/or express bus services and routes) will be considered. The effect of No-Action and project alternatives on traffic on other regional facilities will also be evaluated in the EIS.

Consideration will be given to incorporating waterfront access via a fishing pier and/or boat ramp within or near the footprint of the bridge, although associated security issues will also be taken into account in making a decision regarding the provision of such access. The potential for providing waterfront access may be explored in more detail as part of the environmental permitting process, rather than as part of the EIS process.

### 2.1.3 No-Action Alternative

1. *Eric Rothstein, City of New York Parks & Recreation Natural Resources Group. M 1:1*  
Based on existing coastal wetlands conditions, his preference for the Goethals Bridge project are as follows (ordered from most to least preferred): no project, replace bridge with tunnel, build new bridge in existing alignment, construct new bridge to the south of the existing salt marsh or to the north of the existing salt marsh, or construct a new bridge adjacent to existing bridge (north or south), which would do the maximum damage.

***Response:*** The No-Action alternative assumes that no bridge replacement or other alternative is implemented, although necessary ongoing bridge maintenance and rehabilitation activities to extend the service life of the existing bridge would be included. For purposes of the DEIS, the No-Action alternative defines the future baseline conditions in the study area, inclusive of other projects and improvements that are programmed and committed for implementation by the DEIS analysis years, but absent the proposed improvement of the Goethals Bridge. Impacts associated with the No-Action alternative will be evaluated in the DEIS, and the potential impacts of project, or “build,” alternatives will be evaluated and compared to those of the No-Action alternative.

### 2.1.4 Transit Alternatives

1. *Assemblyman Matthew Mirones, NYS Assembly, 60<sup>th</sup> AD. PSM SII 1:31*  
Citizens are forced to use the Goethals Bridge because there are no mass transit options in Staten Island.
2. *Teresa Toro, Tri-State Transportation Campaign. PSM SII 2:37*  
*Damien Newton, Tri-State Transportation Campaign. PSM E1 3:39*  
The Campaign applauds the Port Authority and Coast Guard’s interest in adding transit capacity to the bridge. They suggest that the estimates for transit ridership be more expansive than in the last study and take into account “rational transportation behavior,” whereby drivers would choose transit over driving if it shortened their trip. A new transit study should account for behavior changes occasioned by mounting traffic congestion and other transportation system conditions.
3. *Ralph Barone, Staten Island Community Board #2. PSM SII 3:40*  
Rail is needed to unite Staten Island with the surrounding areas.

4. *Michael Arvanites, Councilman Michael McMahan's Office. PSM S11 7:52-53*  
The MTA has no interest in providing viable off-Island mass transportation alternatives. The Port Authority is the only hope. Light rail connections, at the very least, the Hudson-Bergen Light Rail and other NJ TRANSIT rail alternatives to New York City and Newark Airport, Jersey City business centers, etc, are needed on Staten Island.
5. *Dr. Jonathan Peters, College of Staten Island. PSM S11 12:66-68*  
A key component of this project has to be mass transit. Unless there is success at providing better facilities for mass transit on Staten Island, it will be difficult to get people away from reliance on automobiles. Because of a lack of mass transit in Staten Island/New Jersey corridors, it will be difficult to implement congestion pricing in terms of equity and actual application. Staten Island has one of the worst transit traffic times (43.8 minutes travel time to work on transit).
6. *Kamal Saleh, Union County Division of Economic Development. ASM 4:3; PSM E1 2:36*  
Union County encourages light rail access to the Goethals Bridge using the Elizabeth Segment of the Newark-Elizabeth Light Rail (NELR) system. The County would support the right-of-way for this.
7. *Richard Gualtieri, No affiliation identified. PSM S12 3:37*  
He recommends looking at adding rail, since the lift bridge currently between Staten Island and New Jersey is opened a lot of times and it is only a one-track bridge. He also suggests consideration of a special lane for buses or some other use.
8. *John Luisi, No affiliation identified. PSM S12 6:45-46*  
The existing bridge is very inadequate, not only for the width of the roadway, but there needs to be a plan for more public transportation, especially a railway and perhaps a dedicated express bus lane.
9. *Jeffrey Zupan, Regional Plan Association. PSM E1 8:58*  
It is imperative that rational policies relating to tolls and to preferential treatment for buses and high speed vehicles in the corridor be established. The NJ Turnpike provides preferences for buses and high speed vehicles in both directions in the peak period. The Goethals Bridge has no such policies – it doesn't have the space.
10. *Mark Kulewicz, Automobile Club of New York. L 13:1*  
The bus lane on the Staten Island Expressway should be extended and converted to an all-purpose HOV lane, and should seamlessly connect to the new Goethals Bridge.
11. *William Wright, No affiliation identified. L 21:1*  
Passengers can be handled with the plan to bring Raritan Valley trains from Cranford to the St. George ferry terminal to give needed redundancy to passengers heading for Manhattan.
12. *Kenneth Koschek, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. L 26:2*  
NJDEP strongly suggests that consideration be given to incorporating transit lines into the bridge design similar to those on the Benjamin Franklin Bridge over the Delaware River.

***Response: Transit alternatives, including fixed guideway systems (commuter rail, heavy rail, light rail), roadway-based systems (bus rapid transit, including express bus, local bus enhancements, high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) strategies), and waterborne systems (ferries) will be considered in the screening analysis of potentially reasonable and feasible alternatives to identify those that may warrant further, detailed evaluation in the EIS.***

*Potential transit alternatives will be identified in the context of:*

- *the potential market for transit for travelers who currently cross the Goethals Bridge or may be expected to in the future;*
- *the applicability of various transit modes for the identified transit market; and*
- *existing transit services/systems, as well as transit extensions or projects that are programmed and committed for implementation, that may present opportunities for connection with a transit alternative in order to constitute a workable transit option.*

*Potential transit ridership demand (including consideration of “rational transportation behavior” vis-à-vis potential travel time savings) within the travel market served by the Goethals Bridge corridor will be forecast to determine whether any given transit alternative warrants consideration for near-term implementation, or accommodation in the design of a potential new crossing for implementation at some future time.*

*Combinations of transit options with Travel Demand Management (TDM) programs designed to reduce recurrent peak-period traffic congestion and/or Transportation System Management (TSM) programs designed to maximize use of existing transportation facilities will also be considered.*

### **2.1.5 Bicycles/Pedestrians**

1. *Dr. Jonathan Peters, College of Staten Island. PSM SII 12:66*  
A key component of this project has to be pedestrian/bike facilities, which are sorely deficient in the region.
2. *John Luisi, No affiliation identified. PSM SI2 6:45-46*  
There should be pedestrian and bicycle access across the bridge the way it is across the George Washington Bridge, although it should not have night closures like the George Washington Bridge recently imposed.
3. *Teresa Toro, Tri-State Transportation Campaign. PSM SII 2:37*  
*Damien Newton, Tri-State Transportation Campaign. PSM E1 3:39-40*  
The Campaign supports the agencies’ interest in improving bicycle and pedestrian access over a new crossing. The Goethals bike and walkway was severely substandard, unattractive, and little used. A new fully-ramped facility will encourage foot and cycling traffic.
4. *Elizabeth Brody, East Coast Greenway. PSM E1 5:47-48; EM 3:1*  
The East Coast Greenway recognizes the importance of a network of greenways providing safe access to people of the local area to a green stretch. The path that goes in Elizabeth, in Hillside and crosses the Elizabeth River Greenway would provide a perfect route down to Goethals Bridge. The Greenway applauds the prospect of restoration of bicycle and pedestrian access onto the Goethals Bridge. There is not a single crossing at present for a bicyclist or pedestrian to cross the Arthur Kill. The greenway serves people who like to ride for recreational purposes and people who must bicycle or walk to work and do not have an inexpensive alternative at convenient times. Consideration should be given to having a bicycle/pedestrian lane on both sides of the bridge unless there is a safe way of permitting a user to cross to the opposite side. The Greenway requests plans for meeting the project goal of “Restore and enhance pedestrian access and provide for bicycle access,” and would like to know what is presently intended with reference to construction standards that would be followed.
5. *Ranjit Walia, New Jersey Pedestrian Task Force. L 15:1*

A new crossing between Elizabeth, NJ and Staten Island, NY must include walkways for bicyclists and pedestrians separated from motor traffic. Many residents of New York and New Jersey would welcome and exercise the option of crossing the Arthur Kill on foot or bicycle. A decision to include a bikeway/walkway on a replacement span costing far more than the \$7.2 million of the original bridge construction would capitalize on a historic opportunity to provide the bicycling and walking option to thousands of people at a small marginal cost – a context-sensitive solution in the truest sense.

6. *Noah Budnick, Transportation Alternatives. L 24:1*  
Transportation Alternatives urges the Coast Guard to include bicycle and pedestrian access in all plans for the Goethals Bridge Modernization Project. A new sidewalk on the bridge is a necessary part of the regional biking and walking network since there is no biking and walking connection from Staten Island to Central New Jersey. There is no bicycle or pedestrian shuttle service across the bridge, and no sidewalk on the Outerbridge Crossing. The Port Authority states that the bicycle and pedestrian sidewalk on the Goethals Bridge will be replaced as part of the Goethals Bridge Roadway Replacement Project, but it is unclear when the sidewalk will reopen. A new path on the bridge would make a key inter-state connection, and germinate new biking and walking projects in New Jersey and New York.
7. *Karen Votava, East Coast Greenway Alliance. L 19:1*  
Bicycle/pedestrian routes planned across Staten Island, NY and through Elizabeth, NJ can be joined only if bicycle and pedestrian access is restored to the Goethals Bridge. The Alliance takes great interest in the restoration of pedestrian and bicycle facilities on the bridge, and advocate that facilities be provided on both sides of the bridge (whether rebuilt or replaced) and that there be safe access at each end of the bridge to the sidewalks of the bridge. The Alliance is concerned that the replacement facility should meet federal standards for bicycle and pedestrian access.

***Response:*** *Since one of the proposed project's goals is to "restore and enhance pedestrian access and provide for bicycle access," options for providing pedestrian and bicycle access in the Goethals Corridor will be investigated, and incorporated in the design of new-crossing alternatives, per current design standards for such facilities. Connections of new walkways/bikeways to existing routes, including greenways, will also be addressed.*

### **2.1.6 Rehabilitation of Existing Bridge**

1. *Michael Arvanites, Councilman Michael McMahan's Office. PSM S11 7:50-53*  
Recent accidents highlight the need to correct significant problems with the antiquated and obsolete Goethals Bridge. In order to end the rehabilitation delays, the Port Authority has to begin to address the root issues of the bridge's overuse by refurbishing.
2. *Anthony Mattei, No affiliation identified. PSM S12 4:39*  
He recommends rebuilding the existing bridge and using it for cars only, and constructing a tunnel with three lanes in each direction for trucks, and cars in one direction only.
3. *Denny Newberry, No affiliation identified. PSM E1 7:53*  
The Goethals Bridge is a beautiful bridge. The engineers of our country could rehab that bridge efficiently and safely and economically to keep it right where it is.
4. *Daryl Blanrinship, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 161:2*

*Eduardo Rivera, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 154:2*

*Lloyd Haynes, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 17:2*

*Daniel Mercado, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 48:2*

*George Baffato, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 70:2*

*Robert T. Ritter, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 85:2*

The Bridge is in serious need of repair and reconstruction to widen the lanes.

5. *Patrick Whalen, No affiliation identified. CS 167:2 and CS 181:2*

The Goethals Bridge is very unsafe and he would like to see it repaired and reconstructed.

6. *Raymond M. Pocino, Laborers' International Union of North America. L 25:1*

A significant rehabilitation of the existing bridge will not adequately address the region's transportation needs, as the bridge's existing design is too limited.

***Response: The Goethals Bridge is currently undergoing a \$60 million major structural rehabilitation program to extend the span's service life for an additional 7 to 10 years. Significant additional, on-going rehabilitation would be required to extend the facility's service life beyond that period, or for a period comparable to what would be anticipated with a replacement bridge. The rehabilitation necessary to do so will be defined and a bridge rehabilitation alternative will be included in the screening of potential alternatives to determine whether it warrants further, detailed evaluation in the EIS.***

### 2.1.7 Tunnel Alternatives

1. *Anthony Mattei, No affiliation identified. PSM SI2 4:39-40*

He recommends rebuilding the existing bridge and using it for cars only, and constructing a tunnel with three lanes in each direction for trucks, and cars in one direction only. He recommends rail in the tunnel as well, using the existing Right-of-Way that goes to St. George to go to the Mall or to the St. George ferry. The rail could connect to Park & Ride lots in New Jersey.

2. *Marvin Ostrega, No affiliation identified. EM 1:1*

Instead of replacing the Goethals Bridge, dig a tunnel under the Arthur Kill. This could make more traffic and transit lanes and money would be saved on not having to worry about weathering.

***Response: A new tunnel crossing of the Arthur Kill in the Goethals Bridge corridor to replace or supplement the existing bridge will be investigated in the screening process to identify alternatives that warrant detailed evaluation in the EIS.***

### 2.1.8 Goods Movement Alternatives

1. *Richard Gualtieri, No affiliation identified. PSM SI2 3:37*

He suggests that the study consider a special use lane for freight.

2. *Andrew J. Willner, NY/NJ Baykeepers. L 14:2*

If the Port Authority had followed the plan to rehabilitate the rail freight bridge across the Arthur Kill, and built rail on the Howland Hook facility as was the alternate proposal, there would be no need to increase the truck capacity of the Goethals Bridge. Baykeeper has made previous comments about the need for reliable truck access and request that those comments be made part

of the record. The reduction of truck movement of goods is a goal of both States and the Port Authority, and the use of rail, rail on barges, and/or container barge movement is a more environmentally and economically sustainable way than increasing truck traffic on the Goethals Bridge.

3. *Marty Markowitz, Brooklyn Borough President. L 16:1-2*

The Goethals Bridge, Outerbridge Crossing and Bayonne Bridge are a critical part of the goods movement system. The interaction of the truck and rail modes in connecting west of the Hudson to east of the Hudson, including the potential effect of the Cross Harbor Freight Movement Project (CHFMP) being conducted by the NY City Economic Development Corporation, should be thoroughly analyzed. The effectiveness of tolling methodologies in achieving a diversion of goods from truck to rail and the CHFMP, and in mitigating the growth of truck volumes on the Goethals, the other Staten Island arterial bridges and along the I-278 corridor should also be thoroughly analyzed.

4. *William Wright, No affiliation identified. L 21:1*

The freight solution is to upgrade the remains of the railcar floating system. This should be rebuilt with the emphasis on the new design of a four-track float capable of handling four five-platform cars. The Nadler freight tunnel solves nothing.

***Response: Since one of the proposed project's goals is to "improve the flow of goods to and from Staten Island and New Jersey and in the New York/New Jersey region," potential freight-movement improvement alternatives will be identified and analyzed in the alternatives screening process to determine if any warrant detailed consideration in the EIS. These alternatives would potentially comprise part of a broader alternative that would more fully address the purpose and need for the proposed Goethals Bridge replacement.***

***The freight-movement improvements suggested during the scoping process, as summarized in the comments above, will be investigated. In addition, potential freight-movement alternatives will be identified in the context of:***

- ***existing freight-movement systems/services and future improvements that are programmed and committed for implementation at the Howland Hood Marine Terminal and the adjacent Proctor & Gamble/Port Ivory site, and for the Staten Island Railroad between Arlington Yard and the Conrail Chemical Coast Secondary in New Jersey via the Arthur Kill lift bridge;***
- ***review of current toll pricing strategies and their effects on truck traffic in the NY/NJ region;***
- ***freight operations in the Goethals Bridge corridor and the NY/NJ region, and overall freight trends; and***
- ***ongoing freight-related studies, notably including the Cross Harbor Freight Movement Project and the Comprehensive Port Improvement Plan for the Port of New York and New Jersey.***

***The potential ability of alternatives to improve truck flows in the Goethals Bridge corridor due to freight-movement improvements will be evaluated to determine whether any of the options warrant further, detailed evaluation in the EIS.***

## **2.2 Integration of Proposed Project with Regional Projects**

1. *Assemblyman Matthew Mirones, NYS Assembly, 60<sup>th</sup> AD. PSM SII 1:32-33*

This project should consider the needed repair and refurbishment of the Gowanus Expressway. There is a patchwork approach to repairing and maintaining that road. It would be shortsighted to

build a new facility that attracts more traffic, particularly truck traffic without addressing the Gowanus corridor.

2. *Jane Vredenburg, Community Board #1. PSM SII 4:41*  
Community Board #1 agrees the Goethals Bridge needs to be improved, but only after issues are addressed concerning improving and expanding the Staten Island Expressway, West Shore Expressway, local roads leading into the expressway, and development of a north shore passenger rail line.
3. *Robert Cassara, Gowanus Community Stakeholder Group. PSM SII 6:46-47*  
The Port Authority needs to upgrade its facilities, but needs to take a much broader view of the I-278 corridor – much of it is functionally obsolete and must be overhauled or replaced. It has to be viewed in regional terms to satisfy environmental and transportation concerns.
4. *Michael Arvanites, Councilman Michael McMahan's Office. PSM SII 7:51*  
The Port Authority needs to address the overburdened Staten Island road network. Building a new bridge to carry more traffic to Staten Island's bottlenecked road network is a non-starter.
5. *Linda Baran, Staten Island Chamber of Commerce. PSM SII 10:58-59*  
A determination on adjustments necessary to the interstate and other roads that feed into the Goethals Bridge is needed.
6. *David Stilwell, US Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service. L 4:2-3*  
The Service recommends that the Project Sponsors work with other planned and ongoing regional transportation projects including the Comprehensive Port Improvement Plan, and the Cross Harbor freight rail project.
7. *Richard Gualtieri, No affiliation identified. PSM SI2 3:37-38*  
He is in favor of this study and hopes that the agency could also look at the Outerbridge Crossing which has many of the same deficiencies and problems and carries a similar traffic load. Consideration should also be given to the transportation facility that would be feeding into and off of the bridge so that these do not become overburdened.
8. *Ralph Marra, No affiliation identified. L 5:1*  
The Staten Island and West Shore Expressways are main arteries that are overburdened and inadequate. At least two lanes must be added in each direction. Secondary and tertiary roads are getting congested and making commuting very difficult. Approving the new bridge and greatly expanding the expressways would help.
9. *Teresa Toro, Tri-State Transportation Campaign. PSM SII 2:38*  
*Damien Newton, Tri-State Transportation Campaign. PSM E1 3:40-41*  
The study should develop scenarios that assume construction of the single and double rail tunnel under the harbor as proposed by the New York City Economic Development Corporation, which in some aspects would be a parallel route complementing the I-278 corridor.
10. *Eric Larkin, Utility and Transportation Contractors Association of New Jersey. PSM E1 6:51*  
A new reconstructed bridge will allow traffic to move across the Arthur Kill in a much safer and efficient manner. However, the highways that serve as ingresses and egresses must be able to handle the increased flow of traffic.
11. *Jeffrey Zupan, Regional Plan Association. PSM E1 8:55-60*

The Goethals Bridge is one link on a chain of transportation facilities serving the critical southern corridor to and through New York City. The corridor is critical to the economy of the tri-state region as only one of two highway corridors providing access for trucks into and through New York City from the West. The corridor stretches from I-78 in New Jersey, the New Jersey Turnpike, the Goethals Bridge, the Staten Island Expressway, the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge, the Gowanus Expressway and the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway in Brooklyn, the Kosciuszko Bridge, and the Long Island Expressway. No less than six agencies are responsible for these facilities. And no less than six projects are in some state of decision-making in this corridor. There is no sign that these agencies are working on these projects as if any but their own existed. This corridor is too important to be left with no one in charge. The Goethals Bridge in particular is critical to the economy of Union County in New Jersey and to Staten Island.

The Goethals EIS can be a springboard for rationalization of both toll and preferential treatment policies in the I-278 corridor. The agencies should convene an interagency group that meets regularly and informs the public, while seeking input from users of the facilities. The question of what capacity on the bridge is needed and what its configuration should be cannot be addressed until the approach above has been taken.

12. *Mayor J. Christian Bollwage, City of Elizabeth. PSM E1 1:31-33, L 7:1*

The Mayor calls for a summit between now and the completion of the DEIS between the Port Authority, the New Jersey Department of Transportation, the City of Linden, the City of Elizabeth, Staten Island representatives and the County of Union to address transportation issues, and to develop a sound expansion plan which safeguards Elizabeth's roads, infrastructure and residents. You cannot put money in to build the Goethals Bridge and leave the interchange with the Turnpike Authority. The interconnection between Exit 13 of the Turnpike, Bayway Ave., and the city streets and Goethals Bridge, has been in need of significant improvements for years. It is not going to get better by toll plaza widening and it is not going to get better just by building another bridge south of the existing bridge. Bayway Ave., an important industrial corridor to the City of Elizabeth, needs to be improved to assure the smooth operation of businesses.

13. *John Tancredi, Staten Island Resident. PSM SII 5:43*

He is in favor of construction of a new bridge because of structural problems, traffic flow and safety issues. But he is against tying in any kind of studies, impact or other types, with the bridge to any other requirements for other boroughs. It is important to build this structure as soon as possible.

14. *William Wright, No affiliation identified. L 21:1*

No improvements should be undertaken for the Goethals until the Port Authority makes long overdue improvements to the area's rail network, both freight and passenger. Both Staten Island and Brooklyn oppose any improvements to the Goethals as the roads feeding the Goethals are at gridlock as well as being severely outdated themselves.

15. *Douglas A. Currey, New York State Department of Transportation. L 20:1-2*

NYS DOT recognizes the importance of the Southern Corridor from a Regional mobility and economic development perspective, and the importance of the Goethals within the Southern Corridor. The bridge is adjacent to the West Shore Expressway (NY440)/Staten Island Expressway (I-278) interchange and any build alternative may impact both operations and level of service at the location. Changes to the bridge may produce changes in traffic demand along the entire I-278 corridor. Coordination of planning efforts between all affected parties in this corridor is very important. NYS DOT is continuing the extension of the SIE Median Bus Lane and other improvements along the corridor.

16. *Robert Menendez, US House of Representatives. L 27:1*

He agrees with the Mayor of Elizabeth that a summit should be held between local governments and relevant transportation agencies to develop a sound expansion plan. This summit should be held now to help ensure that more serious resistance to the project is avoided in the future.

***Response:*** *The environmental review process for the proposed Goethals Bridge replacement will include coordination with transportation (and other) projects, studies, and initiatives in the study area and in the NY/NJ region, including those suggested during the scoping process, as summarized in the comments above. Consideration of other projects, local as well as regional, will be reflected in:*

- *inclusion of programmed and committed projects in the future No-Action Alternative;*
- *definition and development of project build alternatives for evaluation in the DEIS;*
- *evaluation of existing and future No-Action conditions; and*
- *evaluation of direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of alternatives evaluated in the DEIS.*

*The purpose and need, and associated project goals, for the proposed Goethals Bridge replacement are the basis on which project alternatives for evaluation in the DEIS will be defined; that is, alternatives must focus on improvements that have the potential to address the considerations specified in the purpose and need. As the Goethals Bridge is a critical link in the region's transportation system, any proposed improvement alternatives for the bridge and/or in its corridor will be considered as part of the integrated transportation system within which the crossing operates. And the evaluation of potential effects resulting with the No-Action alternative or implementation of any build alternative will address both local and regional roadway networks, considering other major ongoing local and regional transportation projects.*

*Information regarding existing traffic and transportation conditions, as well as major transportation projects and ongoing transportation planning in the region, will be compiled directly from the other projects, project sponsors, and other pertinent agencies, including those related to the Staten Island Expressway Median Bus Lane Extension, West Shore Expressway Corridor/Service Road Improvements, Gowanus Expressway Viaduct Replacement, and Cross Harbor Freight Movement Project, among others. In addition, a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), comprised of agencies with expertise in traffic and transportation (and associated air quality and noise considerations) is being established by the US Coast Guard as part of the EIS process; the TAC will meet several times during the process in order to provide data and information, and other input and guidance on the conduct of the environmental studies for the DEIS, as they relate to traffic/transportation, and mobile-source air quality and noise. Select other stakeholders, notably officials from the affected municipalities, will be invited by the US Coast Guard to also participate in the TAC, and provide input regarding local, community concerns to the traffic and environmental studies for the DEIS.*

## 2.3 Goods Movement Issues

1. *Teresa Toro, Tri-State Transportation Campaign. PSM SII 2:38*  
*Damien Newton, Tri-State Transportation Campaign. PSM E1 3:40-41*  
 The Campaign urges the study to consider a variety of regional rail freight scenarios in its traffic model, and to take into account the Staten Island Railroad link, and pending improvements in the New Jersey rail network.
2. *Linda Baran, Staten Island Chamber of Commerce. PSM SII 10:59-60*

The concurrent proposal for a rail freight tunnel that bypasses Staten Island may provide an opportunity to identify diverted freight trips as economic growth will not allow reduction in freight movements. The only thing that could change is the movement mode.

3. *Kamal Selah, Union County Division of Economic Development. ASM 4:3; PSM E1 2:36*  
Union County suggests the project consider the interaction with freight activities especially rail adjacent or near to the bridge.
4. *Robert Cassara, Gowanus Community Stakeholder Group. PSM SII 6:46-47*  
The Port Authority is conducting the Comprehensive Port Improvement Project. There will be large increase in the amount of goods coming into the area once goals of the plan are realized.
5. *Jim Devine, New York Container Terminal / Resident. PSM SII 9:55-56*  
The NY Container Terminal invites the study to become involved in the future growth plans of the New York Container Terminal to properly scope what truck traffic will be in the near and distant future.

***Response: The analyses of future conditions with the No-Action and project alternatives will incorporate consideration of major programmed and committed improvements to the regional transportation network, including rail improvement and extension projects, and notably those related to rail facilities serving the Howland Hook Marine Terminal (HHMT) and other nearby port facilities. Future growth plans and projections for the New York Container Terminal, which operates at the HHMT, will be obtained and incorporated in the analyses of future changes in goods-movement modes and volumes and the resultant effects on overall traffic conditions.***

***Information regarding major transportation projects and ongoing transportation planning in the region will be compiled directly from the other projects, project sponsors, and other pertinent agencies, including related to the Staten Island Railroad, New Jersey rail network, Cross Harbor Freight Movement Project, the Comprehensive Port Improvement Plan, among others. In addition, a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), comprised of agencies with expertise in traffic and transportation (and associated air quality and noise considerations) is being established by the US Coast Guard; the purpose of the TAC is to facilitate the transfer of data and information to the study team, and to obtain other input and guidance from the agencies on the conduct of the studies for the DEIS, as they relate to traffic/transportation, and mobile-source air quality and noise.***

## 2.4 Property Impacts

1. *Joe Doherty, No affiliation identified. PSM E2 1:29*  
He is concerned about how the residents of relocated Bayway will be affected by the new bridge. If a new bridge is built south of the present structure, will the homes and properties be allowed to remain intact or will they be bought out at a fair price or will they be subjected to an eminent domain scenario?
2. *John Surmay, City of Elizabeth. PSM E1 4:46*  
Special consideration should be given to residential properties in and around any area that may be impacted by construction or replacement of the bridge, especially people who live on Krakow St. If the properties on this street are needed for any construction or access, then compensation, relocation or purchase of these properties must be a priority.
3. *Denny Newberry, No affiliation identified. PSM E1 7:52*

The whole area along the waterfront is becoming more attractive. Property values have increased everywhere and residents don't want to lose out on this. The area has come a long way and there is some history there.

4. *Mayor J. Christian Bollwage, City of Elizabeth. PSM E1 1:33-35, L 7:1*  
People live on Krakow St. It is a neighborhood that stands to lose everything. This proposed expansion would compromise the air space above Krakow St. in addition to the physical public street that will be occupied. The Port Authority should have a meeting with these residents to discuss if buying their property out or enhancing their living opportunities is something that should be discussed at fair market value. The proposed expansion will need the City of Elizabeth's cooperation in putting in pilings and everything else. Schools 17 and 22 (directly across from Goethals Bridge) must be properly protected from the traffic, noise and air pollution emanating from any expansion. The residents in the vicinity of the interchange at the base of the bridge, Bellmore Ave., are already subject to unacceptable noise and air pollution impacts. This bridge could only make it worse.

***Response: All alternatives evaluated in the EIS, including bridge replacement alternatives, will be developed to avoid or minimize impacts to residential and commercial properties to the extent possible. Throughout the environmental review process, the USCG and the Port Authority will seek the input of local residents and officials, including on issues of potential impact to properties located near the existing bridge and potential bridge replacement options. The EIS will analyze and document the potential impacts that would result from construction and operation of bridge replacement and other alternatives to the residents of Elizabeth and Staten Island, particularly those residing on relocated Bayway, Krakow Street, Bellmore Avenue, and Amboy Avenue in Elizabeth and in the mobile home park located along Goethals Road North in Staten Island. The analysis of potential property impacts will address a variety of factors, including real estate trends, local property values, and neighborhood character. For any alternatives that would require direct takings of residential properties, the Port Authority will offer a fair market value as compensation to the owners.***

## 2.5 Study Area(s)

1. *Robert Cassara, Gowanus Community Stakeholder Group. PSM SII 6:48*  
The environmental impacts will be greater than within 2 miles of the bridge. The EIS scoping must take into account the environmental impacts for the entire I-278 corridor.
2. *Joan McDonald, NYC Economic Development Corporation. L 6:1*  
They request that the Coast Guard expand the DEIS study area to include the Arthur Kill Lift Bridge and its approach spans. The environmental analysis should provide an assessment of the potential transportation, vibration, construction, and infrastructure impacts of all alternatives on the reactivated Arthur Kill Lift Bridge and the Howland Hook Marine Terminal.
3. *Kathryn McGuckin, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. ASM 3:2-3*  
The EIS needs to consider the direct and cumulative impacts from these projects: the Harbor Freight Tunnel; improvements to Howland Hook Marine Terminal, Port Ivory, the Arthur Kill Railroad Lift Bridge, and the GATX site.
4. *Kamal Saleh, Union County Division of Economic Development. ASM 4:3*  
The cumulative impact assessment should also include the adjacent New Jersey area (i.e. Union County), as well as Staten Island, and other projects such as the Cross-Harbor Project.
5. *Teresa Toro, Tri-State Transportation Campaign. PSM SII 2:36*

*Damien Newton, Tri-State Transportation Campaign. PSM E1 3:38-39*

The Campaign wonders whether the study area is large enough. The Goethals Bridge is part of an extended corridor and conditions of the Goethals can affect traffic patterns from Rahway to Queens or even farther. While the Port Authority and the Coast Guard have limited ability to affect other parts of the corridor, the EIS could outline and develop scenarios showing traffic effects on and around the Goethals that actions made by I-278 and the Turnpike corridors could potentially have.

6. *Linda Baran, Staten Island Chamber of Commerce. PSM S11 10:58-59*

The current scope of the Secondary Impact Study must extend to include crossing Staten Island to reach the Verrazano Bridge.

7. *Marty Markowitz, Brooklyn Borough President. L 16:1-2*

The Borough President believes that this project will have potentially significant impact on Brooklyn. Because of the Goethals Bridge, as one of three arterial bridges linking the interstate highway system in New Jersey (I-287, I-95, I-78) with I-278 in New York, it cannot be evaluated in isolation. Congestion at one facility results in diversions to the other facilities. This study provides an opportunity to consider ways to improve traffic conditions at all three facilities. Traffic volumes/patterns should be reviewed on a regional basis along the I-278 corridor. The interaction of the Goethals Bridge and the New Jersey Turnpike is another effect that needs to be studied. The larger study area should include the I-278 corridor and affected feeder and diversion routes, such as Brooklyn truck routes to/from Queens and Long Island, as well as the East River Bridges to Manhattan and affected streets. An origination/destination survey and the creation of a regional trip table is recommended, in coordination with the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council's Best Practices Model. Direct and indirect impacts should be thoroughly quantified and analyzed.

8. *James Daley, Union County Department of Economic Development. L 18:1*

The County of Union feels strongly that environmental impacts go beyond the immediate envelope of the proposed bridge and it is essential that effects of the project take into consideration the neighborhoods and corridors that serve as ingress and egress to the bridge, including the NJ Turnpike, I-278, Routes 1&9, and local roads within Elizabeth and Linden between the Arthur Kill and Routes 1&9. The County of Union strongly opposes any analysis of the project's impacts that does not take these areas of concern into account, and is willing to work with the agencies to identify the appropriate areas of impact.

***Response: The Primary Study Area for the evaluation of the No-Action and project alternatives defines the area within which direct and adjacency impacts may occur due to the footprint of the alternative bridge alignments. The Secondary Study Area, which extends approximately one-half mile in all directions from the existing Goethals Bridge right-of-way and includes the Arthur Kill Lift Bridge within its boundary, is the area within which indirect environmental and socioeconomic impacts may occur with the alternative bridge alignments constructed in general proximity to the existing bridge. This Secondary Study Area will be expanded or re-defined if an alternative that is further removed from the existing bridge is identified through the alternatives screening process as warranting detailed evaluation in the DEIS.***

***Traffic and traffic-related impacts, such as air quality and noise, will be addressed within a larger Traffic Study Area encompassing the Primary and Secondary Study Areas and the immediate New Jersey counties and New York City boroughs where impacts attributed to traffic diversions or increased traffic levels could potentially occur (e.g., Union and Middlesex Counties in New Jersey and Staten Island and Brooklyn in New York City).***

*Cumulative impacts, including those potentially affecting areas beyond the limits of the Secondary Study Area, will be addressed, as applicable, for the various projects and proposed improvements identified in the above comments, as well as others that are identified during the environmental review process.*

## **2.6 Environmental Impacts**

### **2.6.1 Air Quality**

1. *Fred LeMoine, The Metallic Lathers and Reinforcing Ironworkers Union of New York. PSM SII 11:63*  
A new bridge will allow for less idling of engines which will improve air quality.
2. *Leah Gebhardt, No affiliation identified. PSM SII 14: 72*  
Additional lanes will improve traffic flow and promote cleaner air over the water.
3. *Ralph Marra, No affiliation identified. L 5:1*  
He disagrees with Ms. Warren of the Staten Islanders for Clean Air and believes that a congested slow moving expressway will cause more air pollution than a functioning one.
4. *Alex Garcia, Hispanic American Chamber of Commerce of Essex County. EM 2:1*  
Vehicular pollution is a significant factor in high asthma rates in minority communities. Any plan that reduces idling will benefit our community. It is important to measure pollution level reduction and benefit to minority communities.

***Response:*** *The air quality analyses to be conducted for the DEIS will evaluate local and regional changes to pollutant levels near heavily traveled roadways and congested intersections for the future No-Action alternative (i.e., if no Goethals Bridge replacement or other project alternative is implemented) and for each project alternative. The air quality analyses will be based on projections of future traffic volumes and patterns for each alternative, including consideration of any change in the number of travel lanes. Existing and future pollutant levels will be compared with pertinent air quality standards and criteria to determine potential impacts or benefits of each alternative.*

*Potential air quality effects, as well as other types of potential impacts, on minority communities will also be evaluated as part of the Environmental Justice assessment, to determine whether a given alternative would result in “disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority communities and low-income communities” (per federal Executive Order 12898).*

### **2.6.2 Archaeology**

1. *City of New York Landmarks Preservation Commission. L 3:2*  
“May be archaeologically significant; requesting additional materials” is checked on the Environmental Review form. The text of the scope of work for the EIS appears to be adequate.

***Response:*** *Comment noted. The EIS will include the completion of Phase IA and IB field studies and the analysis of any recovered materials. Any potential archaeologically-sensitive materials and/or sites will be documented in the EIS, and efforts to minimize any potential impacts will be considered as part of the evaluation of alternatives for selection of a preferred alternative. Any archaeological findings will also be reported to the respective NJ or NY State Historic Preservation Offices.*

### 2.6.3 Construction Impacts

1. *LT CDR Michael Keane/ENS Charles Baxter, US Coast Guard. ASM 1:2*  
USCG's concerns regarding construction should be addressed so as to ensure that the navigation channel stays open to vessel traffic at all times.
2. *Mike Vissichelli, US Army Corps of Engineers. ASM 6:4*  
Impacts to the existing Federal navigation channel must be addressed during construction.
3. *Jeffrey Elmer, General Contractors Association of New York. PSM SI2 1:32-33*  
On other projects, the Port Authority has required ultra low sulphur diesel fuel in construction equipment. They also have plans that prevent unnecessary dust and noise at construction sites. Our contractors will take all necessary steps to make this construction project environmentally friendly and respectful of impacted neighborhoods.
4. *Richard L. Tomer, US Army Corps of Engineers. L 22:2*  
All construction practices that could potentially disrupt navigation, particularly within the Federal navigation channel, should be discussed, along with alternatives that would not result in such disruption.
5. *Kenneth Koschek, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. L 26:3*  
NJDEP recommends a timing restriction from 1/1 – 6/30 be imposed on any in-water work, blasting, and/or sediment generating activity. They recommend that any work that would be covered by the timing restriction be done behind cofferdams installed before the start of the timing restriction and not removed until after the end of the timing restriction. Construction activities could continue within the cofferdams during the timing restriction.

***Response:*** *Construction activities, methods, procedures, equipment, and durations will be defined for the project alternatives evaluated in the DEIS, and will be further defined in relevant environmental permit applications that will be required for implementation of a replacement bridge or other structural alternative. The development of construction details will seek to avoid or minimize construction-period impacts, including to navigation, to the extent feasible and reasonable. Any necessary seasonal restrictions for in-water work or any other aspects of construction, and associated protective measures (e.g., cofferdams) will be investigated, in consultation with the pertinent regulatory and review agencies (e.g., NOAA, NYSDEC, NJDEP, etc.), and analyzed and documented in the DEIS.*

*The environmental analyses will include assessment of each alternative's potential impacts resulting from its construction and, as applicable, demolition of the existing bridge. As necessary, specific measures to mitigate any significant construction-period impacts will be investigated and described.*

### 2.6.4 Economics

1. *Timothy Desiderio, Staten Island Economic Development Corp. PSM SII 8:53-54*  
SIEDC supports the modernization of the Goethals Bridge. It is vital to the economic development of the Borough to provide ample access to Staten Island for those coming from New Jersey. Businesses interested in relocating to Staten Island have interest in getting goods and people on and off the island. The modernization will represent an advantage to Staten Island in marketing the borough and will prevent the loss of businesses to other areas in the region.

2. *Fred LeMoine, The Metallic Lathers and Reinforcing Ironworkers Union of New York. PSM S11 11:63*  
A new bridge will make traveling in the area more desirable, and attract new businesses such as hotels, retail outlets, and restaurants. The project will bring hundreds of new jobs and tax revenues to Staten Island during the construction of the bridge and after its completion.
3. *Jeffrey Elmer, General Contractors Association of New York. PSM S12 1:30-31*  
The replacement of the Goethals will also lead to jobs and economic security for Staten Island residents. The construction alone will put six hundred men and women to work with an additional seven hundred jobs for construction material suppliers and other support services.
4. *Lawrence Kudla, Local 282, Teamsters. PSM S12 2:34-35*  
Local 282 represents around eight hundred Teamsters and their families in Staten Island and we speak in favor of this project. This new bridge will create jobs and income for members of the building trades.
5. *Alex Garcia, Hispanic American Chamber of Commerce of Essex County. EM 2:1 and PSM E2 2:30-31*  
Building the bridge will create economic opportunities for the community in terms of construction employment, contracting employment and consultant opportunities. The Port Authority has a history of creating opportunities for our community which we are sure will be part of the requirements for the new bridge construction. It is important to measure economic benefits to minority communities in the final outcome.
6. *Richard Par, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 56:2*  
*Sean Shannon, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 24:2*  
*Tiffany Ince, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 149:2*  
*Heinz Bodenstab, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 127:2*  
*Leonard Garcia, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 151:2 and CS 186:2*  
The bridge is very old and is falling apart. The new project would also create much needed jobs.

***Response:*** *Comments noted. The economic impact of the construction and operation of the project alternatives, including a comparison with future economic conditions associated with the No-Action alternative, will be evaluated and presented in the DEIS. Potential economic effects on low-income and/or minority communities will be evaluated as part of the Environmental Justice analysis.*

### 2.6.5 Energy

1. *Fred LeMoine, The Metallic Lathers and Reinforcing Ironworkers Union of New York. PSM S11 11:63*  
A new bridge will result in less use of the natural resource of oil.

***Response:*** *Direct and indirect energy expenditures associated with construction and operation of project alternatives will be estimated. Depending on the particular project alternatives that will be evaluated in the DEIS, estimation of direct energy expenditures will address fuel consumption by vehicles operating on roadways and any other transportation modes (e.g., transit, freight rail) affected by a given alternative. The estimation of indirect energy expenditures will address one-time, non-recoverable energy costs associated with constructing a project alternative.*

### 2.6.6 Fisheries

1. *Kenneth Koschek, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. L 26:3*  
NJDEP has concerns about the inadequacy of the proposed 2 to 3-day sampling to address migratory and resident species. The following species of concern are in the project area during various times of the year: anadromous fish (American shad and river herring), striped bass, winter flounder and both species of sturgeon (Atlantic and Shortnose) along with various other species of lesser concern. If an alternative is chosen that would result in the elimination of the existing bridge piers, it is requested that a portion of the near-shore piers be left above the bottom to provide habitat diversity in the water column. The resulting remnant structure should be designed to eliminate any hazard to navigation; the remnant structure and its attached organisms would benefit marine bio-diversity. The Division of Fish and Wildlife's Bureau of Marine Fisheries would be willing to assist with questions or concerns.

***Response:*** *No field sampling of aquatic biota has been proposed as part of the GBR EIS, as there is a considerable amount of existing information regarding the fish communities in the defined study areas. Regional and site-specific data addressing anadromous and other finfish of the Arthur Kill and associated tributaries exist and are available for use in the EIS studies. In addition to the site-specific surveys conducted for the Staten Island Bridges Program (SIBP) EIS in the 1990s, sources include regional studies conducted by federal and state agencies.*

*Existing conditions and potential project impacts will be described based on data provided by the NJDEP Bureau of Marine Fisheries, NOAA Fisheries, and NYSDEC, and on studies performed for the Arthur Kill 41-foot deepening, the SIBP DEIS (1995) and the SIBP FEIS (1997). Fisheries in the study areas will also be addressed as part of the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) assessment that will be conducted in compliance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (PL 94-265), as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996 (PL 104-267). The function of the existing bridge piers as fish habitat will be reviewed and addressed in the DEIS.*

*Regarding replacement bridge alternatives to be evaluated in the DEIS, bridge design and environmental factors will be considered to determine necessary and appropriate pier locations, including possible retention of a near-shore remnant structure to benefit marine bio-diversity, as suggested in the comment above.*

### **2.6.7 Historic**

1. *City of New York Landmarks Preservation Commission. L 3:1*  
“Appears to be eligible for National Register Listing” is checked on the Environmental Review form. The text for historic properties in the EIS scope appears to be acceptable. The LPC concurs with the SHPO finding regarding the eligibility of the bridge for listing on the State/National Registers.
2. *Kenneth Koschek, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. L 26:4-5*  
The Goethals Bridge was determined eligible to be listed in the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places by both New York and New Jersey. It is clearly a significant and prominent landmark in the region and means to preserve this important structure need to be explored. The preferred alternative for the previous study involved rehabilitation of the existing bridge and the construction of a parallel structure. The current preferred alternative would demolish and replace the existing bridge. There has been no adequate explanation for this change. In its comments, NJDEP has included a historic bridge alternatives analysis outline developed by the Historic Preservation Office. They suggest that the alternatives analysis report include this effort.

They suggest that the US Coast Guard begin the process of Section 106 review in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act at the earliest stages of project planning to best ensure that their regulatory responsibilities are well coordinated and efficiently executed.

Three additional resources were identified as eligible during consultation for the Staten Island Bridges Program: the Staten Island Railroad Vertical Lift Bridge, the Staten Island Railroad (New Jersey portion), and the Scherzer Rolling Vertical Lift Bridge over the Elizabeth River.

***Response:*** *Field documentation of architectural resources within the area of potential effect (APE) for each project alternative evaluated in the DEIS will be conducted in accordance with NHPA guidelines. Definition of the APE for any given alternative will use mapping prepared for this purpose and a visual inspection of the area where each alternative alignment would be situated to identify the areas that might be exposed to direct physical, aural, or visual impacts. In addition, survey files at the NJHPO/NYOHRP will be reviewed for information on previously documented resources in or near the APE defined for each alternative.*

#### 2.6.8 Navigable Airspace

1. *Diana Crean, USDOT Federal Aviation Administration. L 2:1*  
The FAA is concerned about the project's impact to navigable airspace. Please have the proponents of this project complete a Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration (FAA Form 7460-1), giving the exact location and height of the project, including all appurtenances or construction equipment to be used. The FAA will conduct an aeronautical study upon receipt to determine if there is impact to navigable airspace and if marking and lighting will be necessary.

***Response:*** *The EIS process is still in its very early stages and information is still being gathered for the preparation/documentation of the Draft EIS which will ultimately support the selection of a preferred alternative. The USCG and the Port Authority will ensure that coordination/consultation with FAA for the Notice of Proposed Construction or Alteration is conducted as early as possible in the environmental review process to permit completion of the associated aeronautical study. Such consultation is not expected to occur before the spring 2005.*

#### 2.6.9 Navigation

1. *T.L. Wolford, Conoco Phillips Company. CS 3:2*  
The navigable channel under the bridge in the Arthur Kill must remain unrestricted and available for use by large tankers bound from Stapleton to Bayway.
2. *F. Fiumano, USCG Waterways Operations Division. L12:1*  
Navigational concerns relating to the Howland Hook Terminal and Tosco Bayway Refinery must be considered due to the proximity of bridge and large vessel traffic.

***Response:*** *The environmental studies will address both horizontal and vertical clearance requirements for any new crossing alternative over the Arthur Kill that is evaluated in the DEIS. The USCG and its environmental consultants will consult with users of the Arthur Kill, as well as marine-dependent property owners and facility operators along the Arthur Kill during the investigation of minimum clearance requirements. Navigation-related groups such as the American Waterways Operators, Sandy Hook Pilots Association, Maritime Association and the New York Shipping Association will also be consulted. Any new bridge alternative will be designed to avoid the Arthur Kill's navigable channel and conform to minimum vertical clearance requirements, to the extent feasible. The DEIS will*

*evaluate the project alternatives to identify any potential impacts to navigation and investigate mitigation measures, if necessary, to address any significant navigational impacts.*

#### 2.6.10 Noise

1. *John Surmay, City of Elizabeth. PSM E1 4:45*  
He is conversant with most of the traffic noise issues and there are enough for concern at this area. These need to be addressed in any replacement of the bridge.

***Response:*** *Any potential traffic noise impacts at sensitive receptors in proximity to the project alternatives or adjacent to areas where traffic patterns may change significantly, will be identified and addressed in the DEIS. Appropriate mitigation measures for any projected significant noise-impacted areas will be investigated and documented in the DEIS, in compliance with appropriate guidelines and criteria.*

#### 2.6.11 Water Resources

1. *Leah Gebhardt, No affiliation identified. PSM S11 14:71*  
Having four lanes instead of three would slow traffic idling with additional fumes accumulating and dissipating over the water. This would help maintain or improve water quality in the area around Staten Island and New Jersey.
2. *F. Fiumano, USCG Waterways Operations Division. L12:1*  
The Captain of the Port will not authorize any extended closures of the waterway. Facilities on the Arthur Kill are receiving increasing shipments of liquefied gas and other potentially dangerous products. Bridge design should account for adequate standoff protection from vessels transferring such hazardous materials at berth.

***Response:*** *The DEIS will include analyses of potential project impacts to air quality, water quality and navigation. Design of bridge replacement or other structural alternatives requiring construction and/or operation in the Arthur Kill will consider safety and security issues associated with vessels using the Arthur Kill, including those with hazardous cargoes.*

#### 2.6.12 Wetlands

1. *Eric Rothstein, NYC Department of Parks and Recreation. ASM 5:3*  
Mitigation issues for upland habitats, wetlands and aquatic issues should be handled as a package and not as independent issues as indicated in the draft Scope of Work.
2. *David Stilwell, US Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service. L 4:3*  
Wetlands along Morses Creek in NJ are classified by the NJ Department of Environmental Protection as foraging habitat for the NJ-listed (threatened) black-crowned night heron and yellow-crowned night heron, as well as other colonial nesting waterbirds. Project sponsors should contact the NJ Endangered and Nongame Species Program, Division of Fish and Wildlife. Smaller wetland areas are mapped near the intersection of I-278 and the NJ Turnpike. In Staten Island, important wetland resources in the project area include tidal and non-tidal wetlands associated with Old Place Creek and wetland mitigation projects managed by the NYC DEP. The project sponsors should include a detailed analysis of the direct, indirect, and cumulative wetland impacts associated with the project, and expressly consider avoidance and minimization of wetland impacts in the alternatives screening process. The project documents mentioned the use

of mitigation banks as potential compensatory migration options. This option is limited by the list of approved banks in the immediate project area, and should only be considered when all other on-site wetland creation or restoration options have been exhausted.

3. *Jeffrey Zupan, Regional Plan Association. PSM E1 8:60*  
Designs for the bridge should consider how to avoid damaging the wetlands of the adjoining Harbor Herons complex.
4. *Andrew J. Willner, NY/NJ Baykeepers. L 14:3*  
The problem of narrow lanes could be addressed by increasing the size of the roadway on the present structure, and needed reinforcement of the structure, with much less impact on the natural resources including wetlands of the Arthur Kill Estuary. Shadowing from an increased footprint of the existing Goethals Bridge or twinning will have an adverse impact on natural resources and wildlife. We assert that because of the historical impacts on the natural resources of the Arthur Kill, the detriment of this proposal far outweighs any benefit, that there are alternatives, and that the impact is unmitigatable. A mid-Island alternative location avoiding wetlands impacts should be explored and a “no action” alternative to this project should be part of any EIS.
5. *Richard L. Tomer, US Army Corps of Engineers. L 22:2*  
Impacts to wetlands should include every activity that would destroy or degrade wetlands and other waters of the US on a temporary or permanent basis. This includes areas that would be permanently or temporarily filled, areas adversely impacted by mechanized equipment, and other indirect impacts. Filling of these resources shall not be permitted unless the applicant demonstrates that the project has been designed and constructed to avoid and minimize adverse effects to the maximum extent practicable. You will be required to provide a detailed analysis on how you would mitigate for unavoidable impacts, including the size and type of wetland to be impacted.
6. *Kenneth Koschek, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. L 26:1*  
There are no wetlands mapped under the Coastal Wetlands of 1970 at this location.

***Response: Mitigation measures for upland habitats, wetlands and aquatic habitats will be addressed comprehensively. These resources are discussed in separate sections of the Draft Scoping Document, each of which addresses mitigation issues and strategies. Mitigation for project-related impacts will be combined whenever practicable. The development of mitigation measures for impacts to ecological resources will also be addressed by an Interagency Mitigation Group (IMG), which will be established for the project.***

***The DEIS will include analyses of potential temporary and permanent direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts to wetlands and wildlife habitat in the primary and secondary study areas. Existing data from the NYSDEC Natural Heritage Program and Endangered Species Unit, NJDEP Endangered and Nongame Species Program and Natural Heritage Program, USFWS, and NOAA will be reviewed to identify records of threatened, endangered, or otherwise protected species. Letters have been sent to these agencies requesting information on listed species and other species of concern that may be located in the project study areas. Wetland resource information provided by NYCDEP for wetland mitigation projects managed by NYCDEP and NYSDEC will also be reviewed. Alternatives will be evaluated regarding their ability to avoid impacts to wetlands to the extent practicable, and to minimize impacts where they cannot be avoided. Any wetland mitigation required for unavoidable project-related impacts will be developed in coordination with the permitting agencies.***

*As addressed in the Draft Scoping Document, preliminary structural alternatives will include in-situ bridge replacement and bridge replacement in locations other than that of the existing bridge and those preliminary alternatives will be screened for selection of alternatives to be further and thoroughly evaluated in the DEIS. The screening process will include consideration of potential wetland-related impacts. More detailed wetland impact assessments will be performed for the alternatives advanced to the DEIS level of analysis. For the project alternatives studied in detail in the DEIS, shadows created by those alternatives will be analyzed to evaluate their potential impacts to natural resources.*

### 2.6.13 Wildlife Resources

1. *Mary Colligan, US Department of Commerce, NOAA. L 1:1*  
No listed species is known to occur in the Arthur Kill where the project is located. As such, no consultation under the provisions of Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, is necessary.
2. *David Stilwell, US Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service. L 4:2-4*  
The peregrine falcon, listed as endangered by the State of New York, is known to occur in the vicinity of the proposed project. The project should be coordinated with Peter Nye, Endangered Species Unit, NYSDEC, and Kathleen Clark, Division of Fish and Wildlife, Tuckahoe Wildlife Management Area. Except for occasional transient individuals, no other federally listed or proposed endangered or threatened flora or fauna are known to occur within the vicinity of the proposed project site. The Service recommends that the project sponsors contact the Service on an annual basis for updates. The Service recommends that project proponents evaluate bird collision mortality at the existing Goethals Bridge, and include measures to reduce mortality in the design of all alternatives considered in the DEIS.
3. *Mayor J. Christian Bollwage, City of Elizabeth. L 7:1*  
The disruption of the ecosystem is a factor. The wildlife resources that exist on the three islands within the Arthur Kill and Kill Van Kull must be preserved and protected.
4. *John Surmay, City of Elizabeth. PSM E1 4:43-44*  
The Goethals Bridge Pond, which is hydrologically connected to the waters of the Kill van Kull, is an important feeding area for colonial water birds. Over ninety species of birds have been identified in and around the pond, of which twenty-two species breed at the pond (including cattle egret, green heron to the great blue heron). The pond's ecosystem is in excess of a hundred acres. There are also three islands within Arthur Kill and Kill van Kull which have provided breeding sites since the 1970s, where water birds breed and feed. The concern is that disruption of the ecosystem be at a minimum, and if some sensitive areas are disturbed, then an equally pristine area be established somewhere else.
5. *Eric Rothstein, City of New York Parks & Recreation Natural Resources Group. M 1:1-3*  
The listing of species are the bare minimum of what should be investigated as part of the EIS based on our experience in western Staten Island (see memo for complete listing). The NYS Natural Heritage Program should be consulted for a rare element occurrence record to determine if there are rare elements within ¼ mile of the project site. The publication "Islanded Nature: Natural Area Conservation in Western Staten Island" should also be consulted. The following surveys should be conducted: breeding bird survey in May, a winter waterfowl survey, a pre-construction survey, and a plantation survey. Monitoring should also be conducted for fish, invertebrates, breeding birds, foraging birds, and crustaceans, at the times suggested in the memo.
6. *Kenneth Koschek, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. L 26:3-4*

The potential impact to wildlife from a bridge replacement on the south side of the existing bridge appears to be substantial on the New York side of the Arthur Kill. A search of the NJDEP's Landscape Project V2 and the Heritage database revealed no areas of concern on the New Jersey side for any threatened and/or endangered species. They recommend a search of the surrounding two-mile area using i-MapNJ to assist with the generation of any T&E species list associated with the project area and the immediate vicinity.

There is a concern that the 2-3 day sampling survey is unacceptable to identify project area species of waterbirds that use this area depending on the weather and status of their migration.

***Response: Data regarding the use of the project study areas by peregrine falcons have been requested from USFWS, NYSDEC, NJDEP, and NYCDEP. As necessary, these agencies will also be contacted annually for updated information during the environmental review process. The EIS will include an assessment of potential project-related impacts to birds and the need for future data requests and updates.***

***The DEIS will include an assessment of potential project impacts to sensitive ecological areas and designated critical habitats in the primary and secondary study areas. The assessment will address habitat usage and potential fragmentation issues for colonial waterbirds and other wildlife in the surrounding area, including the islands in the Arthur Kill and Kill van Kull as well as Goethals Pond. Information provided by the Harbor Herons Project will be used to evaluate potential project-related impacts to these islands and surrounding waters as breeding and foraging sites for herons, egrets and ibises. Any mitigation required for impacts to these areas and habitats from specific project alternatives will be developed in coordination with the permitting agencies.***

***Existing data will be reviewed to identify endangered or threatened species that are known or likely to use the primary study area and surrounding area. These data include records of threatened, endangered, or otherwise protected species from the NYSDEC Natural Heritage Program and Endangered Species Unit, NJDEP Endangered and Nongame Species Program and Natural Heritage Program, USFWS, and NOAA. In addition, the New York City Audubon Society's Harbor Herons Project has been conducting annual nesting surveys in the general vicinity of the Goethals Bridge for two decades. Data from other studies in the project area, including the breeding bird surveys conducted by NYCDEP's Salt Marsh Restoration Team, the Harbor Herons Project, the USACE Arthur Kill 41-foot deepening, the Staten Island Bridges Program (SIBP) DEIS (1995) and FEIS (1997), will also be used to describe wildlife communities and potential project impacts. A field reconnaissance survey will be conducted to confirm the existing conditions and historical information on endangered or threatened species that have a likelihood of using the primary study area. No additional (including season- or species-specific) wildlife surveys are planned.***

***Existing data on fish, invertebrate and crustacean communities in the Arthur Kill will be reviewed to identify the aquatic communities that are likely to exist in the primary study area. Data sources include NJDEP Bureau of Marine Fisheries, NOAA Fisheries, and NYSDEC, and studies performed for the Arthur Kill 41-foot deepening, and the SIBP DEIS and FEIS. Fisheries in the primary study area will also be addressed as part of the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) assessment to be conducted in compliance with the Magnuson-Stevens Act.***

#### **2.6.14 Safety**

1. Assemblyman Matthew Mirones, NYS Assembly, 60<sup>th</sup> AD. PSM SII 1:31-32

The 10-foot lanes on the existing bridge and the tractor trailers that use the crossing create unsafe conditions for drivers on the bridge. There is also concern over emergency ingress and egress from Staten Island.

2. *Louise Vinciguerra, Western Improvement Society. CS 7:2*  
The Society suggests using the existing bridge for one lane each way for truck traffic only. Separating trucks from passengers is a consideration for safety and security.
3. *Timothy Desiderio, Staten Island Economic Development Corp. PSM SII 8:54*  
The creation of an additional emergency lane will be essential to keeping the bridge open after an accident and will dramatically increase safety and reliability of bridge travel.
4. *Linda Baran, Staten Island Chamber of Commerce. PSM SII 10:57-58*  
The current inadequate lane configuration – 10 feet instead of the modern 12 feet – fails to accommodate the width of a typical truck trailer and full size passenger buses.
5. *Fred LeMoine, The Metallic Lathers and Reinforcing Ironworkers Union of New York. PSM SII 11:62*  
Many motorists are afraid to maintain the speed limit because of narrow lanes. Trying to pass another vehicle has been compared to riding an amusement park ride. There are no shoulders for emergencies.
6. *Leah Gebhardt, No affiliation identified. PSM SII 14:71-72*  
She suggests improvement to the merger from the New Jersey side since it is one source of many accidents on the bridge. Additional lanes will also improve safety if the Island ever had to be evacuated.
7. *Meagan Devereaux, Staten Island Borough President's Office. PSM SII 15:75-77*  
Borough President Molinaro states that many feel apprehensive about traveling on the Goethals Bridge because of narrow lanes. A new bridge would make driving safer and more comfortable. It would improve the flow of traffic and improve access for emergency vehicles on and off Staten Island. Accident rates on the Goethals Bridge are higher than the Outerbridge and Bayonne Bridge, and higher than statewide averages in NY and NJ. We should not scrimp or handicap our ability to better handle traffic in the event of an emergency. To improve safety we need a new Goethals Bridge with wider lanes.
8. *Eric Larkin, Utility and Transportation Contractors Association of New Jersey. PSM E1 6:50*  
As the volume and speed of traffic continues to increase, the current Goethals Bridge will become more dangerous in the future. The current bridge cannot be adequately protected from seismic or terrorist activity.
9. *Michael Rizzo, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 124:2*  
*Travis Martin, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 128:2*  
*Andrew O'Flaherty, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 132:2*  
*Kelsey McCabe, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 171:2*  
*John Faracy, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 134:2*  
*Thomas J. Walsh, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 141:2*  
*Devin Boodoo, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 145:2*  
*Jemel M. Newman, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 133:2*  
*Vernon Pouncey, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 160:2*  
*Michael Kelly, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 166: 2*

Ignacio Martinez, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 164:2  
Roger King, No affiliation identified. CS 162:2  
Steve Kehoe, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 158:2  
Anthony Dziedzic, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 157:2  
Arthur Brandao, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 155:2  
Dalila Cintron, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 152:2  
Miguel Huertas, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 103:2  
David Cintron, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 153:2  
Michael Ferrato, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 147:2  
Jason Lewin, No affiliation identified. CS 139:2  
Danny D. Cordero, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 138:2  
Jeffrey Castro, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 140:2  
Jayson Braswell, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 101:2  
Nyheem Moore, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 106:2  
Andrew J. Cleary, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 107:2  
Guo Liang Yu, No affiliation identified. CS 108:2  
Sam Wong, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 34:2  
Sean Brown, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 120:2  
Joseph Anatra, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 119:2  
Omar E. Cordero, No affiliation identified. CS 116:2  
Curtis Geruldsen, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 25:2  
Michael Neglia, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 31:2  
Steven V. Burke, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 20:2  
Keith Mack, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 18:2  
Frank Rivera, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 19:2  
Alex Abrue, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 112:2  
Man Wa Lee, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 111:2  
Chris Moylan, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 9:2.  
Christian Dunn, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 28:2 and CS 179:2  
J. James Gallego, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 26:2  
Francisco Marin, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 23:2  
Abraham Chaljub, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 35:2  
Robert Wooley, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 36: 2  
Paul Bryant, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 38:2  
Vinton McFarlane, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 42:2  
Nicole Willis, No affiliation identified. CS 45:2  
Anthony Duchatellier, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 47:2  
Michael Davidson, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 52:2  
Ricardo Harding, No affiliation identified. CS 54:2  
Christian Rodriguez, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 55:2  
Mike O'Brien, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 66: 2  
Michael Zerbo, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 67:2  
Muhammad Abdul-Rahman, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 68:2  
Steve Lurry, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 69:2  
Timothy Costello, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 61:2  
Jamer Judge Jr., Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 62:2  
Danny Matadobra, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 63:2  
Bo Ming Yu, No affiliation identified. CS 64:2  
Victor Maldonado, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 71:2  
Frank Torres, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 72:2  
Lawrence McLaughlin, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 73:2

Joseph Lester, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 74:2  
 Daniel Cancel, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 75:2  
 Jimmy Gauthier, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 76:2  
 Michaelous Donovan, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 79:2  
 Justin O'Donnell, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 87:2  
 Jeff Guzzo, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 95:2  
 Joe Neglrio, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 49:2  
 Paul Marshallis, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 109:2  
 Thomas Markevitch, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CD 102:2  
 Kareem Garrett, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 32:2  
 Anthony Pennica, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 11:2  
 Sean Hughes, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 176:2  
 George Fernandez, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 177:2  
 Edward Whalen, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 178:2  
 Hubert Fonville, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 180:2  
 Dan Kennedy, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 182:2  
 Willie Gainey, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 183:2  
 James Shavis, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 184:2  
 John Close, Local 46, Metal Lathers. CS 185:2

The bridge is dangerous to travel on. The lanes are too narrow, and there are too many accidents. Traffic volumes are too high. The situation needs to be improved.

***Response:*** *The purpose and need for the Goethals Bridge replacement and the associated project goals specifically address issues of safety, security, and structural integrity, encompassing the concerns voiced in the scoping comments summarized above. Any project alternative evaluated in the DEIS that includes a new bridge crossing will be designed – and would be constructed – to meet current design criteria (including adequate lane widths and provision of shoulders) and seismic code, and to accommodate projected vehicular and truck traffic volumes safely and efficiently. The suggestion to restrict one lane each way on the existing Goethals Bridge for truck use will be investigated during the alternatives screening process to identify alternatives for detailed evaluation in the DEIS.*

*The traffic and transportation analyses to be conducted for the DEIS will also address safety issues through analysis of recent accident data on the Goethals Bridge, the two other Staten Island bridges, and New York and New Jersey statewide averages for comparable facilities. Future accident rates that may be anticipated with the future No-Action and project alternatives, based on projections of future traffic volumes and the alternatives' design and operational features, will be estimated and documented in the DEIS.*

#### **2.6.15 Traffic**

1. *Jane Vredenburgh, Community Board #1. PSM SII 4:41-42*  
 Accidents on the Goethals and Outerbridge were responsible for shutting down Staten Island. You need to address the issues of both short-term traffic problems and long-term solutions. Truck, local, and commuter traffic is expected to increase over the next few years.
2. *Robert Cassara, Gowanus Community Stakeholder Group. PSM SII 6:45-46*  
 The vehicular capacity of the Goethals Bridge and the Outerbridge acts like a brake on the increasing number of trucks and cars entering Staten Island and Brooklyn. By opening the spigot at the NY/NJ borders you would unleash an onslaught of trucks and cars in Staten Island and Brooklyn. NYSDOT's plan for an HOV lane on the Staten Island Expressway, in conjunction

with the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge by MTA, is desirable but represents a capacity increase. Any capacity increase at this crossing would dump more traffic onto the Staten Island Expressway portion of I-278. NYSDOT continues to ignore capacity issues.

3. *Jim Devine, New York Container Terminal / Resident. PSM SII 9:55*  
The New York Container Terminal bears some responsibility for trucks and recognizes that 15-25% of truck traffic coming to and from the terminal will be removed because of the revitalization of the Staten Island Rail Road.
4. *Linda Baran, Staten Island Chamber of Commerce. PSM SII 10:58-60*  
Anything that eases crossing the Goethals Bridge could likely induce more trips and shift impacts currently experienced approaching the bridge to points on Staten Island. Traffic jams not only plague the crossing, but make the Staten Island Expressway a parking lot and causes traffic spillover to local streets. Fixes cannot await a new crossing.
5. *Fred LeMoine, The Metallic Lathers and Reinforcing Ironworkers Union of New York. PSM SII 11:63*  
A new bridge will allow for an easier flow of traffic and relieve congestion.
6. *LT CDR Michael Keane/ENS Charles Baxter, US Coast Guard. ASM 1:2*  
The USCG recommends that vessel traffic be addressed in the EIS.
7. *Kamal Saleh, Union County Division of Economic Development. ASM 4:3*  
Any proposed reconfiguration of traffic patterns for or adjacent to the bridge should consider and involve traffic interactions with the adjacent NJ Turnpike Interchange, I-287, and Routes 1&9.
8. *Leah Gebhardt, No affiliation identified. PSM SII 14:71-72*  
The merger from the Turnpike is not always clearly defined and has bottlenecked traffic quite a bit. Additional lanes will improve traffic flow.
9. *Meagan Devereaux, Staten Island Borough President's Office. PSM SII 15:76-77*  
Borough President Molinaro states that to improve traffic conditions, you need a new bridge with wider lanes. Traffic has increased and will continue to increase no matter what. It is better to have traffic efficiently managed on a modern bridge than to let our motorists suffer worsening conditions and delays.
10. *Albert DeLillo, No affiliation identified. CS 5:2*  
There is concern by Staten Islanders that if a new bridge is built, the expressway will be backed up. To ensure a benefit to Staten Islanders, there should be an immediate exit to local roads so Staten Islanders won't have to worry about Expressway backup.
11. *Daniel Nozza, No affiliation identified. PSM E2 3:31-32*  
Elmore Ave. is a block behind me. Especially at 1 and 9, getting into Bayway Avenue going to the Goethals Bridge is a bottleneck. It narrows down to one – I believe that it will adversely impact the City.
12. *Teresa Toro, Tri-State Transportation Campaign. PSM SII 2:36*  
*Damien Newton, Tri-State Transportation Campaign. PSM E1 3:38*  
Three modern-width general lanes in each direction is the way to go for the Goethals Bridge of the future. Having more lanes on the new bridge than the local highway network in New Jersey would produce less gridlock on the Turnpike and I-278.

13. *John Surmay, City of Elizabeth. PSM E1 4:44*

He is concerned about traffic congestion on the city streets which wasn't supposed to happen when Entrance/Exit 13 was relocated to its present location next to the bridge. I-278 was supposed to direct traffic north and south, but it only connects to Routes 1&9 to the south. Route 439/Rahway Ave. was to be improved to handle northbound traffic to Routes 1&9, but only some slight cosmetic improvements have occurred. Permanent and effective remedies must be instituted before any replacement of the bridge proceeds.

14. *Mayor J. Christian Bollwage, City of Elizabeth. L 7:1*

Traffic congestion within the City of Elizabeth is a concern and will only be increased as a result of the Goethals Bridge expansion.

***Response:*** *As the Goethals Bridge is a critical transportation link in the New York/New Jersey region, the analyses of existing and future traffic conditions in the DEIS will address both local and regional traffic effects of the No-Action and project alternatives. A comprehensive traffic count program was conducted in Spring and Fall 2004 to obtain current traffic data in the Goethals Bridge corridor and on major regional roadways providing access to the three Staten Island Bridges, including those mentioned in the scoping comments summarized above. Within 14 defined Primary Traffic Study Areas, traffic counts were taken at key intersection locations, based on proximity to access and egress ramps of the arterial highways and to major approach travel routes. The resulting dataset will be used for the DEIS traffic analysis to evaluate future changes in traffic conditions within the Staten Island corridor, as well as in the region, with the No-Action and project alternatives.*

*The Best Practices Model (BPM), a multi-modal travel-forecasting model developed by the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC), is being updated and modified (BPM-Goethals) to provide greater detail for the Goethals Bridge/Outerbridge Crossing Southern Corridor, specifically for analysis of traffic and transportation impacts for the DEIS. BPM-Goethals modeling output will be used to determine local and regional traffic and operational changes that would result with each alternative evaluated in the DEIS. The evaluations will encompass the roadway facilities mentioned in the scoping comments, summarized above, and will project changes in future traffic volumes, congestion, delays, queuing, bottlenecks, etc.*

*The traffic analyses will incorporate major programmed improvements to the regional transportation network (roadway and rail) and compile data from other ongoing projects (including for the Staten Island Expressway, West Shore Expressway, Gowanus Expressway, Staten Island Railroad, Chemical Coast Line, etc.). In addition, a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), comprised of agencies with expertise in traffic and transportation (and associated air quality and noise considerations) is being established by the US Coast Guard as part of the EIS process; the TAC will meet several times during the process in order to provide data and information, and other input and guidance on the conduct of the traffic and transportation studies for the DEIS (as well as the related mobile-source air quality and noise analyses). Select other stakeholders, notably officials from the affected municipalities, will be invited by the US Coast Guard to also participate in the TAC, and provide input regarding local, community concerns to the traffic studies for the DEIS.*

*As part of the traffic analyses, potential opportunities for near-term remedies, which may be considered for implementation prior to the proposed Goethals Bridge replacement or other build alternatives, will be investigated and evaluated to determine their potential for beneficial near-term effects on traffic conditions.*

*The DEIS will also address vessel traffic on the Arthur Kill. Existing and future vessel traffic (including range of vessel sizes and volume of marine traffic) and navigational requirements on the Arthur Kill will be characterized, and potential impacts of the No-Action and project alternatives to future vessel traffic will be evaluated.*

## **2.7 Process Issues**

1. *Kamal Saleh, Union County Division of Economic Development. ASM 4:3*  
The County suggests that City and County agencies be part of the ETF and TAC.
2. *Diane Rusanowsky, National Marine Fisheries Service. ASM 7:4*  
NMFS suggested that there be a separate meeting between NMFS, USACE and USCG to coordinate the manner in which the required Essential Fish Habitat Assessment will be handled in the regulatory process and its incorporation into the EIS. NMFS also suggest that the NMFS Gloucester Office be contacted for instructions and information on how to address issues related to listed threatened or endangered species.
3. *Dave Carlson, US Environmental Protection Agency. ASM 8:4*  
USEPA suggests that a subgroup of the ETF and TAC address cumulative impact issues. This methodology has worked well in the past for other complex projects.
4. *John Surmay, City of Elizabeth. PSM E1 4:46-47*  
The City of Elizabeth is a very progressive municipality and well managed. Do not take this cooperative spirit as permission to do what you want. Be considerate and include our City's businesses, residents, students and visitors into the plans. If this is done, we can all be proud of the collaboration and cooperation for the betterment of the users, operators of the bridge, and the community of Elizabeth, NJ.
5. *Dr. Jonathan Peters, College of Staten Island. PSM S11 12:65-66*  
You should not be planning for just the next 5 or 10 years; the bridge will probably be around for 100 years. The newest population data by the New York Metropolitan Transportation Council projects roughly a 50 percent increase in the population on Staten Island within the span of this facility's life. Therefore, don't "underplan" this facility.
6. *Richard T. Anderson, New York Building Congress. L 11:1*  
The Goethals Bridge is unable to accommodate the volume of vehicles that use it daily. It has substandard lane widths, no emergency shoulders and is an unreliable link in the transportation system. The Building Congress is interested in improving infrastructure in the region and applauds the Coast Guard for conducting a thorough scoping process, and looks forward to the ensuing recommendations.
7. *Andrew J. Willner, NY/NJ Baykeeper. L 14:1*  
The NY/NJ Baykeeper agrees in part with the project statement that the bridge has become functionally and physically obsolete. The Baykeeper believes that it would be appropriate in the scope of work for this new iteration of the plan, that all supporting materials for this assertion be incorporated. It is important to include supporting materials that indicate why the proposal was withdrawn, and what circumstances have changed so that the Port Authority has found it necessary to re-introduce the proposal at this time.
8. *Josephine Beckmann, Brooklyn Community Board 10. L 17:1*

Brooklyn Community Board 10 requests a 30-day extension to study the EIS, and ask that it encompass I-278 corridors and review the one-way toll on the Verrazano Bridge.

9. *Richard L. Tomer, US Army Corps of Engineers. L 22:1*

If the US Army Corps of Engineers is a NEPA cooperating agency, we would participate in the preparation of the DEIS consistent with the extent of our jurisdiction for this project. Discharges of dredged or fill material incidental to the construction of bridges across navigational US waters that meet applicable requirements, may be authorized by Nationwide Permit number 15. Causeways and approach fills are not authorized in this nationwide permit; those activities and other work that is not authorized under the Nationwide Permit Program require a Department of the Army individual permit.

10. *Douglas A. Currey, New York State Department of Transportation. L 20: 2-3*

The scoping document should change “narrow” to “substandard” lane widths as well as mentioning sight distance limitations. It should emphasize the importance of I-278 as a “bypass” or supplemental route for the I-95 corridor and outline the relationship between the earlier Staten Island Bridge Program effort and the current Goethals Bridge needs. The scoping goals should be noted as “preliminary” and subject to change through the ongoing EIS process. The NYSDOT-sponsored Staten Island Expressway Major Investment Study and the NYCDCP city-wide rezoning projects should be noted in the scoping documents. South Avenue should be added to the data collection plan. NYSDOT has, and continues to collect traffic data on the Staten Island Expressway and West Shore Expressway and this data is available. The alternatives and screening analysis process should define in more detail what constitutes “no build” and “committed project”. The scope should differentiate between construction related and permanent impacts under the “environmental impacts” and “impacts on adjacent transportation facilities” sections. The value of the corridor for interstate goods movement, international freight terminal access and just-in-time delivery as well as relative economic impact on both New York and New Jersey should be expanded in the scope.

11. *F. Fiumano, USCG Waterways Operations Division. L 12:1*

The US Army Corps of Engineers is planning a large-scale channel deepening within the waterway to allow for safe transit of larger vessels which require sufficient vertical and horizontal clearances. Therefore construction should be coordinated with this project to ensure safety of navigation.

12. *Marty Markowitz, Brooklyn Borough President. L 16:3*

The extent of the arterial/highway system feeding the Goethals Bridge should be matched by the public participation process. Extensive public participation efforts should be formulated in Brooklyn and possibly Manhattan. The absence of such efforts is noteworthy in light of former Brooklyn Borough President Golden’s 1998 request on this matter.

13. *Kenneth C. Koschek, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection. L 26:1-3*

As the bridge is located within the New Jersey Coastal Zone and does not currently have a riparian instrument in force, an instrument will be required for activity at or below the New Jersey Tidelands Claims Line, as shown on map 651-2124 (see map in appendix). Compliance with the Coastal Zone Management Rules will need to be demonstrated.

The NJDEP’s Transportation Group of the Land Use Regulation Program will be the reviewer for the project.

The EIS should indicate how Transportation Conformity has been addressed for this proposed project. NJDEP could not find this proposed project in the current NJTPA TP or TIP.

William Figley from the DFW's Bureau of Marine Fisheries should be contacted about the possibility of placing clean materials on an artificial reef site offshore.

***Response: The Process Issues identified in the comments above are rather diverse in nature, so this response is designed to address each of the issues. Regarding participation in the ETF, TAC and Stakeholder Committee, it is the intent that a representative from the City of Elizabeth, the County of Union and the Borough of Staten Island will be invited to participate in each. In addition, the City of Linden and the Borough of Brooklyn will be invited to participate on the Stakeholder Committee. The Stakeholder Committee is also proposed to include a variety of organizations that can potentially contribute valuable input to the process, including business organizations, local emergency services and service/community groups, among others. The need and value of creating subcommittees of the ETF and TAC to address special issues such as cumulative impacts will be explored during the several meetings of those committees.***

***Regarding permitting requirements and coordination with the regulatory and resource agencies beyond participation in the ETF and/or TAC, specific coordination between NMFS, USACE and USCG regarding the required Essential Fish Habitat Assessment will be initiated by the USCG or its consultant at an appropriate time in the process. In addition, letters have already been sent to key agencies requesting a variety of information that would be relevant to this EIS, including the two specifically mentioned in the above comments: i.e., 1) a letter sent to Ms. Mary Colligan at the NMFS office in Gloucester, MA on November 18, 2004 requesting information on threatened and endangered species within the project area; and 2) a letter sent to Mr. William Figley on November 22, 2004 requesting information on artificial reef locations and material requirements.. It is also the intent of the USCG to invite the USACE and USEPA to participate in the Goethals Bridge Replacement EIS as cooperating agencies. In the case of the USACE in particular, it is recognized that a permit will be required for discharges of dredged or fill material to waters of the U.S., and that all practicable and feasible attempts to avoid and/or minimize impacts to such waters will be made. It is also recognized that a riparian instrument will need to be acquired by the project sponsor, the Port Authority, as part of the permitting process for this project, and that compliance with New York and New Jersey Coastal Zone Management policies will need to be demonstrated.***

***Regarding the scoping process, a number of changes have been suggested to be incorporated into the Scoping Document. It is not intended that the actual Scoping Document will be revised, although some of the comments are likely to be addressed in the EIS. This Scoping Summary Report, including the responses to comments that have been raised, essentially constitutes the final response to be prepared as part of the scoping process. A request had been received to extend the EIS scoping process for an additional 30 days. Although this process was not officially extended beyond the November 5 closure date by the USCG, several letters were received after that date and have been addressed as part of this Scoping Comments Summary Report.***

***As requested, the EIS will include a discussion that describes the historical progression from the previously-proposed improvements to the Goethals Bridge as presented in the 1990s EIS to the improvements that are being studied as part of the current EIS process.***

***The final Process Issues raised relate to traffic analyses. The project improvements are being assessed on the basis of an estimated time of completion (ETC) plus 20-year planning horizon, meaning that all traffic projections reflect the year 2030. Traffic conditions along the I-278 corridor in Elizabeth, Staten Island and Brooklyn are being evaluated, including conditions related to the several build alternatives***

*to be evaluated in the EIS. The NYSDOT-sponsored Staten Island Expressway Major Investment Study and the NYCDCP city-wide rezoning project will be taken into account in the EIS studies. Traffic data collected by NYSDOT on the Staten Island Expressway and West Shore Expressway have been requested and are currently being analyzed as part of the Goethals Bridge Replacement EIS.*

*South Avenue, a local north-south street east of the Staten Island Expressway/West Shore Expressway interchange, was not included in the traffic data collection program. The traffic data collection program was developed to include intersections and roadway segments that would be directly affected by project-generated traffic, in Staten Island notably including locations near the Goethals Bridge and Verrazano-Narrows Bridge toll plazas, or directly connected to interchanges with the Staten Island Expressway (e.g., Richmond Avenue, Victory Boulevard). Predominant traffic to/from the Goethals Bridge would be unlikely to use South Avenue, other than via circuitous routing. The USCG and its consultants expect to work closely with transportation agencies to appropriately analyze and document all traffic impacts with the No-Action and project alternatives.*

*The full range of preliminary alternatives and the screening analysis used to identify those that will be studied in detail will be discussed in the EIS, along with a detailed description of which other “committed” projects are included as part of the No-Action alternative. Temporary impacts during the construction period will be differentiated from permanent operational impacts in the EIS.*

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**Legend:**

ASM = Agency Scoping Meeting

PSM = Public Scoping Meeting with “SI1” and “SI2” referring, respectively, to the first (afternoon) and second (evening) sessions of the Public Scoping meeting in Staten Island, and “E1” and E2” referring to the first and second sessions of the Public Scoping meeting in Elizabeth

CS = Comment Sheet collected at any of the Public Scoping meetings

L = Letter

EM = E-Mail

M = Memoranda