# APPENDIX M:
# PUBLIC OUTREACH, SCOPING MEETING, and DEIS PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

M.1 Draft Scoping Document
M.2 Notices in Federal Register
M.3 Summary Report for 2004 Scoping Meetings
M.4 Comments Received during the GBR DEIS Public Comment Period

# Appendix M.1
# Draft Scoping Document

# 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

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August 20, 2004

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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.

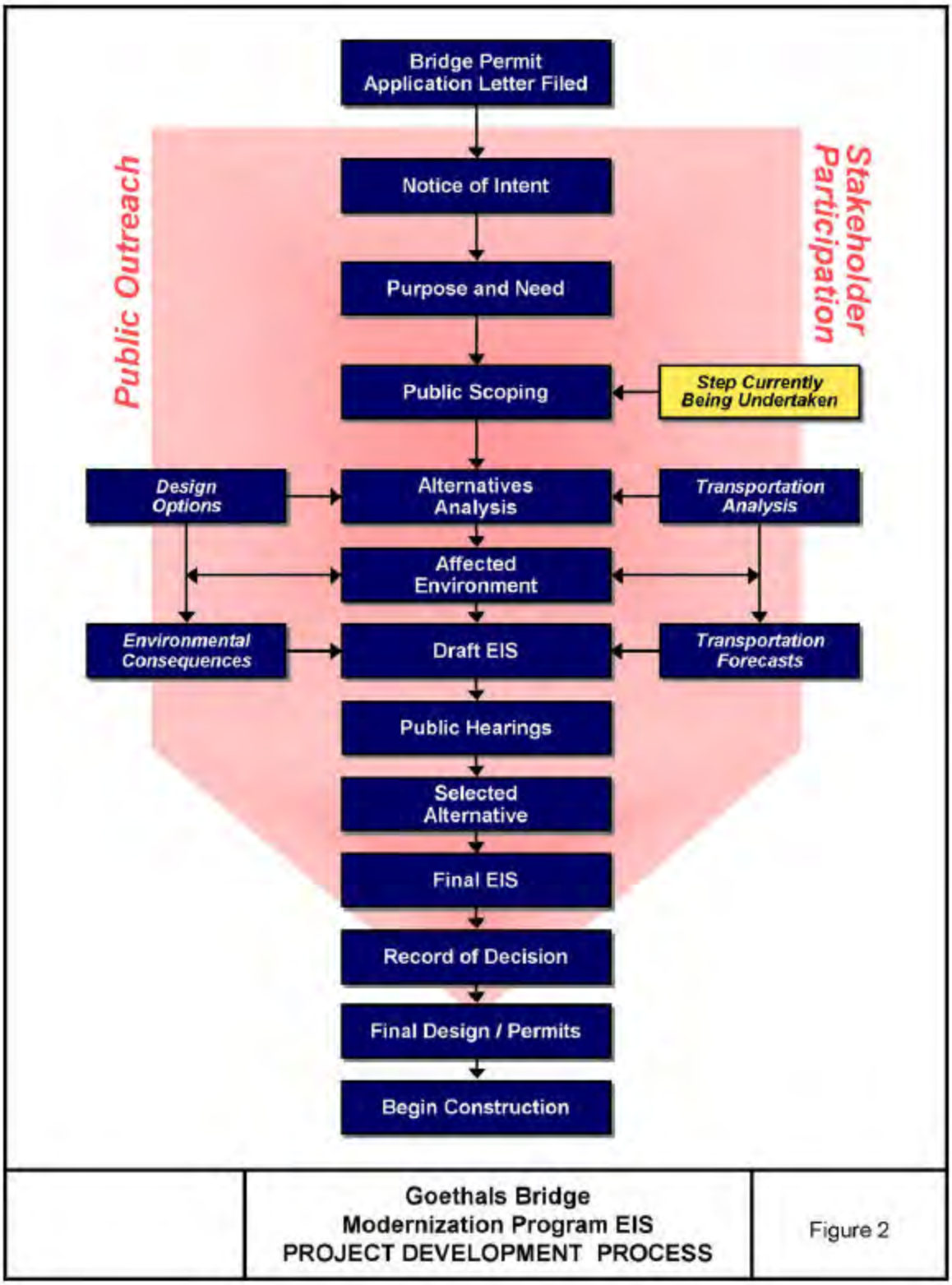
## 2.3 DEIS Preparation

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,


Bridge Permit Application Letter Filed
Notice of Intent
Purpose and Need
Public Scoping
Step Currently Being Undertaken
Design Options
Alternatives Analysis
Transportation Analysis
Affected Environment
Environmental Consequences
Draft EIS
Transportation Forecasts
Public Hearings
Selected Alternative
Final EIS
Record of Decision
Final Design / Permits
Begin Construction
Public Outreach
Stakeholder Participation
Goethals Bridge
Modernization Program EIS
PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS
Figure 2

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[1].

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.

[1] 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.[2] 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[3], 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.

[2] These expenditures are based on Port Authority data on repair contracts.
[3] 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[4] 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

[4] 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).[5] 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)[6], 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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[5] 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.

[6] 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:

| Year | No. of Accidents | No. of Accidents/MVM | Volume (Millions) |
|---|---|---|---|
| 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 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).

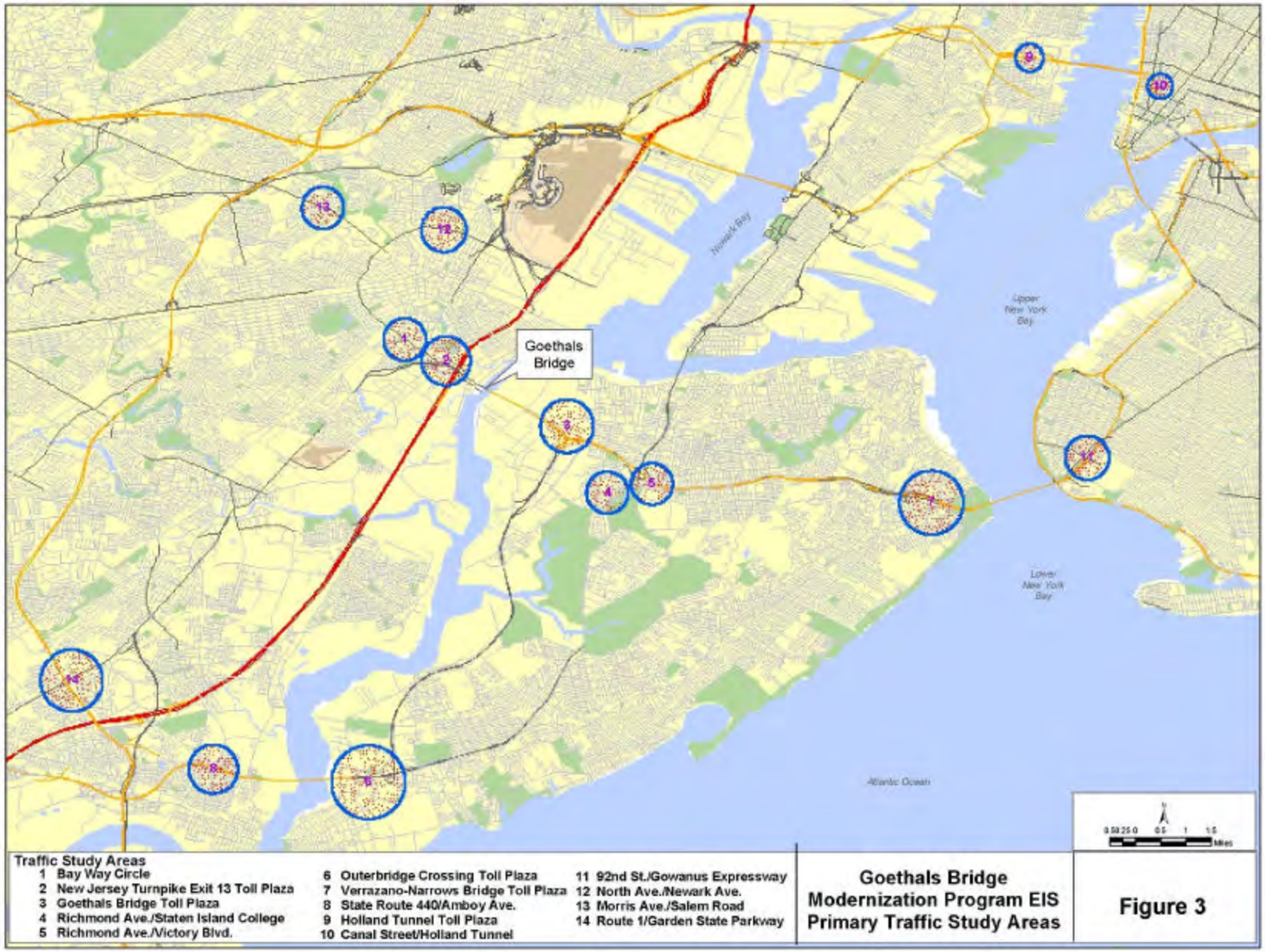
In each of the 14 PTSAs, signalized and unsignalized intersection locations will be analyzed. Key intersection locations were chosen based on their proximity to access and egress ramps of the arterial highways and to major approach travel routes. The resulting dataset will provide the ability to determine 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.




**Goethals Bridge Modernization Program EIS Primary Traffic Study Areas**

**Figure 3**

### 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 ($NO_x$) 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 NOx 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.

PM10 and PM2.5 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 idenified. 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 (NJDCA) 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 1B 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.

<u>Class 1 Properties</u>
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, socioeconomics, 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);
- 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.

# Appendix M.2
# Notices in Federal Register

- 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.*

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.*

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.*

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–2Rα) (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

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## 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

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## 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

# Appendix M.3
# Summary Report for 2004 Scoping Meetings

# 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 SI1 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 |
| *Afternoon Session Subtotal* | *16* | *57* |
| *Evening Session Subtotal* | *6* | *14* |
| Elizabeth's Public Scoping Meeting of 10/06/04 | 11 | 29 |
| *Afternoon Session Subtotal* | *8* | *28* |
| *Evening Session Subtotal* | *3* | *3* |
| Comment Sheets | 186 | 152 |
| Letters | 27 | 62 |
| E-Mails | 4 | 6 |
| Memoranda | 1 | 2 |
| **TOTAL** | **259** | **335** |

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, 60th AD. PSM SI1 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 SI1 2:34-35*
   *Damien Newton, Tri-State Transportation Campaign. PSM E1 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 Vredenburgh, Community Board #1. PSM SI1 4:42*
   The bridge needs to be improved and/or rebuilt to 21st 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 Vinciquerra, 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*
*Lonoyn 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*
*Glenville 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 7:50*
   The two-way tolls will not be reinstituted 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 SI1 2:35*
   *Damien Newton, Tri-State Transportation Campaign. PSM E1 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 SI1 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, 60th AD. PSM SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 3:40*
   Rail is needed to unite Staten Island with the surrounding areas.

4. *Michael Arvanites, Councilman Michael McMahan's Office. PSM SI1 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 SI1 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 SI2 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 SI2 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.

***<u>Response</u>: 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI2 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, 60th AD. PSM SI1 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 Vredenburgh, Community Board #1. PSM SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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*
NYSDOT 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. NYSDOT 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 11:63*
   A new bridge will allow for less idling of engines which will improve air quality.

2. *Leah Gebhardt, No affiliation identified. PSM SI1 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 1A and 1B 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI2 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 SI2 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 SI1 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 SI1 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, 60th AD. PSM SI1 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 Vinciquerra, 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 SI1 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 finalresponse 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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| Abdul-Rahman | Muhammad | | Local 46, Metal Lathers, Metal Lathers | CS 68 | 2 |
| Abrue | Alex | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 112 | 2 |
| Acevedo | Felix | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 27 | 2 |
| Adams | Michael | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 136 | 2 |
| Alvarez | Edwin | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 50 | 2 |
| Anatra | Joseph | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 119 | 2 |
| Anderson | Richard T. | President | New York Building Congress | L 11 | 1 |
| Angeline | Matthew | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 148 | 2 |
| Arlee | Favla | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 150 | 2 |
| Arvanites | Michael | | Councilman Michael McMahan's Office | PSM SI1 7 | 50-53 |
| August | William | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 15 | 2 |
| Aureliano | Hernandez | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 16 | 2 |
| Baffato | George | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 70 | 2 |
| Baran | Linda | President/CEO | Staten Island Chamber of Commerce | PSM SI1 10 | 56-60 |
| Barbata | Kevin | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 118 | 2 |
| Barone | Ralph | | Community Board #2 | PSM SI1 3 | 39-40 |
| Bassaragh | Glenville | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 143 | 2 |
| Beachem | Philip K. | President | New Jersey Alliance for Action | L9 | 1 |
| Beckmann | Josephine | District Manager | Brooklyn Community Board 10 | L 17 | 1 |
| Benanti | Michael | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 114 | 2 |
| Blanrinship | Daryl | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 161 | 2 |

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| Bodenstab | Heinz | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 127 | 2 |
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| Bogant | Lonoyn | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 65 | 2 |
| Bollwage | J. Christian | Mayor | City of Elizabeth | L 7 | 1 |
| Bollwage | J. Christian | Mayor | City of Elizabeth | PSM E1 1 | 30-35 |
| Boodoo | Devin | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 145 | 2 |
| Brag | David | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 168 | 2 |
| Brandao | Arthur | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 155 | 2 |
| Braswell | Jayson | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 101 | 2 |
| Brody | Elizabeth | Chair, NJ Committee | East Coast Greenway | EM 3 | 1 |
| Brody | Elizabeth | Chair, NJ Committee | East Coast Greenway | PSM E1 5 | 47-49 |
| Brown | Sean | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 120 | 2 |
| Bryant | Paul | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 38 | 2 |
| Budnick | Noah | Projects Director | Transportation Alternatives | L24 | 1 |
| Burke | Steven | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 20 | 2 |
| Califano | Steven | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 53 | 2 |
| Cancel | Daniel | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 75 | 2 |
| Cardona | Jose | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 12 | 2 |
| Carey | Brian | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 46 | 2 |
| Carlson | Dave | ERS | US Environmental Protection Agency | ASM 8 | 4 |
| Carroll | Robert | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 175 | 2 |
| Cassara | Robert | | Gowanus Comm. Stakeholder Group Chair | PSM SI1 6 | 44-49 |
| Castro | Jeffrey | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 140 | 2 |
| Chaljub | Abraham | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 35 | 2 |
| Cheng; Pak | Alice; Michele | Vice President; Project Manager | NYC Economic Development Corp. | ASM 2 | 2 |

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| Cintron | Dalila | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 152 | 2 |
| Cintron | David | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 153 | 2 |
| Cleary | Andrew J. | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 107 | 2 |
| Close | John | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 185 | 2 |
| Colligan | Mary | Asst. Reg. Admin. For Protected Resources | US Department of Commerce - NOAA | L 1 | 1 |
| Cordero | Danny D. | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 138 | 2 |
| Cordero | Omar E. | | | CS 116 | 2 |
| Costello | Timothy | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 61 | 2 |
| Coyle | James R. | President | Gateway Regional Chamber of Commerce | L 8 | 1 |
| Crean | Diana | Manager, Airspace Branch | US Department of Transportation - FAA | L 2 | 1 |
| Currey | Douglas A. | Regional Director | NYS Department of Transportation | L 20 | 1-3 |
| Cusick | Michael | Assemblyman | New York State Assembly | L 23 | 1 |
| Daley | James | Director | Union County Department of Economic Development | L 18 | 1-2 |
| Davidson | Michael | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 52 | 2 |
| DeAngelis | Robert | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 174 | 2 |
| DeCastro | Edrick | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 173 | 2 |
| DeLillo | Albert | | Citizen | CS 5 | 2 |
| Desiderio | Timothy | | Staten Island Economic Dev. Corp. | PSM SI1 8 | 53-54 |
| Devereaux | Meagan | | Staten Island Borough Pres. Office | PSM SI1 15 | 74-79 |
| Devine | Jim | President/CEO | NY Container Terminal | PSM SI1 9 | 54-56 |
| Dimson | Amoo | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 122 | 2 |
| Doherty | Joe | | | PSM E2 1 | 29 |
| Donovan | Don | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 30 | 2 |

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| Donovan | Michaelous | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 79 | 2 |
| Duchatellier | Anthony | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 47 | 2 |
| Dunn | Christian | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 28 | 2 |
| Dunn | Christian | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 179 | 2 |
| Dziedzic | Anthony | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 157 | 2 |
| Edler | Scott | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 100 | 2 |
| Edwards | Ralph | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 51 | 2 |
| Ellis | Roger | | Laborers Local 472 | CS 8 | 2 |
| Elmer | Jeffrey | | General Contractors Association of NY | PSM SI2 1 | 30-34 |
| Epple | Alan C. | | Resident | CS 1 | 2 |
| Faracy | John | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 134 | 2 |
| Fernandez | George | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 177 | 2 |
| Ferraro | Richard | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 13 | 2 |
| Ferrato | Michael | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 147 | 2 |
| Fischer | Pam | VP, Public Affairs | AAA New Jersey Automobile Club | EM 4 | 1 |
| Fiumano | F. | Commander | USCG Waterways Operations Division | L 12 | 1 |
| Fonville | Hubert | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 180 | 2 |
| Forletta | Dario | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 14 | 2 |
| Gainey | Willie | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 183 | 2 |
| Gallego | James J | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 26 | 2 |
| Garcia | Alex | | Hispanic-American Chamber of Commerce - Essex County | EM 2 | 1 |
| Garcia | Alex | | Hispanic-American Chamber of Commerce - Essex County | PSM E2 2 | 30-31 |
| Garcia | Leonard | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 151 | 2 |
| Garcia | Leonard | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 186 | 2 |

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| Garrett | Kareem | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 32 | 2 |
| Gauthier | Jimmy | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 76 | 2 |
| Gavin | James | | | PSM SI2 5 | 41-44 |
| Gebhardt | Leah | | | PSM SI1 14 | 69-73 |
| Geruldsen | Curtis | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 25 | 2 |
| Godfrey | Bob | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 131 | 2 |
| Golden | Christopher | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 165 | 2 |
| Green | Kevin | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 142 | 2 |
| Gualtieri | Richard | | | PSM SI2 3 | 36-38 |
| Guerrero | Benjamin | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 104 | 2 |
| Guzzo | Jeff | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 95 | 2 |
| Harding | Ricardo | | | CS 54 | 2 |
| Harris II | John J | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 6 | 2 |
| Harris III | John J. | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 84 | 2 |
| Haynes | Lloyd | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 17 | 2 |
| Heuschkel | Walter | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 59 | 2 |
| Hibbs | John | President - Business Manager | Local 472 - Heavy and General Construction Laborer's Union | L10 | 1 |
| Hobombo | Tesfay | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 170 | 2 |
| Huertas | Miguel | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 103 | 2 |
| Hughes | Sean | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 176 | 2 |
| Ince | Tiffany | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 149 | 2 |
| Jaramillo | Edwin | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 41 | 2 |
| Jenne | David | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 144 | 2 |
| Judge Jr. | Jamer | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 62 | 2 |
| Keane; Baxter | Michael; Charles | Senior Watch Officer | U.S. Coast Guard | ASM 1 | 2 |

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| Kehoe | Steve | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 158 | 2 |
| Kelly | Michael | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 166 | 2 |
| Kelly | Steve | | | CS 60 | 2 |
| Kennedy | Dan | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 182 | 2 |
| King | Roger | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 162 | 2 |
| Kittelberger | Robert | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 10 | 2 |
| Koschek | Kenneth | Supervising Env. Spec. | New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection | L 26 | 1-9 |
| Kudla | Lawrence | Recording Secretary | Teamsters Local 282 | PSM SI2 2 | 34-36 |
| Kulewicz | Mark | Director | Automobile Club of New York | L 13 | 1-2 |
| Kull | Adam | | | CS 115 | 2 |
| Lamlo Jr. | James | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 113 | 2 |
| Larkin | Eric | | Utility & Transportation Contractors Assoc. | PSM E1 6 | 49-51 |
| LeBow | Keith | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 94 | 2 |
| LeMoine | Fred | Business Agent | MLR Ironworkers Union of NY, Chapter 46 | PSM SI1 11 | 61-64 |
| Lester | Joseph | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 74 | 2 |
| Lewin | Jason | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 139 | 2 |
| Liang Yu | Guo | | | CS 108 | 2 |
| Lloyd | Jermaine | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 39 | 2 |
| Long | Kevin | | | CS 123 | 2 |
| Luisi | John | | | PSM SI2 6 | 45-47 |
| Lurry | Steve | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 69 | 2 |
| Mack | Keith | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 18 | 2 |
| Maldonado | Victor | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 71 | 2 |
| Marin | Francisco | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 23 | 2 |

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| Markevitch | Thomas | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 102 | 2 |
| Markowitz | Marty | Borough President | Office of the Brooklyn Borough President | L 16 | 1-3 |
| Marra | Ralph | | | L 5 | 1 |
| Marshallis | Paul | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 109 | 2 |
| Martin | Travis | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 128 | 2 |
| Martinez | Ignacio | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 164 | 2 |
| Martinez | Jose E | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 83 | 2 |
| Matadobra | Danny | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 63 | 2 |
| Mattei | Anthony | | | PSM SI2 4 | 39-41 |
| McCabe | Kelsey | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 171 | 2 |
| McCarthy | Christopher | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 169 | 2 |
| McCarthy | Duncan | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 88 | 2 |
| McDonald | Joan | Senior Vice President, Transportation | NYC Economic Development Corp. | L 6 | 1 |
| McDonald | Robert | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 159 | 2 |
| McDonald Jr. | Enrique | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 97 | 2 |
| McFarlane | Vinton | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 42 | 2 |
| McGuckin | Kathryn | Environmental Analyst | NYS Dept. of Env. Conservation | ASM 3 | 2-3 |
| McLaughin | Kevin | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 121 | 2 |
| McLaughlin | Lawrence | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 73 | 2 |
| McMahon | Steven | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 110 | 2 |
| McVicker | Michael | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 86 | 2 |
| Mejias | Francisco | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 137 | 2 |
| Menendez | Robert | Member of Congress | US House of Representatives | L 27 | 1 |

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| Mercado | Daniel | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 48 | 2 |
| Mercado | Elijah | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 29 | 2 |
| Ming Yu | Bo | | | CS 64 | 2 |
| Mirones | Matthew | Assemblyman | NYS Assembly 60th AD | PSM SI1 1 | 29-34 |
| Monroe | Jorge A. | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 125 | 2 |
| Monroe | Lord | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 98 | 2 |
| Moore | Bryan | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 78 | 2 |
| Moore | Nyheem | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 106 | 2 |
| Morgan | Andre | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 96 | 2 |
| Moylan | Chris | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 9 | 2 |
| Murray | Bill | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 90 | 2 |
| Natale | Michael | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 58 | 2 |
| Neglia | Michael | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 31 | 2 |
| Negrio | Joe | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 49 | 2 |
| Newbery | Denny | | | PSM E1 7 | 52-53 |
| Newman | Jemal M. | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 133 | 2 |
| Newton | Damien | | Tri-State Transportation Campaign | PSM E1 3 | 37-41 |
| Nozza | Daniel | | | PSM E2 3 | 31-32 |
| Obertlik | Ed | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 146 | 2 |
| Obrien | Mike | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 66 | 2 |
| ODonnell | Justin | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 87 | 2 |
| O'Donnell | Gerard | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 89 | 2 |
| O'Flaherty | Andrew J. | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 132 | 2 |
| Ortiz | David | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 172 | 2 |
| Ostrega | Marvin | | | EM 1 | 1 |
| Par | Richard | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 56 | 2 |

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| Peccia | Robert | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 33 | 2 |
| Pennica | Anthony | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 11 | 1 |
| Peters | Jonathan | Assistant Professor of Finance | College of Staten Island | PSM SI1 12 | 64-68 |
| Petit | Yolande | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 37 | 2 |
| Pierre | Steve Jean | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 22 | 2 |
| Pocino | Raymond M. | Vice President | Laborers' International Union of North America | L 25 | 1 |
| Pouncey | Vernon | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 160 | 2 |
| Powers | Joseph | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 91 | 2 |
| Reid | Ryan | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 92 | 2 |
| Reinhardt | Michael | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 135 | 2 |
| Richardson | Ron | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 130 | 2 |
| Ritter | Robert T. | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 85 | 2 |
| Rivera | Eduardo | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 154 | 2 |
| Rivera | Frank | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 19 | 2 |
| Rivera | Joshua | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 105 | 2 |
| Rizzo | Michael | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 124 | 2 |
| Rochicchio | Ray | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 80 | 2 |
| Rodriguez | Christian | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 55 | 2 |
| Rodriguez Jr. | Pete | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 93 | 2 |
| Roiland | Thomas | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 156 | 2 |
| Ross | Michael | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 129 | 2 |
| Rothstein | Eric | Hydrologist/PM | NYC Dept. of Parks and Recreation | ASM 5 | 3 |
| Rothstein | Eric | | NYC Dept. of Parks and Recreation, Natural Resources Group | M 1 | 1-3 |

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| Saddique | John | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 21 | 2 |
| Saleh | Kamal | Supervisor of Trans. And Land Use. | Union County Division of Econ. Dev. | ASM 4 | 3 |
| Saleh | Kamel | | Union County Division of Econ. Dev. | PSM E1 2 | 35-36 |
| Shannon | Sean | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 24 | 2 |
| Shavis | James | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 184 | 2 |
| Smith | Demetrius | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 57 | 2 |
| Stilwell | David | Field Supervisor | US Department of the Interior - Fish & Wildlife Service | L 4 | 1-4 |
| Storetveit | Keith | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 43 | 2 |
| Strehle | Michael W. | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 163 | 2 |
| Surmay | John | Health Officer | City of Elizabeth | PSM E1 4 | 41-47 |
| Sweeney | David | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 44 | 2 |
| Tancredi | John | | | PSM SI1 5 | 43 |
| Tomasino | Don | | | PSM SI1 13 | 68-69 |
| Tomer | Richard L. | Chief, Regulatory Branch | US Army Corps of Engineers | L 22 | 1-2 |
| Toro | Teresa | | Tri-State Transportation Campaign | PSM SI1 2 | 34-38 |
| Torres | Frank | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 72 | 2 |
| Ulria | Thomas | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 99 | 2 |
| Vanderburg | Dee | President | Staten Island Taxpayers Association | PSM SI1 16 | 79-80 |
| Vazquiz | Daniel | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 82 | 2 |
| Vinciquerra | Louise | | | CS 7 | 2 |
| Vissichelli | Mike | Biologist | US Army Corps of Engineers | ASM 6 | 4 |
| Votava | Karen | Executive Director | East Coast Greenway Alliance | L 19 | 1-3 |
| Vredenburgh | Jane | | Community Board #1 | PSM SI1 4 | 40-42 |

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| Wa Lee | Man | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 111 | 2 |
| Wagner | Dionne | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 40 | 2 |
| Walia | Ranjit | Project Manager | New Jersey Pedestrian Task Force | L 15 | 1 |
| Walsh | Thomas J. | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 141 | 2 |
| Whalen | Edward | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 126 | 2 |
| Whalen | Edward | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 178 | 2 |
| Whalen | Patrick | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 167 | 2 |
| Whalen | Patrick | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 181 | 2 |
| White | Michael | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 117 | 2 |
| Willis | Nicole | | | CS 45 | 2 |
| Willner | Andrew J. | Executive Director | NY/NJ Baykeeper | L 14 | 1-3 |
| Wolford | T.L. | | Conoco Philips Company | CS 3 | 2 |
| Wong | Sam | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 34 | 2 |
| Wooley | Robert | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 36 | 2 |
| Wright | William | | | L 21 | 1 |
| Wynter | Orlando | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 77 | 2 |
| Zerbo | Michael | | Local 46, Metal Lathers | CS 67 | 2 |
| Zupan | Jeffrey | Senior Fellow for Transportation | Regional Plan Association | PSM E1 8 | 54-60 |
| | | | NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission | L 3 | 1-2 |

***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

# Appendix M.4
# Comments Received during the GBR DEIS Public Comment Period

- "AG" – official written comments received from agencies.
- "FPM E1 & E2" – Formal Public Meeting of July 8th, 2009 in Elizabeth, NJ; including both "E1" and E2" referring to the first (afternoon) and second (evening) sessions of the Formal Public Meeting.
- "FPM SI1 & SI2" – Formal Public Meeting of July 9th, 2009 in Staten Island, NY; including both "SI1" and SI2" referring to the first (afternoon) and second (evening) sessions of the Formal Public Meeting.
- "WS" – written statements submitted at any of the Formal Public Meetings.
- "CS" – comment sheets distributed at any of the Formal Public Meetings.
- "L" – comment letters received from the public or stakeholders.
- "EM" – e-mail comments submitted via the GBR Website (www.goethalseis.com).

# "AG"
## *(DEIS Public Comment Period)*

AG1

**THE CITY OF NEW YORK LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION**
1 Centre Street, 9N, New York, NY 10007 (212) 669-7700 www.nyc.gov/landmarks

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# ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD/ER.R — 5/22/2009

**Project number** — **Date received**

**Project:** GOETHALS BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

**Comments:** The LPC is in receipt of the draft EIS of May, 2009. The text is acceptable for historic resources and archaeology.

cc. SHPO

6/3/2009

SIGNATURE — DATE

Gina Santucci

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State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

JON S. CORZINE
Governor

Natural and Historic Resources, Historic Preservation Office
PO Box 404, Trenton, NJ 08625
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LISA P. JACKSON
Commissioner

September 9, 2008

Gary Kassoff, Bridge Program Manager
First Coast Guard District
One South Street
Battery Building
New York, NY 10004

Dear Mr. Kassoff:

As Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer for New Jersey, in accordance with 36 CFR Part 800: Protection of Historic Properties, as published with amendments in the Federal Register on 6 July 2004 (69 FR 40553-40555), I am providing Additional Consultation Comments for the following proposed undertaking:

**Union County, Elizabeth City**
**Interstate 278 over the Arthur Kill**
**Goethals Bridge Replacement**

These comments were prepared in response to your request for Historic Preservation Office review and comment on the following reports:

"Goethals Bridge Replacement, Richmond County New York and The City of Elizabeth, Union County, New Jersey, Historic Architectural Resource Study New Jersey Revised Report" by The Louis Berger Group, Inc./Parsons Brinckerhoff JV. (July 2008)

"Historic Bridge Alternatives Analysis for Goethals Bridge Replacement, Connecting Interstates 278 and 95 over the Arthur Kill" by the Louis BergerGroup/PB Joint Venture (August 2008).

"Goethals Bridge Replacement, Richmond County New York and The City of Elizabeth, Union County, New Jersey, Historic Resources Effects Assessment" by The Louis Berger Group, Inc./Parsons Brinckerhoff JV. (July 2008)

***SUMMARY: This project will have an adverse effect on identified historic properties. An addendum to the Alternatives Analysis report, to ensure that there has been adequate planning has occurred to explore all means to avoid or reduce harm to identified historic properties, is requested.***

**800.4 Identifying Historic Properties**

There are 10 architectural resources within the Area of Potential Effects (APE) that have been previously identified as eligible for listing in the New Jersey and National Registers of Historic Places. They are:

1. The Goethals Bridge (SHPO Opinion 2/14/1995);
2. The Staten Island Railroad Historic District (SHPO Opinions 6/11/1991 & 2/27/1995);
3. Staten Island Railway Lift Truss Bridge over the Arthur Kill (SHPO Opinion 6/11/1991);
4. Perth Amboy and Elizabethport Branch of the Central Railroad of New Jersey (SHPO Opinion 8/30/2000);
5. Central Railroad of New Jersey Bridge over the Elizabeth River (SHPO Opinion 4/9/1990);
6. South First Street Bridge over the Elizabeth River (SHPO Opinion 3/23/1998);
7. Mattano Park (SHPO Opinion 5/21/2008);
8. Mravlag Manor Housing (SHPO Opinion 5/21/2008);
9. Sound Shore Railroad Historic District (SHPO Opinion 5/21/2008); and
10. South Front Street Bridge over the Elizabeth River Bridge (SI&A # 2004001(SHPO Opinion 5/21/2008).

No further work to identify historic properties is required, unless there is a change in the proposed scope of work that would alter the Area of Potential Effects for the project.

**800.5 Assessing Effects**

The project as proposed – demolition of the Goethals Bridge and replacement with a new structure will have an adverse effect on historic properties. Effects on identified properties are listed individually below:

1. The Goethals Bridge – The project as proposed will have an adverse effect on the individually eligible Goethals Bridge because it involves the demolition of this historic resource.
2. The Staten Island Railroad Historic District – I concur with your consultant's opinion that the project will have an adverse effect on this resource due to visual impacts.
3. Staten Island Railway Lift Truss Bridge over the Arthur Kill – I concur with your consultant's opinion that the project will have an adverse effect on this resource due to visual impacts.
4. Perth Amboy and Elizabethport Branch of the Central Railroad of New Jersey – I concur with your consultant's opinion that the project will have no adverse effect on this resource.

5. Central Railroad of New Jersey Bridge over the Elizabeth River – I concur with your consultant's opinion that the project will have no adverse effect on this resource.
6. South First Street Bridge over the Elizabeth River – I concur with your consultant's opinion that the project will have no adverse effect on this resource.
7. Mattano Park – I concur with your consultant's opinion that the project will have no adverse effect on this resource.
8. Mravlag Manor Housing – I concur with your consultant's opinion that the project will have no adverse effect on this resource.
9. Sound Shore Railroad Historic District – I concur with your consultant's opinion that the project will have no adverse effect on this resource.
10. South Front Street Bridge over the Elizabeth River Bridge – I concur with your consultant's opinion that the project will have no adverse effect on this resource.

As discussed in a 8/28/2008 meeting between your consultant (Deborah Van Steen and Kenneth Hess, both of The Louis Berger Group Inc.) and my staff (Andrea Tingey), the alternatives analysis report requires some clarifications and/or amplifications. Please see specific report review comments below.

**Alternatives Analysis Report Review Comments**

An addendum to the alternatives analysis report addressing the comments listed below is requested to ensure adequate documentation of the efforts to develop and evaluate alternatives or modifications to the project that could avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects on historic properties in accordance with 36 CFR Part 800.6.

1. I am concerned by the continued collective inability to find a suitable use and/or re-use for the Goethals Bridge. This bridge has recently undergone significant rehabilitation and maintenance (according to reviewed report almost $121 million was spent between 1987 and 2005). On a 10/17/2005 field visit, HPO staff witnessed conditions far better than those commonly encountered on iron and steel bridges that are subsequently rehabilitated for continued vehicular and/or pedestrian use. Consequently, use of the bridge for bicycle and pedestrian circulation should be explored. Similarly, mothballing the Goethals for potential mass transit use should be considered. It should be noted that when these concepts where brought up by HPO staff in the 8/28/2008 meeting, the response received was that the United States Coast Guard (USCG) would under no circumstances permit the existing bridge to remain in situ because it demonstrates a navigational hazard. If this is indeed the USCG's official position, that should be clearly reflected in the administrative record, and a level of supporting documentation akin to that required to demonstrate roadway geometric deficiencies (such as accident data and reports) should be appended.

2. The proposed new bridge is substantially wider than the existing bridge. The approximate out-to-out widths of 210 feet for proposed (interestingly, this would make the new crossing wider that the Leonard Zakim Bridge in Boston, reputedly the world's widest cable stayed bridge at a width of 183 feet {source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zakim_Bunker_Hill_Bridge}). Whereas the approximate out-to-out width of the existing is 62 feet. The magnitude of the identified adverse effect on the Staten Island Historic District and the Staten Island Railway Lift Bridge is commensurate with the overall mass of the proposed bridge. Therefore, any opportunities to narrow the proposed bridge should be explored. Another potential advantage to narrowing the proposed bridge would be the possible reuse of the existing bridge to fulfill uses no longer accommodated by the proposed bridge. In examining the cross section of the proposed bridge as shown in Figure 6 of the reviewed alternative analysis report, several clarifications need to be made.
    - Please explain the purpose and/or use of the approximately 5 foot space between the bicycle and pedestrian area and the adjacent westbound travel lanes.
    - Please specify the width of the area designated for 'potential future mass transit corridor'.
    - Please clarify whether there are any other proposed uses within the area designated for 'potential future mass transit corridor'.
    - Please specify the width and purpose and/or use of the approximately 5 foot space between the bicycle and pedestrian area and the eastbound travel lanes.
3. Please submit copies of all comments received in response to the press release of August 2008.
4. Please clarify Table 3 Project Goals Screening Matrix. It seems unusual that point scores were restricted to: 1=does not meet goal, 3=uncertain, and 5=satisfies goal. It would seem reasonable to assume that some alternatives would partially meet project goals with a degree of certainty. Not allowing partial credit would seem to skew the numerical scoring of the alternatives.
5. Please clarify what types of activities might be pursued as transportation mitigation measures.

**Additional Comments**

I am concerned that issues raised by Elizabeth Mayor J. Christian Bollwage regarding the impacts of additional traffic from the proposed new bridge on the local roadway network have not been adequately addressed.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Andrea Tingey regarding architecture at (609-984-0539) or Katherine Marcopul regarding archaeology at (609-984-5816). Thank you.

Sincerely,

Daniel D. Saunders
Deputy State Historic
Preservation Officer

cc Ruth Pierpont, NYSHPO
Honorable Christian Bollwage, Mayor of Elizabeth
Gina Santucci, New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission
Coleen Hopson, The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey

AG3

State of New Jersey
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
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JON S. CORZINE
*Governor*

MARK N. MAURIELLO
*Acting Commissioner*

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JUL 24 2009

July 24, 2009

Mr. Gary Kassof
Bridge Program Manager
First Coast Guard District
One South Street
Battery Building
New York, NY 10004

**RE: Goethals Bridge Modernization Program**
**Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)**

Dear Mr. Kassof:

The Office of Permit Coordination and Environmental Review of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) has completed its review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Goethals Bridge Modernization Program. We offer the following comments for your consideration.

**REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS**

**Division of Land Use Regulation**

The NJDEP's Division of Land Use Regulation (DLUR) has received the Goethals Bridge Replacement DEIS and has determined that the project will require a Waterfront Development Permit.

In addition, through a Letter of Interpretation (file no 2004-06-0007.1), the Division has determined that freshwater wetlands are present within the project limits. Any activities regulated under the Freshwater Wetlands Protection Act proposed within the wetlands or transition areas will require a permit from this office.

**Division of Fish and Wildlife**

The NJDEP's Division of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) feels that the provisions found within section 5.13.4.1 Aquatic Communities under "Construction Phase" on page 5-97 for dredging, demolition of existing bridge, land clearing and noise and vibration should minimize impacts to the fish and wildlife resources during demolition and construction. Only minimal impacts are

expected due to the containment of in-water dredging, construction, and demolition within cofferdams and the implementation of the Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Plan.

"Any dredging or explosions required for in-water construction of the replacement bridge or demolition of the Goethals Bridge would be performed within cofferdams in dry conditions."
*Goethals Bridge Replacement EIS Section 5—Environmental Consequences*
*DEIS – May 2009, 5-100*

Cofferdam installation and removal will be limited to work windows in order to protect winter flounder spawning habitat and migrating Alewife, Blueback herring, and American shad. In New Jersey waters the timing restriction to protect Winter flounder runs from January 1 to May 31 and the anadromous timing restriction to protect migrating Alewife, Blueback herring, and American shad runs from March 1 through June 30.

The New Jersey Artificial Reef Program has used bridge demolition material in the past to build up existing reef sites. The location of the Goethals Bridge makes an ideal situation to load barges with material and deliver it to reef sites along the coast. Although the bridge replacement alternative is apparently yet to be determined, a statement that consideration would be given to the use of bridge demolition material for artificial reef construction could be included in the final EIS.

The NJDEP's Endangered and Non-game Species Program (ENSP) recommends that the project consultant remain in close contact with Chris Nadaresky, the Section Chief with the New York Department of Environmental Protection (NYDEP). The NYDEP closely monitors the peregrines on the Goethals Bridge and will advise on timing restrictions (and/or erection of alternate nesting structures). In New Jersey, our timing restriction for breeding peregrines is March 1 to July 15.

In order to reduce mortality to the Diamondback Terrapin from construction vehicles in the Primary Study Area during the nesting period (June-July), the contractor should instruct all employees and sub contractors to avoid any animals and, if possible, move any turtles to the closest suitable habitat and release unharmed.

**Site Remediation Program**

The NJDEP's Bureau of Case Management (BCM) has reviewed pertinent sections (4.4.3,4.18.4, 4.18.8, 5.18.5) of the Goethals Bridge Replacement Project DEIS dated May 2009 prepared for the United States Coast Guard.

The BCM can only comment on the document generally, as an EIS pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is not a document regulated pursuant to the NJDEP Technical Requirements for Site Remediation (TRSR N.J.A.C. 7:26E).

The DEIS identified several known and potential sites that contain contaminated soils, groundwater or both within the Primary Study Area (PSA). The known sites are in various stages of remediation with oversight by different Bureaus within the Site Remediation Program (SRP).

Further investigations should be conducted in accordance with the NJDEP's Technical Requirements for Site Remediation to confirm the presence of contaminants once an alternative is selected and project design has progressed to the point where areas to be disturbed are more specifically defined. If these investigations reveal the presence of contaminated materials,

delineation of the nature and extent of contamination and remediation would be required within the project area.

A Remedial Action Work plan approved by the NJDEP should be developed to safely remove contaminated soils generally during, but potentially prior to, construction. This plan must be submitted in accordance with the (TRSR, N.J.A.C. 7:26E).

**Historic Preservation Office**

The NJDEP's Historic Preservation Office (HPO) is in the Section 106 consultation process with the United States Coast Guard (USCG) on this project pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act. A copy of the most recent correspondence is attached for your use and information.

The Section 106 process will be complete when the USCG, HPO, New York State Historic Preservation Office, and the Port Authority sign a Memorandum of Agreement for this project. At this time the HPO and the USCG are in the earliest stages of discussing possible mitigation measures for adverse impacts to historic resources. The schedule for the completion of this process is not currently known.

**Office of Local Environmental Management - Noise**

The NJDEP's Office of Local Environmental Management (OLEM) has reviewed the noise section of the Goethals Bridge Replacement DEIS. The following comments highlight our concerns regarding the potential noise impacts:

- Excessive noise, such as pile driving, should be conducted during normal working hours, when local nearby residents may not be home.
- Please be aware that noise on public roadways is exempt under the New Jersey State Noise Control Regulations N.J.A.C. 7:29-1.5(9). Jurisdiction for noise on the New York side of the construction project should comply with New York State noise control regulations.
- Temporary sound barriers should be installed along the active construction corridors that may impact nearby residents.
- Sensitive receptors such as the P.S. 22, William F. Halloran Elementary School should be offered soundproofing insulation.
- Residents within two hundred feet of the proposed construction sites should be notified in advance of the start and finish times and the potential for excessive noise when applicable. Construction hours should have curfews during the evening and early morning hours when near existing residential developments.
- All motorized equipment used during construction should be equipped with factory-installed mufflers.
- A soundproofing jacket for jackhammers exists and should be used during construction.
- Truck routes used during construction should not traverse through residential neighborhoods whenever possible.

- The noise study mentions an effort to comply with the local noise ordinance for the City of Elizabeth. Please be aware that the Department disapproved the city's noise ordinance.

- Some of the noise studies were conducted using an averaging of sound (Leq). Please be aware that State noise investigations are conducted by taking real-time measurements from at or within a complainant's property line.

**Bureau of Air Quality Planning**

The NJDEP's Bureau of Air Quality Planning (BAQP) has reviewed the DEIS for the Goethals Bridge Replacement project and has the following comments:

Section 4.20.1.4 - Regulatory Setting and Compliance with Standards (New Jersey)

The DEIS states that, "the Goethals Bridge Replacement project is a regionally significant project, which requires project-level compliance with the United States Environmental Protection Agency's (USEPA) Conformity rule. If the proposed project is either funded or approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) or the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), then Transportation Conformity would apply. If the proposed project requires funding or approvals from any other Federal agency, such as the USCG, then General Conformity applies to the project."

Comment

A "regionally significant" project as defined in the General Conformity regulation (93.152 Definitions) means "a Federal action for which the direct and indirect emissions of any pollutant represent 10 percent or more of a nonattainment or maintenance area's emission inventory for that pollutant." The definition for "regionally significant" should be clarified in the DEIS. The pollutant emissions associated with this project are not likely to represent 10 percent or more of the nonattainment area's emission inventory. This differs from the definition of regionally significant as it pertains to Transportation Conformity.

The BAQP concurs with the USCG's conclusion that this project requires a Federal General Conformity review. Section 7.1 (Federal Permits and Approvals) in the DEIS indicates that three Federal permits are required for this project. (Section 9 Bridge Permit from the USCG and a Section 44 Dredge and Fill Permit and Section 10 Rivers and Harbors Act Permit from the United States Army Corp of Engineers). As indicated in the Federal General Conformity regulation (40 CFR 93.150)(a), " No department, agency or instrumentality of the Federal Government shall engage in, support in any way or provide financial assistance for, license or permit or approve any activity which does not conform to an applicable implementation plan." Since two Federal agencies will be issuing permits for this project, the General Conformity regulation would apply to this project. Also, this project should be included in the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority's Transportation Improvement Program which is subject to Transportation Conformity.

Section 5.21.7 - Conformity Analysis

The DEIS states that, "Determination of full Conformity compliance will be made following the detailed construction phase air quality analysis, which will be conducted for the

Port Authority's preferred alternative and documented in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) (see Section 5.21.8)"

Comment

Section 93.153(b) and (1) (Applicability) in the Federal General Conformity regulation states, " ...a conformity determination is required for each criteria pollutant or precursor where the total direct or indirect emissions of the criteria pollutant or precursor in a nonattainment or maintenance area caused by a Federal action would equal or exceed any of the rates in paragraphs (b)(1) of this section." Under the 1-hour Ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), the New York-Northern New Jersey-Long Island NY (NY-NY-CT) nonattainment area was classified as a "severe" nonattainment area. Under this classification, the de minimis level for Oxides of Nitrogen (NOx) is 25 tons per year (tpy) and the de minimis level for Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) is 25 tpy. The State of New Jersey continues to be in nonattainment for the 8-hour ozone NAAQS. In order to prevent backsliding and to meet the goal of the Clean Air Act (42 U.S.C. 7502(c)) to achieve attainment of the NAAQS, it is necessary to use the de minimis emissions levels established for General Conformity projects under the 1-hour Ozone NAAQS at (40 CFR 93.153(b)(1). When preparing the Applicability Analysis, please use the de minimis levels for the 1-hour Ozone NAAQS.

In addition, Section 93.158(a)(2) indicates that for ozone and nitrogen dioxide," the total of direct and indirect emissions from the action are fully offset within the same nonattainment or maintenance area... so that there is no net increase in emissions of that pollutant." Section 93.158(d) states that, "any analyses required under this section must be completed, and any mitigation requirement necessary for a finding of conformity must be identified before the determination of conformity is made." In light of the above, a mitigation plan will be required for criteria pollutant emissions and precursors above the 1-hour de minimis levels.

Section 5.21.8 - Construction Impacts

The DEIS states, "Since it is not anticipated that there will be any construction-related detours or diversions during any of the construction phases, no CO analysis of these detours or diversions is needed. The construction phase analysis, therefore, will focus on the potential particulate matter impacts."

Comment

Section 93.153 (b) (Applicability) in the Federal General Conformity regulation states, "...a conformity determination is required for each criteria pollutant or precursor where the total direct or indirect emissions of the criteria pollutant or precursor in a nonattainment or maintenance area caused by a Federal action would equal or exceed any of the rates in paragraphs (b)(1) of this section." When preparing the Applicability Analysis for this project, the analysis should not be limited to direct PM, but must include the emissions of Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs), oxides of nitrogen (NOx), fine particulate matter (PM2.5) and its precursors.

This section of the DEIS includes measures to control airborne particulate matter during construction. These include the use of ultra low sulfur diesel fuel and a 3-minute limit on idling. Due to the health risks associated with diesel exhaust, any project that involves concentrated sources of diesel exhaust such as heavy use of construction vehicles, the BAQP recommends that all construction equipment above 75 horsepower should meet Tier 4 non-road emissions

standards. If Tier 4 standards cannot be met, construction equipment should have control technology verified by the USEPA or the California Air Resources Board (CARB) to reduce particulate matter emissions by a minimum of 85%.

Thank you for giving the NJDEP the opportunity to comment on the Goethals Bridge Modernization Program DEIS.

Sincerely,

Joseph Corleto
Principal Environmental Specialist
Office of Permit Coordination
and Environmental Review

C: Chris Jones, NJDEP
Dan Saunders, NJDEP
Kelly Davis, NJDEP
Steve Maybury, NJDEP
Dave Triggs, NJDEP
Danny Wong, NJDEP

AG4

MEMORANDUM
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

TO: P. King, RPPM, Region 11

FROM: J. Zamurs, Environmental Science Bureau, 4th Floor, POD 4-1

SUBJECT: Goethals Bridge Replacement DEIS Review

DATE: July 24, 2009

As requested in your memo dated June 8, 2009, attached please find the NYSDOT Office of Environment Air Quality, Energy & Climate Change Section comments on the Goethals Bridge Replacement Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

Please contact Catherine Leslie at (518) 485-9449 if you have any questions.

JZ/CL

Enclosure

cc: D. Hitt, Director, Environmental Science Bureau, 4th Floor, POD 4-1
M. Flynn, Environmental Science Bureau, 4th Floor, POD 4-1
M. Ricard, Office of Design, 2nd Floor, POD 2-3

**NYSDOT AIR QUALITY, ENERGY & CLIMATE CHANGE SECTION COMMENTS**

**Project**: Goethals Bridge Replacement
**Document**: Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS)
**PIN**: N/A
**Date**: July 24, 2009

1. Table ES.5-1: This table should list the direct and maintenance energy consumption estimates for the No-Build Alternative (instead of "N/A").

2. Page 4-185, Section 4.18: The "Contaminated Materials" section should include background and screening information in association with suspect asbestos-containing materials that may have to be removed as part of the project. Text should be added stating that during design, all suspect materials will be confirmed positive through laboratory analysis and that any confirmed positive materials will be removed during construction using appropriately-licensed abatement contractor(s) in accordance with applicable state and federal regulations.

3. The current and applicable National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS) for 24-hour PM2.5 is 35 $g/m^3$, and should be used throughout the DEIS for all related analyses. The references in the DEIS to the old standard of 65 $g/m^3$ should be deleted.

4. Page 4-215, Section 4.20.1: The first sentence states "The air quality analysis of the proposed project was conducted in accordance with the procedures outlined in…the New York State Department of Transportation's (NYSDOT) *Environmental Procedures Manual (EPM)*…" However, much of the air quality analyses for this project were not conducted in accordance with the EPM. Specifically:
   a. For the CO microscale analysis, the intersections with the three highest level of service and three highest traffic volumes should be analyzed (only 2 sites were analyzed in New York State and it is unclear why these sites were selected) and the analysis should be conducted for 1-hour CO in addition to 8-hour CO. Also, the receptors should be shown in a figure or listed in a table in the DEIS and be located, at a minimum, at sidewalks near the corner and mid-block for each approach and departure at the intersection (in accordance with EPA guidance).
   b. The PM microscale analysis does not follow (or mention) Chapter 1.2 of the NYSDOT EPM ("Project-Level Particulate Matter Guidance"). According to the EPM, PM microscale analyses should be conducted for PM10 and PM2.5 (the analysis for this project only included PM2.5) and the results should be compared to the NYSDOT potential significant impact thresholds.
   c. For the mesoscale analysis, years ETC and ETC+10 should be analyzed (in addition to ETC+20), PM10 should be included, and the results for PM10 and PM2.5 should be compared to the NYSDOT potential significant impact thresholds in Chapter 1.2 of the EPM.

5. Page 4-218, Table 4.20-1; page 4-220, Table 4.20-2; page 4-221, Table 4.20-3: EPA has revised the 8-hour ozone NAAQS to 0.075 ppm. However, the tables list the previous standard of 0.08 ppm.

6. Page 4-220, Section 4.20.1.4: In the first paragraph on page 4-220, the references to the NYMTC TIP and Long Range Plan transportation conformity determination approvals should cite the most recent FHWA/FTA approval date of April 27, 2009.

7. Page 4-220, Section 4.20.2.1 and Table 4.20-2: The first paragraph in this section states that data were compiled for 2005, but Table 4.20-2 states that the data are for 2006. This inconsistency should be corrected. Also, the air quality monitoring data used throughout the DEIS should reflect the most recent data available.

8. Page 4-221, Table 4.20-3: Asterisked notes are included in the footnotes, but no asterisks are included in the table. Also, the units are missing from the second asterisked note. Lastly, footnote #3 states that 2005 data were used for PM10; however, aren't all of the data in this table from 2005?

9. Page 4-225, Section 4.20.3.5: Please omit the reference to the NYSDOT EPM in the second paragraph of this section.

10. Page 4-226, Section 4.20.3.6: This section states that 2006 vehicle registration and diesel sales fraction data were used as inputs to MOBILE6.2. Please be aware that NYSDOT currently uses 2007 vehicle registration, diesel sales fraction, and inspection and maintenance data for the analyses of our projects. We recommend that the U.S. Coast Guard consider updating the air quality analyses for this project using the newer MOBILE6.2 input data.

11. Page 5-207, "Dispersion Model" subsection: This subsection states that CAL3QHC was used for the analysis; however, Section 4.20.3.8 states that CAL3QHCR was used. Please correct this inconsistency.

12. Page 5-209, "Changes in Vehicular Emission Rates" subsection: In the first paragraph of this subsection, it appears that the PM2.5 emission factors are reversed for 2006 and 2014.

13. Page 5-212, Section 5.21.4: The third paragraph states that there are no differences in VMT among the four build alternatives. However, Section 5.19.6.2 states that the lane miles under the New Alignment North Alternative are slightly less than that under the other build alternatives. This inconsistency should be corrected in the DEIS.

14. Page 5-213, Section 5.21.5: This section should list the six "priority" MSATs and reference the FHWA "*Interim Guidance on Air Toxic Analysis in NEPA Documents*" (from which much of the text in this section was derived).

15. Page 5-220, Section 5.21.7: The discussion of general conformity should reference the applicable *de minimis* thresholds.

AG5

**M E M O R A N D U M**
**Department of Transportation**

To: R. Zerrillo, Policy and Strategy Group

From: P. G. King, RPPM, Region 11

Subj: Goethals Bridge DEIS

Date: July 27th, '09

I reviewed the transportation elements of Chapters 4 and 5 of the Goethals DEIS and offer the following comments.

**Chapter 4:Existing Conditions/Chapter 5:Environmental Consequences & Mitigations**

| Page No. | Section or Table No. | Comment |
|---|---|---|
| 199-first bullet | | limited access arterial (Richmond Ave parallels the WSE and is a 6 lane non-limited access corridor) |
| | Table 4.19-6 | The AM LOS disparity between the Goethals and the OBC is interesting. Considerably more traffic is outbound on the GB in the morning than inbound, yet that same kind of split does not manifest on the OBC. This should be verified. |
| 207 | 4.19.4.3 | Note that on the SIE, congestion is also caused by the high volume of large trucks. This is particularly acute at the Todt Hill grade. |
| | General Comment | Data was only collected for the AM and PM peaks. What about impacts on weekends when volumes can be as high or higher than during the week (especially during the warm weather months) |
| | Table 4.19-11 | It might be helpful to the analysis to include the lengths of each segment. |
| | Table 4.19-14 | In using statewide average accident rates for similar facilities, was the substandard lane width on the present GB taken into consideration? |
| | Section 4.19-7 | Section on transit facilities-there was no mention of the existing bus-HOV lane on the SIE (E/B & W/B) from the VNB to Slosson and no mention of the new MTA service over the Bayonne to the 34th Street HBLR station. |
| | Section 5.20.2.1 | Did network enhancements for the modeling effort include other important Hudson River crossings going as far North as the TZB? |
| 168 | Bottom of page | Forecasted transit enhancements should indicate SDOT's plans to extend the bus lane to Victory/Richmond (final determination on Western limit yet to be made) |
| 170/Top | | I would not use the word 'unacceptable' in describing LOS F-it's too subjective. Better to say that at LOS F (or corresponding density) conditions are severely congested or similar phrasing. |
| 170/Bottom | | The document states; "As shown in Table 5.20-2, future No-Build travel demand at the Goethals Bridge is forecast to grow by 23 percent and 19 percent, respectively, in the peak hour, peak direction of travel, which is westbound in |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | the AM and eastbound in the PM." Can the bridge absorb this growth or is it capacity-constrained? |
| | Table 5.20-2 | Are these throughput figures achievable given the capacity of the bridge (similar to above) |
| 173 | 5.20.3.2 | Shouldn't the WSE be on the bulleted list? It is included on Table 5.20-3 |
| | General | The analysis focuses on changes in trip volumes due to shifts in the network. Also to be considered are new trips generated by construction of a new, higher capacity bridge. The trip generation phenomenon was explored analytically in the Staten Island Expressway MIS done in the 1990's where improvements to the SIE were shown not only to attract trips from other parts of the network but to generate new trips not formerly made. |
| 176 | Bottom | The document notes; ……travel demand due to its additional capacity, travel demand at the parallel Outerbridge Crossing would be moderately reduced in 2034." Is this reduction from current levels or projected 2034 no-build levels? This should be made clear |
| 184 | Top | Changes in volume on the SIE east of the WSE between projected build and no-build should be small except for induced trip making and shifts from non-S.I. crossings such as the GWB. |
| | Table 5.20-18 | Different tables in the document use different measures such as LOS, seconds of delay, and traffic density. Can these data be standardized or equivalents developed? |
| | | Mitigations (under no-build) should include the recent addition of auxiliary lanes on the SIE at Todt Hill to the Region's Bus lane extension project. |
| 192/3 | | Note that the SIE bus/HOV lanes' extension to the GB was never part of the Region's capital program. Extension to the GB was only discussed. The current program will extend the lanes to the vicinity of Victory/Richmond, add auxiliary lanes at Todt Hill and remove the unused Sunnyside Interchange built for the Richmond Parkway |
| 193 | | It should be noted that the Region decided to defer the reconstruction of the WSE/SIE Interchange for more than resource reasons. There are also anticipated environmental and wetland issues and impacts from nearby development such as at the GATX site. Also note that MUL's don't mitigate volumes, more precisely, they mitigate the operational impacts of increased volumes. |
| 201 | Bottom | The description of the SIE Operational improvements should be recharacterized to note that the reconfiguration of on/off ramps will better able to allow the service roads and Expressway mainline to function as a single system with better balance of traffic between the two. |
| | Section 5.20.8/Transit | It should be noted that with completion of the redecking of the Gowanus (last major project to be let in Jan. '10) the MTA-NYCT may well shift current bus routes to Manhattan which now go via N.J. to come to Manhattan via the Gowanus and BBT. Other shifts in bus route operation associated with the extension of the SIE bus lanes further west as well as additional work on the Gowanus may also be contemplated by NYCT. |

# New Jersey Turnpike Authority

AG6

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - 581 MAIN STREET
P.O. BOX 5042 - WOODBRIDGE, NEW JERSEY 07095
TELEPHONE (732) 750-5300

JON S. CORZINE
GOVERNOR

STEPHEN DILTS, *Chairman*
MICHAEL R. Du PONT, *Treasurer*
HAROLD L. HODES, *Commissioner*
DAVID G. EVANS, *Commissioner*
RAYMOND M. POCINO, *Commissioner*
CLIVE S. CUMMIS, *Commissioner*
TROY SINGLETON, *Commissioner*
ULISES E. DIAZ, *Commissioner*
DIANE GUTIERREZ-SCACCETTI, *Executive Director*

July 27, 2009

RECEIVED
JUL 28 2009

Commander (dbp)
First Coast Guard District
Battery Building
One South Street
New York, N.Y. 10004

Attention: Mr. G. Kassof

RE: Goethals Bridge Replacement Project
Draft Environmental Impact Statement
Comments

Dear Mr. Kassof:

The New Jersey Turnpike Authority (Authority) has reviewed the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) relative to the above referenced project.

Let me first say that the Authority is very supportive of the project as the Goethals Bridge provides a vital transportation link between the State of New Jersey and Staten Island, New York. The safety and operational problems along with the associated capacity limitations on the existing bridge, as documented in the EIS, create significant operational problems for the Turnpike Authority. The congestion that regularly occurs in the eastbound direction across the bridge commonly backs up through the Authority's toll plaza and onto the mainline roadway which many times results in congestion along the Turnpike mainline in both the northbound and southbound directions. Because of these issues, the Authority is a strong supporter of the planned improvements to the Goethals Bridge.

The Authority does, however, have concerns relative to the mitigation plan that is being proposed by the Port Authority with the goal of minimizing the secondary impacts associated with the project. The mitigation plan being proposed involves the incorporation of a managed use lane (MUL) across the 6 lane replacement bridge during peak periods of travel. The restriction associated with this MUL results in only 2 lanes being available across the bridge for general purpose traffic, the same number of lanes that currently exist. It is understood that the future general purpose lanes will be able to accommodate greater volumes than the existing lanes because of the associated geometric improvements (lane widths, shoulders, etc.); however, the Authority is concerned as to the effect the plan will have on future traffic conditions at our Interchange 13, and we are interested in the working relationship of the lanes with our toll plaza.

NEW JERSEY TURNPIKE AUTHORITY



Thank you for the opportunity to review the EIS. The Turnpike Authority has been working closely with the Port Authority during the development of this very important project and looks forward to continuing to do so as the project progresses towards reality.

Very truly yours,

Richard J. Raczynski, P.E.
Chief Engineer

RJR:SMB:rp
cc: Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti, Executive Director (NJTA)
Robert J. Fischer, P.E.
Stephen M. Buente, P.E.
File

AG7

The following DEIS comment was submitted to the Goethals Bridge Website:

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Name: Ellen K. Hartig for Bram Gunther, Deputy Chief
Organization: City of New York Parks & Recreation
Title: Project Manager
Street Address: 1234 Fifth Avenue
City: New York
State: NY
Zip Code: 10029
Telephone: 212-360-1481
Fax Number: 212-360-1426
Email Address: ellen.hartig@parks.nyc.gov

Comment:

Comment to pages 4-130 to 4-134:

Good that so many sources were sought for survey data on benthic invertebrates, fish, birds and other wildlife in and around Old Place Creek; however, some of the data was collected more than ten years ago.

Fish species lists given on page 4-132 are from 1992, 1996 and 1997 studies. There is enough of a gap in time that changes in water quality or other parameters may have caused changes in fish or other species composition especially when the early 1990s may still reflect the impacts of the 1990 Exxon Bayway oil spill.

Comment to page 4-112, Appendix H Regarding: Use of the 1993-1994 breeding bird surveys:

The damages account was based in part on documented reductions in fauna resulting from the spill. Through a description either in the text or in a footnote the influence of the oil spill on birds, fish and other wildlife should be recognized, particularly given the emphasis in the DEIS on surveys from the early 1990s (following the oil spill event).

It should be noted that bird species numbers and density from that period may have been depressed due to the spill and numbers may have meanwhile recovered.

A letter in the DEIS from NYCDPR, refers to the water bird and other avian data. The letter can be found in Volume 3, Appendix H dated May 23, 2005. NYCDPR can check if the data given was collected after the oil spill mainly in 1993 to 1994.

Comment to Page 4-144
Paragraph at end of 4.14.5.4:

Mention of the Exxon Bayway oil spill of 1990 was found only at the end of the section 4.14.5.4 in relation to the 2005 Bridge Creek Restoration Project located north of Goethals Road North, and as stated, outside of the Primary Study Area. As noted, the restoration compensates for damages from the oils spill, and that it was a 13 acre restoration sponsored and constructed by the NYSDEC, New York Harbor Oil Spill Trustees, US Fish & Wildlife Service and NOAA Restoration Center plus participation of PANY&NJ. However, clarification is needed whether the 1994 NYCDPR restorations mentioned briefly at the beginning of section 4.14.5.4 (P 4-137, line 12) was not also conducted as compensation of the same oil spill and the result of similar agreements with NYSDEC and the trustees.

General Comment:

Part of the footprint of the bridge supports will cross Old Place Creek salt marshes in the location of NRG's earlier (1993-1994) salt marsh restoration projects stemming from the 1990s Exxon Bayway oil spill.

NRG's Salt Marsh Restoration Team (SMRT) project restoring marshes following the oil spill was funded by the damages account based in part on before and after bird surveys through which the damage to wildlife could be documented. The SMRT published and presented their findings at professional conferences because of the innovative methodology used to restore the petroleum-soaked Spartina alterniflora marshes and the high success rates achieved under highly contaminated conditions. These salt marshes are currently thriving.

Given the unusual history of these marshes special consideration should be given to the mitigation requirements if the restored marshes must be destroyed during the Goethals Bridge Replacement. The mitigation ratio to compensate for the loss should be significantly larger than the usual maximum 3:1 ratio of wetland mitigation acreage to wetland loss acreage.

Comment to page 5-107, Table 5.13-1:

The Old Place Creek wetlands are designated as Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitat (NYSDEC). While wetland

acreage given in Table 5.13-1 (page 5-107) accounts for the actual footprint of wetland loss (5.19 to 5.51 acres depending on alignment selected), it does not account for the impact of splitting a large significant wetland into two sections. Mitigation measures should include compensating for the bifurcation of a large contiguous and significant wetland.

Comment to Fig. 4.14-4 & 4.14-5 and 5.13-1 & 5.13-2:

Ecological communities highlighted in figures assumes that impacts are limited to the study area within several hundred feet of the wetland.

Please describe size determinations for impacts analysis.

Comment to page 5-107, Table 5.13-1:

Not included in the DEIS is the list of proposed mitigation sites. From table 5.13.1 the acreage range of expected dredge or fill activity occurring in wetlands will be 5.19 to 5.51 acres. Please note that this should be closely coordinated with DPR as nearby sites are being examined for transfer to Parks as part of the Wetlands Transfer Task Force (WTTF) inventory and other efforts.

While the norm for Army Corps of Engineers and DEC wetland permit conditions would be to require a ratio of 1:3 to compensate for the direct wetland loss, consideration is also needed in determining the compensation for impacts from bifurcating the existing wetlands of Old Place Creek. Mitigation to be considered should include sites that are large enough to allow not only for the direct losses due to dredge and fill activity, but also can compensate for the loss of contiguous wetland habitat. For example, selecting the GATX site (located adjacent to Old Place Creek marshes) for mitigation through a combination of restoration and preservation, has the advantage of offering an opportunity to reestablish contiguous wetlands of comparable size. The GATX site currently supports what NRG believes to be the largest population of Southern Leopard Frogs (Rana phenocephala) in New York State as well as breeding populations of several uncommon marsh birds.

Comment to pages 3-16, 5-81, 5-108, 5-117, 5-257:

One major concern is in regard to the extent to which bridge construction will include a permanent fenced paved road, and the

extent to which the road and fenceline will traverse Old Place Creek marshes. Depending on the road design, the marshes could become partially disconnected hydrologically.

Wetland loss from the road alone will be approximately 3.8 to 4.4 acres. In addition, as stated, "...the security fence would surround an area of approximately 16 acres, consisting primarily of wetlands associated with Old Place Creek and/or the Arthur Kill."

Such actions would physically bifurcate the wetlands. These impacts may be greater than that of shading in dissecting the existing wetlands.

Section 5, page 5-117 discusses sectioning of habitat from shading, however does not discuss other impacts of sectioning except as "indirect effects from the Proposed Project" (page 5-257). Not found in Section 5-Environmental Consequences, was mention of how wetland impacts from the roadbed would be minimized. For example, will culverts be constructed adequate for water and wildlife to pass through.

There is a brief discussion in Section 3-Alternatives, regarding access road design and the impacts of alternative designs. Placement of the road on piles is given as an alternative to the current designs, however, it does not appear to receive further analysis. This alternative may however, significantly reduce the impacts of the permanent road on wetlands by reducing changes to the hydrologic regime. A pile-supported permanent road would have fewer impacts to fish birds and other wildlife than a road constructed on elevated fill.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

AG8

The following DEIS comment was submitted to the Goethals Bridge Website:

---

Name: Marjorie Bryant
Organization: NYCDOT
Title: Project Manager
Street Address: 55 Water Street, 6th Floor
City: New York
State: NY
Zip Code: 10041
Telephone: 212-839-7756
Fax Number: 212-839-7777
Email Address: mbryant@dot.nyc.gov
Comment:

We have completed our review of the above referenced Draft EIS and have the following comments:

DOT's Signals Division review of the proposed mitigation measures involving signal reallocations exceeding four or more seconds may result in a request for a signal progression analysis.

DOT has not received the background material (i.e., detailed HCS summary sheets or electronic files for the 2034 No Build, Build and Build with Mitigation conditions; traffic assignment maps and tables for the individual sites/projects). In addition, please provide the project-generated diversions for the 2034 Build Condition.

Please provide DOT with any changes made to the HCS default values or factors between existing and future conditions.

Following our review of the requested materials, DOT may provide additional comments, as we are still reviewing the Construction chapter.

Bicycle Program Comments

Providing a safe, convenient connection between Staten Island and New Jersey across the Goethals Bridge to promote more cycling and enable cyclists to access future bike routes in Fresh Kills Park. We hope that the Goethals Bridge will seamlessly fit into this bicycle network. To ensure the successful integration of bicycles and pedestrians onto the Goethals Bridge the "Purpose and Need" section of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) should

list the need to "establish a bicycle pedestrian connection between Staten Island and New Jersey".

Furthermore, existing alternatives, as represented in the DEIS, to provide a single 10-foot shared pedestrian and bicycle path across the bridge should be upgraded to a 10-foot shared walkway/ bikeway in each direction. The additional walkway/ bikeway will reduce conflicts between pedestrians and cyclists as they cross the bridge and will simplify connections between the Goethals Bridge and the network of bicycle routes on either side.

The impact of additional moving lanes on the Goethals Bridge should be studied to assess the impact of additional traffic on streets with planned bicycle facilities including South Avenue, Forest Avenue and Edward Curry Avenue. Also, impacts to the proposed greenway along the Staten Island Railroad right-of-way should be considered.

AG9

UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 2
290 BROADWAY
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1866

RECEIVED
JUL 30 2009

JUL 28 2009

Mr. Gary Kassof
Bridge Program Manager
First Coast Guard District
Battery Building
One South Street
New York, NY 10004

Dear Mr. Kassof:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) for the Goethals Bridge Replacement Project (GBR) (CEQ#20090173) between Staten Island, New York and Elizabeth, New Jersey. This review was conducted in accordance with Section 309 of the Clean Air Act, as amended (42 U.S.C 7609, PL 91-604 12 (a), 84 Stat. 1709) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

The Goethals Bridge, constructed in the 1920s, provides a link over the Arthur Kill along Interstate 278, which begins as U.S. Route 1/9 in Linden, New Jersey, and continues across northern Staten Island as the Staten Island Expressway, and then across the Verrazano Bridge into Brooklyn and Queens. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ) owns and operates the Goethals Bridge. The purpose of the proposed project is to eliminate the functional and physical obsolescence of the existing Goethals Bridge, and address the aging structure's escalating maintenance, repair, and structural needs and costs.

In general, EPA finds the DEIS to be a comprehensive document, and that our comments on the preliminary DEIS have been addressed. EPA notes that an interagency mitigation group has been created to identify agency-specific needs for mitigation of wetland impacts associated with the GBR, and that the final design of the bridge will include mitigation to reduce impact to birds flying over the Arthur Kill. Nevertheless, EPA is concerned about the future traffic volumes on ancillary highways and ramps, even with the traffic mitigation presented. We urge the PANYNJ to keep working with federal, state and local transportation agencies to minimize the impacts to the connecting transportation network to the extent possible.

EPA would also like to take this opportunity to encourage the PANYNJ to undertake voluntary initiatives to use clean diesel fuel, emission control devices, and other measures to effectively reduce air pollution emissions during construction and operation of its

facilities. In addition, the use of coal combustion products and recycled industrial materials in lieu of new materials, such as Portland cement, provide environmental benefits by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, solid waste disposal needs and energy use. Additional information on industrial material recycling can be found at www.epa.gov/epawaste/conserve/rrr/imr. EPA also recommends the use of renewable energy for lighting during construction and operation of the new bridge.

EPA has rated the DEIS and all four alternatives as Environmental Concerns – Adequate (EC-1) as the mitigation to impacts to wetlands has not been fully identified. (see enclosed rating sheet). If you have any questions regarding this review or our comments, please contact Lingard Knutson of my staff at (212) 637-3747.

Sincerely,

John Filippelli, Chief
Strategic Planning and Multi-Media Programs Branch

Enclosure

## SUMMARY OF RATING DEFINITIONS AND FOLLOW-UP ACTION

### Environmental Impact of the Action

LO-Lack of Objections

The EPA review has not identified any potential environmental impacts requiring substantive changes to the proposal. The review may have disclosed opportunities for application of mitigation measures that could be accomplished with no more than minor changes to the proposal.

EC-Environmental Concerns

The EPA review has identified environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to fully protect the environment. Corrective measures may require changes to the preferred alternative or application of mitigation measures that can reduce the environmental impact. EPA would like to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts.

EO-Environmental Objections

The EPA review has identified significant environmental impacts that must be avoided to provide adequate protection for the environment. Corrective measures may require substantial changes to the preferred alternative or consideration of some other project alternative (including the no action alternative or a new alternative). EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts.

EU-Environmentally Unsatisfactory

The EPA review has identified adverse environmental impacts that are of sufficient magnitude that they are unsatisfactory from the standpoint of environmental quality, public health or welfare. EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts. If the potential unsatisfactory impacts are not corrected at the final EIS stage, this proposal will be recommend for referral to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ).

### Adequacy of the Impact Statement

Category 1-Adequate

EPA believes the draft EIS adequately sets forth the environmental impact(s) of the preferred alternative and those of the alternatives reasonably available to the project or action. No further analysis or data collection is necessary, but the reviewer may suggest the addition of clarifying language or information.

Category 2-Insufficient Information

The draft EIS does not contain sufficient information for EPA to fully assess environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to fully protect the environment, or the EPA reviewer has identified new reasonably available alternatives that are within the spectrum of alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS, which could reduce the environmental impacts of the action. The identified additional information, data, analyses, or discussion should be included in the final EIS.

Category 3-Inadequate

EPA does not believe that the draft EIS adequately assesses potentially significant environmental impacts of the action, or the EPA reviewer has identified new, reasonably available alternatives that are outside of the spectrum of alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS, which should be analyzed in order to reduce the potentially significant environmental impacts. EPA believes that the identified additional information, data, analysis, or discussions are of such a magnitude that they should have full public review at a draft stage. EPA does not believe that the draft EIS is adequate for the purposes of the NEPA and/or Section 309 review, and thus should be formally revised and made available for public comment in a supplemental or revised draft EIS. On the basis of the potential significant impacts involved, this proposal could be a candidate for referral to the CEQ.

*From: EPA Manual 1640, "Policy and Procedures for the Review of Federal Actions Impacting the Environment."

AG10

From: John.Formosa@dot.gov [mailto:John.Formosa@dot.gov]
Sent: Thursday, August 06, 2009 11:05 AM
To: Kassof, Gary
Subject: FW: Goethals Bridge Draft EIS

Hello Gary,

Below are FHWA comments on the DEIS.

In addition to the Observations and Recommendations contained below I would like to make an additional recommendation: There is great interest and need for freight improvement and improved maintenace and protection of traffic among early deliverables in this corridor. Currently your schedule of deliverables does not make traffic improvements until the replacement structure is opened to traffic. Your potential solicitations for federal funding and for federal support would be enhanced if your project included an early deliverable of improved transportation. FHWA is supportive of MP&T schemes that provide immediate and improved relief to the corridor while the design and construction package is advanced on a parallel path. On this unique corridor there appear to be two potential areas for MP&T improvement.

- One would be to review the highway itself and the opportunities for enhanced signage, delineation, dedicated freight lanes, structural modifications and enhancements to optimize usage of the existing structure and feeder ramps etc...

- The second and more imaginative/challenging area recommended for the PANYNJ to examine is the operation of the NY Container facility and how this establishes a significant demand on the current Goethals. An "out of the box" MP&T early action that delivers a sizable portion of the containers that demand to be moved westward would be eligible for the potential federal funding and may make that immediate improvement to MP&T to facilitate the continued maintenance and replacement of the Goethals. While not recommending a specific solution here, it would appear within the PANYNJ collection of infrastructure the capacity to evaluate "landing" a larger degree of containers on the Western shores for movements westward. Recognizing that revenue, leasing, marine operations and other challenges may be difficult to address, still the intent is to deliver a degree of relief prior to opening of the new Goethals. Increased costs of these MP&T enhancement would be eligible for federal aid support,

if that federal-aid were awarded under TIFIA, Tiger, Discretionary, PABs or other potential PANYNJ solicitations.

NEPA Draft EIS Observations

1. The document is well written and adequately defines the purpose of and need for the project, delineates the logical termini of the action, and frames the proposed improvements in light of other related actions in the region.

2. The Draft EIS sufficiently identifies and addresses FHWA NEPA requirements, including difficult and often confusing areas of analysis such as indirect and cumulative impacts.

3. The Draft EIS was developed with the USCG as the federal lead agency in anticipation of permit issuance. FHWA involvement has been limited to cooperating agency status under NEPA. This involvement includes both the NY and NJ Divisions.

4. The Draft EIS, under the direction of the USCG, documents extensive outreach to the public, stakeholders, and regulatory/advisory agencies.

5. The project design reflects the consideration and incorporation of public and agency input, including analysis methodologies and mitigation measures.

6. It would appear that the only FHWA requirements not met by the Draft EIS, are those unique to the USDOT, namely Section 4(f).

In recognition that funding through the USDOT may be accomplished at a later, as yet undefined time, then FHWA's role in the project may change. In such an event, two scenarios can play out. FHWA can become a joint federal lead agency, becoming a full partner in the continued development of the Final EIS, and ultimately leading to USCG and FHWA Record of Decisions. The second option would be for FHWA to continue in the role of a cooperating agency, ensuring FHWA's comments and concerns are made known to the USCG, and then adopting the USCG's analysis contained in the Final EIS and FHWA issuing its own ROD.

Recommendations:

1. Continue the role of FHWA as Cooperating Agency through the USCG's Record of Decision (ROD).

2. If funding through the USDOT is accomplished and a FHWA NEPA document becomes necessary, then FHWA may adopt the USCG's analysis and findings contained within the USCG's EIS and issue it's own ROD. There appears to be no substantive gain in having FHWA become a joint lead agency at this time.

3. If the PANYNJ, USCG, or FHWA believe that FHWA involvement is necessary, then coordination with both FHWA Divisions should commence as soon as possible to ensure that the EIS contains sufficient data and consultation.

4. Section 4(f) Evaluation. The proposed project includes Section 4(f) use that will require a Section 4(f) evaluation. This evaluation must include an avoidance alternatives analysis and demonstration of measures to minimize harm. Because of the existing documentation, consultation, and analysis conducted on historic properties in conformance of Section 106 and NEPA requirements, it is likely that the 4(f) evaluation can be substantially developed from the material produced to date. There is very specific terminology, procedures, and standards of review that must be met, including circulation of the 4(f) evaluation. Given the amount of work conducted thus far, this should not pose a significant obstacle to the team or the schedule.

5. If FHWA is to be involved in funding the project, then FHWA should play a larger role in the determination and execution of mitigation commitments and agreements. For example, FHWA should become a signatory to the Section 106 Memorandum of Agreement to resolve adverse effects.

Additional permits and approvals should be reviewed to determine if FHWA can or should be elevated in status.

Summary:
USCG Actions
Close comment period on Draft EIS.
Address substantive comments and prepare Final EIS.
Consult as necessary.
Circulate Final EIS.
Prepare USCG ROD.
Execute USCG ROD.

If FHWA involvement is deemed necessary, then additional steps include:
Prepare Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation.

Circulate Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation.
Prepare FHWA ROD/Final Section 4(f) Evaluation.

Permit requirements should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

AG11

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Habitat Conservation Division
James J. Howard Marine
Sciences Laboratory
74 Magruder Road
Highlands, NJ 07732

August 5, 2009

Commander (dpb)
United States Coast Guard
First Coast Guard District
1 South Street
Battery Park building
New York, New York 10004-1466

ATTN: Mr. Gary Kassof
Bridge Program Manager

Dear Mr. Kassof:

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Northeast Region's Habitat Conservation Division has reviewed the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Goethals Bridge Replacement*. The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PA) proposes to construct a new cable-stayed bridge to replace the existing Goethals Bridge connecting the Borough of Staten Island, New York and the City of Elizabeth, New Jersey. According to the DEIS, the existing bridge is both functionally and physically obsolete. The DEIS describes the project purpose and need and outlines several alternatives proposed by the PA to meet the project's goals which include addressing design deficiencies; enhancing structural integrity and reducing life-cycle costs; providing transportation system redundancy; improving traffic service; providing safer operating conditions and reducing accidents; providing safe and reliable truck access for regional goods movement and providing for the potential future transit in the corridor.

The DEIS evaluates the no build alternative as well as four alignments for a new, six lane bridge. All of the new bridge alternatives would consist of six 12-foot-wide travel lanes, three on each roadway deck (i.e., one roadway for eastbound traffic and one roadway for westbound traffic); a 12-foot wide outer shoulder on each roadway; a five foot wide inner shoulder on each roadway; a minimum ten foot wide sidewalk/bikeway along the northern edge of the westbound roadway and a central area between the two roadways to be maintained for future transit service. Other components proposed as part of the build alternatives include new approach spans in both NY and NJ; a 50-foot wide buffer on both sides of the replacement bridge and its approach spans; a permanent access road below the replacement bridge for construction, maintenance and security; replacement of the Travis Branch railroad bridge in Staten Island; relocation and or realignment of either or both Goethals Road North and Gulf Avenue in Staten Island; and five acre construction staging areas on each side of the Arthur Kill.

The four alignments evaluated for the build alternatives include new bridges either to the north or south of the existing bridge or a bridge built partially to the north or south of the existing bridge. If a bridge is constructed partially to the north or south, only one-half of the new bridge would be constructed initially. The traffic would be transferred to the new bridge section. The old bridge

would be demolished and then the remaining portion of the new bridge would be constructed within the alignment of the old bridge. The DEIS does not identify a preferred alternative.

Our comments on the DEIS are as follows:

**General Comments:**
The lack of an identified preferred alternative prevents the full evaluation of the proposed project impacts on NOAA Trust resources. While the impacts of the various alternatives are similar, the location, the nature of the habitat impacts and the extent of the impacts vary. For example, the total impacts to wetlands and water of the U.S. for the four build alternatives range from 5.19 to 5.51 acres. The two northern alignment alternatives will impact more acres of low marsh and mudflat that the two southern alternatives. The southern alternatives will impact more acres of high marsh. Low marsh and mudflats are more likely to support resources of concern to us than high marsh. However, the southern alignments both involve the construction of a bridge pier at the entrance to an interpier basin in Elizabeth, NJ. The placement of this pier would restrict substantially the tidal flushing of this shallow 3-acre area, permanently altering water quality and sedimentation patterns. This could result in the degradation of the area as habitat for fish. .

The northern alternatives will also impact the Old Place Creek Marsh, eight acres of salt marsh that were injured by the 1990 Exxon Bayway oil spill and were subsequently restored using more than one million dollars of settlement funds. As stated in our 1995 correspondence on the Goethals Bridge modernization project, the Old Place Creek Marsh has a high ecological value and has served as award winning model for restoration after oils spills. The DEIS does not appear to discuss fully the implications of impacting this area. Should one of the northern alignments be selected as the preferred alternative, the final EIS should more carefully consider ecological consequences of the filling of this marsh. Further, any mitigation plan developed should include the unique value of this site as part of the plan selection and design process.

However, without a designated preferred alternative, it is not possible to develop a mitigation plan that compensates for the project derived losses to ecological functions and values because these losses cannot be quantified completely without identifying the impacts.

**Magnuson Stevens Fishery Management and Conservation Act (MSA)**
The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) requires Federal agencies including the US Coast Guard (USCG) to consult with NMFS regarding any action or proposed action authorized, funded, or undertaken by the agency that may adversely affect EFH identified under the MSA. The EFH regulations, 50 CFR Section 600.920, outline that consultation procedure and, further, enable federal agencies to use existing consultation/environmental review procedures to satisfy the MSA consultation requirements when appropriate. Included in this consultation process is the preparation of a complete and appropriate EFH assessment to provide necessary information on which to consult.

The draft EFH assessment included in the DEIS is incomplete. While the assessment includes information on impacts to forage species and indirect impacts, there are several deficiencies that should be addressed in the final document. The species for which EFH has been designated is incomplete. The list appears to have been obtained from the 10 minute square data from our website (www.nero.noaa.gov/hcd/STATE4/new_jersey/40307410.html), and this data is only partially complete. Additional designations for the Hudson-Raritan Estuary including the Arthur Kill can be found on our website as well (www.nero.noaa.gov/hcd/nj4.html). The use of both data sets is required to develop a complete list of EFH for the project site. Species and life stages missing from the draft EFH assessment include juvenile and adult black sea bass (*Centropristis*

*striata*), adult red hake (*Urophycis chuss*), windowpane (*Scophthalmus aquosus*) and winter flounder (*Pseudopleuronectes americanus*) spawning adults.

In addition, the assessment only appears to consider the permanent loss of 0.2 to 0.3 acres of shallow water as impacts to EFH. The EFH final rule published in the Federal Register on January 17, 2002 defines an adverse effect as: "Any impact which reduces the quality and/or quantity of EFH." The rule further states that:

> An adverse effect may include direct or indirect physical, chemical, or biological alterations of the waters or substrate and loss of, or injury to, benthic organisms, prey species and their habitat and other ecosystems components, if such modifications reduce the quality and/or quantity of EFH. Adverse effects to EFH may result from action occurring within EFH or outside EFH and may include site-specific or habitat-wide impacts, including individual, cumulative, or synergistic consequences of actions.

As a result, the assessment should address impacts to wetlands, tidal creeks as well as the Arthur Kill. Temporary impacts should also be considered. A more detailed discussion of measures to compensate for the impacts should be provided.

As mentioned above, the lack of an identified preferred alternative precludes a complete analysis of project impacts and the development of detailed mitigation plans to offset the impacts. With the information in the DEIS on the four potential alternatives and the draft EFH assessment, we can offer some preliminary recommendations for inclusion in the FEIS and the mitigation plans and for project planning and scheduling purposes.

As a result, the EFH consultation between NMFS and the USCG for this project should not be considered complete until a final, revised EFH assessment is provided that incorporates the missing information and includes a discussion of the impacts of the alternative selected and more details on the specific construction methods to be used. At that time, we will be able to provide more site specific conservation recommendations pursuant to Section 305(b) (4) (A) of the MSA..

Until a preferred alternative is selected and a final EFH assessment if provided to us for review, our preliminary recommendations are as follows:

1. EFH for all life stages of winter flounder has been designated in the project area. Winter flounder spawn beginning in early January through April, depending on water temperatures. Their demersal eggs sink, remaining on the bottom until they hatch. After hatching, flounder larvae are initially planktonic, but following metamorphosis they assume an epibenthic existence. Increased turbidity and the subsequent deposition of the suspended sediments can smother the winter flounder eggs and newly-metamorphosed larvae and would adversely affect their EFH. To minimize impacts to early life stages of winter flounder that may be in the area, in-water work on the bridge should be timed to avoid the time when eggs and larvae may be present - January 1 to May 31.

2. Anadromous fish such as alewife and blueback herring use the Arthur Kill as migratory pathway and as nursery and forage habitat. Buckel and Conover (1997) in Fahey et al. (1999) reports that diet items of juvenile bluefish include Alosa species such as these. As a result, activities that adversely affect the spawning success and the quality for the nursery habitat of these anadromous fish can adversely affect the EFH for juvenile bluefish by reducing the availability of prey items. Bridge construction and demolition activities can increase turbidity and degrade water quality. This water quality degradation and the noise and vibrations caused by

the construction activities can impede the migration of anadromous fish to their upstream spawning grounds. Avoiding in water work from January 1 to May 31 will also minimize impacts to these species.

3. A compensatory mitigation plan to offset all of the project impacts to aquatic resources including EFH should be developed in accordance with the federal standards and criteria for compensatory mitigation for losses of aquatic resources published in the Federal Register on April 10, 2008 (vol. 73 No. 70). If either of the northern alignments is selected, any mitigation plan should include consideration of the unique values of the Old Place Creek Marsh. Should either of the southern alignments be chosen, the mitigation plan should compensate for any habitat degradation of the interpier area in Elizabeth, NJ. The use of a mitigation bank may be an acceptable form of compensatory mitigation if there is an approved bank with sufficient credits available to sell exists and whose service area includes the impact site. In-lieu fee mitigation may also be acceptable provided it complies with the current Federal regulations. These regulations require the development of an in-lieu fee program and an in-lieu fee instrument similar to a mitigation banking instrument and the establishment of an Interagency Review Team.

**Conclusion**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the EA. We will gladly continue to coordination on a formal and informal basis as the selection of the preferred alternative is made, mitigation plans are developed and the final EFH assessment is prepared. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact Karen Greene at 732 872-3023 or Diane Rusanowsky at 203 882 6504.

Sincerely,

Stanly W. Gorski
Field Offices Supervisor
Habitat Conservation Division

cc: ACOE NYD R. Tomer
EPA Region II Environmental Review Section- L. Knudson
Wetlands Section – D. Montella
FWS Pleasantville- S. Mars
PRD – J. Crocker

## LITERATURE CITED

Buckel, J.A. and D.O. Conover. 1997. Movements, feeding periods, and daily ration of piscivorous young-of-the-year bluefish, *Pomatomus saltatrix*, in the Hudson River estuary. Fish. Bull. (U.S.) 95(4):665-679.

Fahey, M.P., P.L. Berrien, D.L. Johnson and W.W. Morse. 1999. Essential Fish Habitat Source Document: Bluefish, *Pomatomus saltatrix* life history and habitat characteristics. U.S. Dep. Commer., NOAA Technical Memorandum NMFS-NE-144.

AG12

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**
**NEW YORK DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS**
**JACOB K. JAVITS FEDERAL BUILDING**
**NEW YORK, N.Y. 10278-0090**

AUG 18 2009

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:
Regulatory Branch

SUBJECT: United States Coast Guard (USCG) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Goethals Bridge Replacement; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Permit Application Number NAN-2008-00238-EHA

Commander (dpb)
First Coast Guard District
Battery Building
One South Street
New York, NY 10004
Attn: Mr. G. Kassof

Dear Mr. Kassof:

This letter is in response to the DEIS prepared by USCG in cooperation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and the Federal Highway Administration (New York and New Jersey divisions) for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey's proposal to replace the Goethals Bridge.

USACE generally concurs with the DEIS and finds that our comments on the preliminary DEIS have been addressed.

The FEIS must contain the applicant's evaluation of how the selected alternative will comply with the Clean Water Act Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines for Specification of Disposal Sites for Dredged or Fill Material.

The FEIS must contain or be contingent upon written approval from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries Service (NFS) for compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act; NFS approval for compliance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act and the Marine Mammal Protection Act; and the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

We anticipate receipt of a Department of the Army permit application package for the proposed project in the near future.

We thank you for giving us this opportunity to comment on the DEIS. If you have any questions, need additional information, or wish to discuss any of the above in more detail, please contact Naomi Handell, Project Manager, at 917-790-8523.

Sincerely,

Stacey Jensen
Acting Chief
Eastern Permits Section

cc: Port Authority of New York and New Jersey

**PLEASE INCLUDE 18-CHARACTER APPLICATION NUMBER ON EACH SUBMITTAL**

AG13

United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

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RECEIVED
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Commander (dpb)
First Coast Guard District
Battery Building
One South Street
New York, New York 10004
ATTN: Mr. Gary Kassof

Dear Mr. Kassof:

This responds to the U.S. Coast Guard notice of May 29, 2009, on the availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the **Goethals Bridge Replacement (GBR) project across the Arthur Kill, Borough of Staten Island, Richmond County, New York and the City of Elizabeth, Union County, New Jersey.**

We regret not being able to provide detailed comments on our particular areas of environmental impact concerns and appreciate your acceptance of those that follow:

**HISTORIC AND ARCHEOLOGICAL RESOURCE PRESERVATION CONSIDERATIONS** (as commented on by the National Park Service per the National Environmental Policy Act and related Acts for National Historic Preservation and the National Wild, and Scenic Rivers).

Historic Resources (Section 5.7, Pages 5-54 to 5-62)

Appropriate study of the Area of Potential Effect (APE) indicated that 11 National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) listings or properties eligible for such listing may be affected by this GBR project. Three (3) of these 11 have been determined to be adversely affected under provisions and rules of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA). Although most of these 11 historic resource places are in the jurisdiction of the State Historic Preservation Officer-New Jersey (SHPO-NJ), the 3 adversely affected "bridge" into the jurisdiction of the SHPO-NY. The nature and factors of adverse affect have been addressed by both SHPOs as well as other parties representing historic preservation concerns. The final paragraph of the Summary, Section 5.7.6 (page 5-62) indicates that consultation with the official preservation officers and other interested parties is being sustained, and that a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) required under these circumstances by Section 106 of NHPA is

scheduled to be completed, signed and included in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). This MOA will have stipulations to ensure the avoidance or minimization of the adverse affects and/or tolerable mitigation measures for such affects as acceptable to the SHPOs of both NY and NJ. We expect these stipulations to be incorporated into the final planning, detailed design, and physical implementation of the selected alternative for this major transportation undertaking, improving the segment of circumventive I-287, connecting NY and NJ over the Arthur Kill. In the spirit of project expediency and cultural resource preservation, it would be most appropriate for the FEIS and following Record of Decision to fully ensure the accomplishment of those MOA Stipulations through implementation of the selected alternative.

Archeological Resources (Section 5.8, Pages 5-62 to 5-65)

Appropriate consideration for the presence of archeological resources in the APE has not indicated a high probability for impact to archeological values, with the greater possibility, if any, to be in the SHPO-NY jurisdiction on Staten Island. Concern was raised for possible new northern alternative alignments, but it now appears that the continuing responsibility for identifying archeological resources should be through careful performance of the work watching for, and appropriately treating any resource finds discovered in the stated APE. Both SHPOs have given their concurrence for the U.S. Coast Guard's determination of no adverse affect by this GBR undertaking; however, we are pleased with the apparent commitment (last paragraph, Summary, 5.8.6 , page 5-65) to assess any construction staging/work or storage areas beyond the archeological APE for their potential for and proper treatment of any archeological resources that may be present or discovered in those areas through continuing consultation with the SHPOs of NJ and NY. As for the project expediency of cultural resource preservation expressed above, we encourage assessment of staging areas, if possible, to be reported as accomplished in the FEIS, certainly before any physical occupancy of those areas.

**PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES,** (Section 5.6, Pages 5-53 to 5- 54)

Impact considerations to Parks and Recreation Facilities are generally reported as minimal to unlikely. However, careful treatment of closure (page 5-54) is committed to a "few days maximum," which should be well publicized for those times during removal of the existing and installation of the new bridge span and its NY (Staten Island) approach over waters of recreation use. Apparently such activities as kayaking are popular and certainly of considerable human injury risk. The need to minimize curtailment of such recreational enjoyment in this heavily populated area should be readily understood and accepted. We note the statements of no need for permanent taking or direct or indirect impacts to existing or planned parklands or facilities will be necessary for completion of this project.

**WILD, SCENIC AND RECREATION RIVERS** (Section 4.15, Page 4-173)

Both the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection and New York Department of Conservation reported no Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers affected by the GBR project. Although that indicates "state" river designations, it would be well to confirm such status under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. Contact Jamie Fosburgh, National Park Service program manager for the Wild and Scenic Rivers program at 617-223-5191.

**NATURAL RESOURCES PROTECTION CONSIDERATIONS**

See comment by the Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) for project planning purposes under the National Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973 (87 Stat. 884, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*), and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 *et seq.*).

Existing Conditions, Vegetative Habitats (Section 4.14.5.1, Page 4-134)

The Draft EIS describes the dominant vegetation within the High Salt Marsh, stating that this community "features a dense growth of saltmeadow cordgrass (*Spartina patens*) with several dense stands of common reed also present." The Final EIS should provide more information on these dominant species, specifically the approximate percentage of coverage, giving the reader a better perspective on the ecological value of this habitat. The Draft EIS includes this information later in the document, and should be included in the Existing Condition section of the Final EIS.

Existing Conditions, Threatened and Endangered Species (Section 4-14.3.3, Page 4-125)

No federally-listed or proposed threatened or endangered flora or fauna under FWS's jurisdiction are known to occur within the proposed project's impact area. Therefore, no further consultation pursuant to ESA is required. Until the proposed project is complete, we recommend that you check the New York Field Office's website at (http://www.fws.gov/northeast/nyfo/es/section7.htm) and the New Jersey Field Office's website (http://www.fws.gov/northeast/njfieldoffice/Endangered/) for further information regarding federally-listed and candidate species. The websites also provide procedures for requesting ESA review, the National Bald Eagle Management Guidelines, and contacts for obtaining information from the New York and New Jersey Natural Heritage Programs, which provide state-listed and other species of concern. We recommend that you check the websites every 90 days from the date of this letter to ensure that information on the presence/absence of listed species for the proposed project area is current. Should project plans change or additional information on listed or proposed species or critical habitat becomes available, this determination may be reconsidered.

Existing Conditions, Ecosystem Relationships (Section 4.14.6, Pages 4-171-173)

In its description of the wetlands present within the project study area, the Draft EIS appears to refer to all wetlands within the project area collectively as the "Old Place Creek Marsh" or the "Old Place Creek and Marsh"; whereas Figure 4.14-6 depicts one particular wetland restoration site as "NYCDPR Old Place Creek Marsh." The Draft EIS should clarify the names of the wetlands described. If this section of the document is only referring to the relatively small NYCDPR Old Place Creek Marsh depicted in Figure 4.14-6, then it is not clear why this analysis concentrates on this marsh and not the remaining wetland areas.

Environmental Consequences, Biotic Communities, Regulated Wetlands (5-13.4.3, Page 5-108, Section 5.13.5.2. Page 5-132)

The document describes the impacts of shading on wetland vegetation in section 5.13.4.3, recognizing that each of the proposed alternatives require wider deck areas resulting in additional shading. Yet it is stated in section 5.13.5.2 that no mitigation for shading impacts is required due to more transparent superstructure. Please provide additional information on the impacts of shading in the Final EIS, including a quantification of these impacts, clarification on how the superstructure is more transparent, and the potential mitigative measures.

Environmental Consequences, Biotic Communities, Mitigation of Impacts, Regulated Wetlands/Open Waters/Mudflats (Section 5.13.5.2, Page 5-132)

The FWS looks forward to working with the wetland mitigation group and is willing to provide technical assistance on the conceptual wetland mitigation design. The point of contact can be Field Supervisor, USFWS, New York Field Office (Region 5), 3817 Luker Road, Cortland, NY 13045; phone: 607-753-9334, FWSES_NYFO@fws.gov .

We appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments.

Sincerely,

Willie R. Taylor

Willie R. Taylor
Director, Office of Environmental
Policy and Compliance

AG14

# State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
P.O. Box 600
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0600

JON S. CORZINE
*Governor*

STEPHEN DILTS
*Commissioner*

***September 15, 2009***

***Mr. Gary Kassof***
***Bridge Program Manager***
***First Coast Guard District***
***One South Street***
***Battery Building***
***New York, NY 10004***

***Subject: Goethals Bridge Replacement – Draft EIS Review by NJDOT.***

***Mr. Kassof:***

***The New Jersey Department of Transportation's (NJDOT) Division of Project Development in conjunction with the Division of Environmental Support Services reviewed the DEIS and offers no comments on it.***

***The Department's representatives attended several meetings during the alternative development phase and raised questions about the proposed project's impact in the City of Elizabeth especially at the intersection of US 1&9 with Bay Way Avenue (NJ Route 439). NJDOT agreed with the Port Authority's decision to mitigate the traffic congestion at Bay Way Circle by providing the missing moves to the existing partial interchange of Interstate 278 with US 1&9, thereby diverting the traffic from Elizabeth's streets. In addition, NJDOT concurred with the Port Authority's decision to start the planning work on this interchange modification immediately to complete the construction of Goethals Bridge Replacement and the interchange modification concurrently.***

***Sincerely,***

***Lynn Rich, Director***
***Division of Project Development***

***C:*** ***Jim Blackmore, Program Director - Goethals Bridge Replacement, The Port Authority of NY & NJ***
***Melissa Budsock, Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates***
***Laine Rankin, Manager –Division of Project Development, Northern Region, NJDOT***
***Elkins Green, Director-Environmental Resources and Context Sensitive Solutions, NJDOT***

# "FPM E1 & E2"

***(DEIS Public Comment Period)***

FPM E1



THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

----------x

Public Meeting:

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Statement

For the Proposed Goethals Bridge Replacement

----------x

City of Elizabeth

City Hall

Council Chambers

50 Winfield Scott Plaza

Elizabeth, New Jersey

July 8, 2009

4:30 p.m.

B e f o r e:

GARY KASSOF
Bridge Program Manager
The United States Coast Guard

MAURA FITZPATRICK
Moderator
Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates

22 KEN HESS
Project Manager
23 Louis Berger Group

24

25

A P P E A R A N C E S:

For The United States Coast Guard:

Gary Kassof

Chris Bisignano

Zack Strauss

For Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates:

Maura Fitzpatrick

Christie A. Marcella

Ryan Walsh

For Louis Berger Group, Inc.:

Ken Hess

Jean Philippe Magron

Craig Hanlon

For Parsons Brinckerhoff:

Judy Versenyi

Peter Sucher

For URS:

Stefan Armington

ALSO PRESENT:

The Public

22 The Press

23 The Media

24 Marc Russo,

25 Reporter

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Associate Professor of Finance - The College of

Staten Island & Research Fellow, The University

Transportation Research Center - City College

22 of New York & on behalf of Alan Benimoff -

23 College of Staten Island

24

25

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** There were no Speakers for the

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P R O C E E D I N G S

THE MODERATOR: Good afternoon, everyone.

My name is Maura Fitzpatrick and I'm going to be facilitating this meeting today. And I would like to welcome you on behalf of the U.S. Coast Guard.

And for those of you who are interested in speaking to us today, it's important that you fill out a speaker's request card at the table right outside the main door here and Christie will help you with that.

We are going to begin this evening with a short - this afternoon I should say - a short presentation and then we're going to take --

A VOICE: Can we get a little more volume?

THE MODERATOR: How about if I get closer?

22 Thank you.

23 And so I'm going to remind you

24 about this again. But if you want to speak, you

25 have to sign up. And after the presentation I'll

be giving you the ground rules on how we will run that part of the meeting.

But without further delay, I would like to introduce Gary Kassof who is the Bridge Program Manager of the First Coast Guard District.

Thank you.

MR. GARY KASSOF: Good afternoon.

VOICES: Good afternoon.

MR. GARY KASSOF: Before we begin, I would like to thank John Papetti of the City of Elizabeth for arranging, helping us arrange for these accommodations.

We thank the City of Elizabeth as well.

Also we would like to recognize some elected officials who are here: Michelle Yamakaitis, Councilwoman of the City of Linden, Jonathan Peters, Council President, Fair Haven Borough, Elaine Lubas, Commissioner of the Linden

22 Environmental Commission, and Gordon Hass, Chairman

23 of the Elizabeth Planning Board.

24 So welcome, welcome all.

25 As Maura had said, I also welcome

you to the United States Coast Guard public meeting regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Goethals Bridge Project.

As Maura mentioned, I am Gary Kassof, the Bridge Program Manager for the First Coast Guard District.

The U.S. Coast Guard, an agency within the Department of Homeland Security, by virtue of its authority to consider the issuance of a bridge permit for the proposed action, is the lead federal agency in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and its enabling regulations which found at Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations Part 1500.

Therefore, the Coast Guard is responsible for ensuring that the Federal environmental process is properly conducted.

In addition, this process is being conducted in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

22 With me this evening are members

23 of my staff as well as members of the joint venture

24 consultant team of The Louis Berger Group, and PB

25 World, who assisted the Coast Guard in the

preparation of the DEIS about which we are here this afternoon and evening to receive and listen to your comments.

Therefore, this meeting is a critical part of the EIS process.

There are numerous federal, state and local agencies with expertise or jurisdiction in the environmental review process that have provided consultation to the Coast Guard through the Technical Advisory Committee and the Environmental Task Force in order to ensure conformance with existing laws and regulations.

Further, public input has been a key component of the process to date via the EIS scoping meeting held in October of 2004, two rounds of public open houses at key milestones in the process, and established Stakeholder Committee meetings of organizational representatives in the project area which were held throughout the development of the Draft EIS.

This is one of two formal public meetings that are being held in communities nearest to the project. And we are here to hear comments on the Draft EIS.

The other meeting will be held tomorrow, July 9th at the Staten Island Hotel, Staten Island, New York, between the hours of 4 p.m. and 8 p.m.

This public meeting is conducted under the authority granted to the Coast Guard by Section 115.60 of Title 33 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

The decision to hold this meeting was announced in The Federal Register on May 28, 2009.

The purpose of this meeting is to obtain views of interested and affected parties and to gather information concerning the impacts of the proposed project on navigation and its effect on the quality of the human environment.

A brief presentation describing the proposed action, its purpose and need, project alternatives, and potential mitigation will follow my remarks.

22 Informational boards are located

23 outside this meeting room to the rear and are

24 provided for your review along with handouts that

25 can be taken home for further study.

In addition, members of the consultant staff are available to provide answers or clarification, wherever possible.

Discussions held in those areas will not be made part of the official record. So I encourage you to make oral statements or comments here in this room or submit comments by the various methods available so that they can be included in the official record.

We will address comments received and statements made in the ensuing Final Environmental Impact Statement.

We are here to listen to you.

This meeting is not an adversarial proceeding, rather, it is one in which all interested parties have the opportunity to present a full and frank statement of their views regarding the impacts of the proposed project.

Statements will not be given under oath and cross-examination of speakers will not be

22 permitted. However, the presiding official may ask

23 for clarifications or amplifications of statements

24 that are made.

25 Shortly, Maura will provide the

ground rules for conducting this meeting.

The record of this meeting will remain open for the receipt of comments until July 28, 2009.

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the project sponsor, submitted a preliminary bridge permit application to the Coast Guard in June 2004. The U.S. Coast Guard, pursuant to the General Bridge Act of 1946, found at 33 U.S. Code 525, will ultimately make a decision on the bridge permit application based on the merits of the case.

At this point it is important to state that the U.S. Coast Guard has not made a final determination or final decision on the merits of the case or the application before us. Our decision will be based upon an evaluation of the probable impacts of the proposed activity on navigation and on the quality of the human environment.

22 Pertinent factors such as

23 information concerning public parks, wetlands,

24 water quality, fish and wildlife, coastal zone,

25 historic and archeological sites and navigational

safety, among others, will be made part of the case record and will be fully considered prior to taking final agency action on the bridge permit application.

I would now like to introduce Mr. Ken Hess from the project team who will provide a brief description of the project.

Thank you.

MR. KEN HESS: Thank you, Gary.

I would also like to thank all of you who are today.

I know many of you have probably been involved right from the initial scoping and we value your input and we continue to value your input today.

We really want to hear from you all so I'm going to have a very abbreviated presentation today because we really want to hear what your comments are.

I have an abbreviated agenda,

22 similar to some of the presentations we've given in

23 the past, focusing on purpose and need for the

24 project and how that purpose and need has led to

25 the conceptual bridge design that's been proposed.

We will also talk about some of the key project impacts and mitigation measures that have been identified in the Draft EIS. And we'll talk about this public comment period and the next steps.

There are a number of elements of purpose and need driving this project. One of them is to address design deficiencies that make the Bridge functionally obsolete. Given that the Bridge was constructed in 1928, the substandard ten-foot lane widths that are on the Bridge really are not able to accommodate the types of traffic and the volumes of vehicles that are used in the Bridge today.

There's also a lack of emergency shoulders and there's a difficult span alignment on the New Jersey approach to the Bridge.

There's also a need to provide safer operating conditions and to reduce the number of accidents on the Bridge as well as to improve

22 traffic service on the Bridge and its approaches.

23 And I'll be addressing that particular point in a

24 few minutes in more detail.

25 There's also a need to enhance

structural integrity and to reduce the lifecycle cost with the aging Bridge.

In order to keep the existing Bridge functioning for the next hundred years, hundreds of millions of dollars would need to be invested just to keep it going without the additional benefit of the other -- being able to resolve some of the other needs that we're talking about.

There's a need to provide reliable transportation system redundancy to ensure that there's an adequate number of lanes between Staten Island and New York -- and New Jersey at all times.

There's also a need to provide for the safe and reliable truck access for regional goods movement. And this is especially important now in light of the ongoing and anticipated future growth at the New York Container Terminal on Howland Hook.

And there's also a need to provide

22 additional width on the Bridge so as not to

23 preclude potential future transit in the corridor.

24 So it's being designed so that we can accommodate,

25 whether it be a bus rapid transit system or a light

rail system, if and when it's determined that it's feasible or warranted.

So the various elements of purpose and need that I've just addressed led to a cable-stayed design. It was determined that a cable-stayed design would fully meet all of the elements of purpose and need and that I've just addressed. The concept that you can see here shows what that cable-stayed design could look like.

It's essentially, or very close to where the existing Goethals Bridge is, although depending on which alternative alignment is selected, would either be a little bit to the south or a little bit to the north of where the existing bridge is.

With regard to the alignments, I'm not getting into that in the presentation here but out in the hallway we do have display boards that do give details about the four alternative alignments that have been considered. And we've

22 got people here that will help you to understand

23 more about those.

24 The basic design concept includes

25 a single bridge with cable-stayed supported roadway

decks. There are two decks and roadways, one in each direction.

Now here you see a -- oh, I'm sorry.

Each roadway contains three 12-foot wide lanes, a 12-foot wide right shoulder, and a 5-foot wide left or inner shoulder.

Now the design concept that we're seeing here is, this is the entire cross section of the proposed Bridge. The roadways that I've just mentioned, we've got a westbound and an eastbound, with three lanes in each direction with shoulders.

In the center area there's the potential future transit corridor that I mentioned earlier. Between that area and the two roadways, here is where the towers are proposed to go as well as the inner support cables.

The outside edges, that's where the outer support cables will go. And then on the north side of the bridge, that's where there's the

22 proposed bicycle/pedestrian facility is.

23 Now we've taken that basic concept

24 with the various alternatives that have been

25 analyzed and we've looked at the impacts associated

with those alternatives and concepts. And that's what's been addressed in the Draft EIS.

As I mentioned earlier to you, we want to really give you the opportunity to talk tonight so I really can't talk about all of the different disciplines that we have listed here, which we did look at in the Draft EIS.

I'm going to focus today on those that are underlined and shown in red, although you can't really tell that they're red. I think those are kind of the key types of environmental impacts that you're probably most interested in knowing about.

I should point out that the handout that we've given you, there's a matrix, a four-page matrix. That does, in fact, address, in a summary fashion, all of the impacts and some mitigation measures as they relate to the various alternative alignments that have been studied in the EIS.

22 So let's first talk about

23 socioeconomics.

24 And one of the key elements there

25 is the potential for displacements, specifically

businesses and residences.

And the number of displacements really correlate with the particular alignment that's chosen. But among the four alignments, anywhere from nine to twelve businesses would be impacted. And what that includes are those businesses that would be displaced outright, or in some cases it would be an operational impact where it's some facility on the property that would be encroached upon such as a parking lot or some other support structure to the business.

There's a total of zero to 51 residences that would be displaced, once again, depending on which alternative is selected. And they're all located in Elizabeth in the Krakow Street neighborhood.

Regardless of which alternative and which -- the total number of displacements that ultimately does come out of this, compensation will be provided in accordance with the law.

22 Now, during the construction

23 period, which would last anywhere from 56 to 70

24 months, once again, depending on which alternative,

25 jobs would be generated so that's a positive

impact.

Actual construction jobs, there would be about 400 to 500 generate per year during the construction period. And there would be a total of about 5500 to 5900 jobs that would be indirectly generated through sales and expenditures and services.

We also looked at historic and archeological resources. The State Historic Preservation Offices for both New York and New Jersey have concurred with the Coast Guard's determinations that there's no known adverse effect on any archeological resources in either state.

They've also concurred that there is, in fact, an adverse effect on three historic architectural resources which are all considered to be eligible for listing on the National Register.

The first of those is the Goethals Bridge itself which would be adversely effected because it would be demolished. The other two, the

22 Staten Island Railroad Historic District in New

23 Jersey, and the Staten Island Railway Lift Truss

24 Bridge over the Arthur Kill, they would be visually

25 adversely affected because there's a visual

relationship between those resources and the Goethals Bridge.

So the next step would be, as we develop the Final EIS, to also develop a Memorandum of Agreement with the State Historic Preservation Offices to establish what would be appropriate mitigation for the impacts associated with those three resources. And the intent is that we would present that information in the Final EIS.

Okay. We looked at wetland impacts. Permanent impacts of wetlands is when there would be an impact that would occur for more than six months right up to truly a permanent impact.

And the range for the four alternative alignments would be anywhere from 5.2 to about 5.5 acres. So between the various alignments there's not a significant difference in number of acres. It's really the location of the acres would that be impacted.

22 Temporary wetland impacts are

23 those that would be in effect for less than six

24 months. They're usually associated with cofferdam

25 construction that would be ultimately removed.

Most of the impacts are in New York because that's where the large tidal wetlands system is located.

And there's a variety of mitigation measures that are being proposed. They vary depending on state and type of impact that's being proposed. And there's also an effort to continue to try to reduce the number of impacts as design proceeds further.

Okay. The next element is traffic.

Now, generally, when we're looking at traffic, you talk in terms of levels of service. And that's really, we're talking about operational conditions. And levels of service are similar to a report card that go from best being level of service A to the worst being level of service F with various grades in-between.

Level of service A is defined as a free-flowing condition with high travel speeds, whereas F is considered breakdown condition with

22 excessive congestion and delay.

23 So what we looked at was the year

24 2034, which is the Design Year, twenty years beyond

25 the point where it's anticipated that the Bridge

would be completed.

So let's look at first at the AM peak period during that year. What we see there in red arrows, those are the level of service F. Those are the worst case conditions. So what you see here on the Goethals Bridge, you've got level of service F. This would be the No Build Scenario if you did not construct the Goethals Bridge replacement.

In the AM you would have level of service F in the westbound direction, level of service E, which is next level up, still not considered to be acceptable, in the eastbound direction.

Down here at the Outerbridge Crossing you've got level of service F in both directions.

Now, with the Build, where we would provide a replacement bridge for Goethals, what happens there is that where you have level of

22 service F or E, you're now going to have level of

23 service D in both directions and that's considered

24 to be operationally acceptable.

25 And you get some improvement here

going from a level of service F to E in the westbound direction on either Bridge.

And that would occur because some of the traffic that would otherwise be used in the Outerbridge Crossing will now be traveling onto the Goethals Bridge because of the increased capacity.

And we did a similar analysis for the PM peak period. In the No Build case, once again, you get level of service E, level of service F and level of service of -- level of service F in both directions along the Outerbridge.

Now with the Build Scenario, in the PM, once again, you have level of service D in both directions and you have some improvements of level of service E here.

So there will be improvement at the various bridge crossings and essentially in the region as a whole as a result of the project. There would be some locations, however, where you get some increased congestion and reduced speeds.

22 And we're talking about some local intersections,

23 they could be on and off-ramps to expressways and

24 so on.

25 And you can see that there are a

number of locations both in New York and New Jersey during the AM and PM peak period.

So what is being done to try to alleviate those impacts is that there's some mitigation proposed as part of the basic project. On the Bridge itself we're talking about a managed use lane on the new bridge. So for the three, the three-lane roadways in both directions, we're talking about that two of those lanes would serve as general use, whereas, one would be a managed use lane in each directions. And that would mean that they would be set aside for buses and high-occupancy vehicles, autos. And this is during the two peak commuting periods, the peak committing only.

Another type of mitigation that's being proposed are local improvements at certain select intersections where there would be some impacts. And there's a variety of types of improvements that are being proposed kind of on a

22 case-by-case basis, including signal timing

23 changes, new signals, and so on.

24 Now dealing with mitigation that

25 will be proposed, there are still a few locations

-- I should say that most of those locations then with the mitigation will be improved. They will be brought back at least to the No Build level of operation.

But there are some locations where you can't fully get mitigation. In New York, you've got a number on and off-ramps along the Staten Island Expressway that you see there in red. They would continue to remain unmitigated.

And then on the New Jersey said there's a couple of ramps in the vicinity of the New Jersey Turnpike Interchange that would also not be fully mitigated.

With regard to air and noise, once the Bridge is constructed, there will be no adverse impacts. In the case of air, we would actually get some improvements because there would be decreases in regional greenhouse gases and other mobile source emissions.

The noise level increases at a

22 couple of locations would really be imperceptible

23 to the human ear so no mitigation really is

24 required.

25 Once the Preferred Alternative has

been identified during the course of developing the Final EIS, we will also be doing an air quality and noise analysis for the construction period. And we will be reporting on those results in the Final EIS.

So that completes the information I'll be presenting with regard to the impacts.

As was mentioned previously, we're in the midst of a public comment period that ends on July 28th.

I believe the newsletter that was given to you, it does give details on where to mail or fax or online your comments.

As far as the next steps, we will be taking and incorporating your comments and we'll be addressing them into the EIS in some fashion, as appropriate. And we will be coming up with a Final EIS.

At this point we're envisioning some time in the early part of next year. And then

22 there would be with a Record of Decision which

23 would be the Coast Guard's decision document. And

24 that's anticipated for some time in the middle of

25 next year.

And with that, I'll give it back to Maura.

THE MODERATOR: All right. Thank you, everybody.

I'm now going to tell you about how the rest of this day is going to work. We're going to set up our equipment a little bit differently.

I'm going to call -- and I just want to mention that we are going to be here to 8:00 p.m., but Ken is going to repeat his presentation at 6:30 for any latecomers. So we will be doing the presentation again.

I'll be calling the names of the people who are registered to speak. When it's your turn to speak, please come up to the podium set up right there. I'm going to ask you to come to this podium and ask you that you introduce yourself by giving us your name and your organization, if you have one.

22 And if you have any difficulties

23 with coming up to the podium, please let anybody on

24 the project staff know. We're the ones with the

25 name tags around our necks and we will do

everything we can to accommodate you.

This meeting is going to be recorded by Marc, the stenographer. And remember what I told you before, if you wish to speak, you need to fill out a speaker request card in order to speak, which is in the back in the open house area.

Again, we are here to hear from you so we will not be responding to your comments that you make this afternoon and this evening. But we will address them in the Final Environmental Impact Statement when that comes out, again, as decided by the schedule.

To assure everyone has an opportunity to be heard, I would request that you limit your testimony to three minutes and I will give you little bit of a warning when you get to the end of it.

If you have a written statement, by all means provide it to us as well. That's always helpful for Marc. And submission for written

22 statements is the same for all statements, they

23 will both be part of this afternoon's and evening's

24 record.

25 I do want to remind you that, and

Ken and Gary went through this, but we have our open house area as in an informal area to be able to converse with you and answer any questions. But those comments in the open house area are not part of the official record. So just what's said here or what you give us in writing up to July 28th is what becomes official. And as Ken pointed out, on our comment sheet and our newsletter, there's all the information you need --

A VOICE: Can't hear her.

THE MODERATOR: -- to submit your written comments after the fact through July 28th.

You're welcome to step out of the room. We will call your names out in the open house as well and we'll call you up.

And with that, I think I've covered all the ground rules. So I'd like to first call Councilwoman Yamakaitis to come up to the microphone, please.

COUNCILWOMAN YAMAKAITIS: Hi.

22 Good afternoon.

23 (Adjusting microphone.)

24 THE MODERATOR: Bear with us.

25 Okay. Sorry about that.

COUNCILWOMAN YAMAKAITIS: Good afternoon.

My name is Michele Yamakaitis. I'm the Eighth Ward Councilwoman for the City of Linden.

(Adjusting microphone.)

THE MODERATOR: We have some technical difficulties.

COUNCILWOMAN YAMAKAITIS: Good afternoon.

My name is Michele Yamakaitis. I'm the Eighth Ward Councilwoman for the City of Linden.

One thing I didn't see expressed in the presentation was anything on the Missing Link. I know it's two separate projects, but I would like the Port Authority to take that into consideration.

Approximately two years ago Bayway Avenue turned into a one-lane highway. The impact

22 of Linden's Eighth Ward was incredible. We've had

23 increased truck traffic, cars.

24 From 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. you get a

25 traffic nightmare on the Ward. Bachelor Avenue has

been affected, Route 1 and 9.

So I would like, request that we work on the Missing Link to coincide with any expansion of the Goethals Bridge.

I would also like to request that the public meetings regarding this be held in this type of forum also. There are many rumors that are going around the Ward saying that houses were going to be taken. It causes panic.

I'm also here representing St. Patrick's Church of Elizabeth. There had been rumors that, you know, that they were going to come right through the Church to the Goethals Bridge. I think this is important that the public be kept aware of this situation. But I just want to make sure that, you know, we don't get left out in the loop.

The Eight Ward of Linden cannot withstand any impact of the traffic, further impact without something being done with the Goethals

22 Bridge expansion. We need to have that in the City

23 of Linden worked on and considered.

24 Thank you.

25 THE MODERATOR: Thank you,

Councilwoman.

Next is Steve Radel.

MR. STEVE RADEL: Hello. My name is Steven Radel.

I'm a consultant for J. Cashman, Inc.

Jay Cashman is a company that is working to develop property on South Front Street in Elizabeth. And we've been working with the parties that are responsible for environmental cleanup.

And soon that work is scheduled to begin this fall and soon after that Cashman will implement its infrastructure improvements. And obviously Cashman has concerns with a northerly alignment and the impacts it would have on the property that they are in the process of revitalizing.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Mr. Radel.

22 Next I'd like to have John Papetti

23 come to the front, please.

24 John Papetti, thanks.

25 MR. JOHN PAPETTI: Hello.

Good afternoon.

My name is John Papetti, Jr. I'm the Director of Public Works for Elizabeth and I have a statement here that's here on behalf of Mayor J. Christian Bollwage.

This statement is submitted on behalf of J. Christian Bollwage, Mayor of the City of Elizabeth regarding the conditions that should be addressed before full support of the Goethals Bridge Replacement Project can be expressed.

During previous meetings between representatives of the City of Elizabeth and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the City has stated its concerns about traffic in the area of the approach to the Bridge, the roadwork that would be required, as well as the impact on the local residents and merchants.

Certainly the addition of a second bridge will increase the traffic, in particular, truck traffic with a tremendous impact on our local

22 roads.

23 One area of concern is the

24 interconnection between Exit 13 of the Turnpike,

25 Bayway Avenue, City streets and the Goethals

Bridge, which is in need of significant improvement and will not be resolved simply by the current toll plaza widening.

Of equal importance to the City is the fact that access from the Bridge to relocated Bayway Avenue - an important industrial corridor for the city of Elizabeth - be significantly improved to ensure the smooth operation of business-related traffic.

As we work to promote alternative transportation methods, the bicycle and pedestrian way inclusion in the widening or in any new construction is important. Consideration should be given to how the bike and pedestrian way will emerge from the Bridge to the City of Elizabeth streets.

Considering the overall critical impact the expansion will have on Elizabeth's residents and commuters, we want to make sure that the appropriate (sic) acquisition of current City

22 property owners' rights, that those owners be

23 adequately adjusted for their rights that have to

24 be acquired for construction at fair market value.

25 We want to stress the importance

of minimizing noise and air pollution during all construction phases. Besides the adverse effect to local residents in the vicinity of the construction, a local school will also be directly impacted.

An additional health concern is the design flaws due to settling of earth at the stanchions of the current bridge supporting pillars. Currently, the flaw has allowed for a concave configuration which retains rainwater and results in potential breeding grounds for mosquitoes and West Nile Virus.

The City of Elizabeth's last concern is vital to the success of the project as well our overall transportation issues.

The I-278, U.S. Routes 1 and 9 Interchange Ramp Improvement project, also known as the Missing Link portion of the Bridge project, will enable a critical connection to be made to Routes 1 and 9 north and southbound.

22 In order to ultimately alleviate

23 vehicular traffic volumes on City streets, traffic

24 must be redirected via the Missing Link connection.

25 In addition, the Missing Link

connection will have its own environmental process with the Federal Highway Administration Serving as the lead agency. This initiative must be finished in conjunction or before the completion of the Goethals Bridge Replacement project.

If the conclusion of the -- if the inclusion of the bicycle and pedestrian way as well as the Missing Link components are not addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, it provides the U.S. Coast Guard with the opportunity to ignore the concerns of the city and its residents.

The City of Elizabeth will remain persistent in its efforts and will not be disregarded or shortchanged with respect to the Goethals Bridge Replacement Project.

The residents of the City of Elizabeth deserve more and we will continue to stand up for what is right, fair, and best for this community.

22 Thank you.

23 THE MODERATOR: Next I'd like to

24 call up Elizabeth Lutak, please.

25 MS. ELIZABETH LUTAK: Yes. Good

afternoon. Good afternoon, everybody, please.

I'm Elizabeth Lutak. I'm a resident of the City of Elizabeth so I'm just a regular resident. But my concern is similar to Mr. Papetti. Being a lifelong resident of the City of Elizabeth, we seem to be having an increase of hearing problems in the City, asthma, due to the fact we have an overload of cars, naturally buses, trucks.

The truck population here has grown like tremendous and no one takes into consideration -- even though you have the new air controls, there's still a lot of pollution in the town. I wish someone would just take consideration of the schoolchildren, regular residents, and seniors.

We're getting hoarse. We get bronchitis. We get asthma when it's not the season to get asthma. Strange things are happening.

Our homes that do exist, by

22 putting in more of these trucks and cars, the paint

23 peels. We must get them fixed periodically. It's

24 supposed to last 30 years on a roof. Our roofs are

25 being replaced due to the car traffic and truck

traffic between eight years and ten years. Can you imagine what us human beings are going through if the roof can't withstand?

And the other part would be is, I like the Goethals Bridge, the construction of it. If there's any way of saving the architectural design and in addition to what you're building a new bridge. That is something that was built previously and it's something to keep historically what it was.

Also, has anyone considered solar power so that when it snows -- because, you know, we do live in Jersey and in New York -- so we can drive without having the salt trucks ahead of us and splashing rock salt all over us, to modernize it with solar power so this way it will automatically defrost.

And could you please make announcements for when we do we get to the Final Statement, whichever statement. Consider the fact

22 that most of us people have lived, like I have, 50

23 years in our home. So we got like fifty to a

24 hundred years of stuff, considering the families

25 we've raised and just being there.

Where else could you move where you have a church up the street, you have a grocery stores, you got a bank all within walking distance? You said you're going to relocate me. To where? Why? You know, it's kind of strange. Why would I want to get relocated? I've lived here for a hundred years. I've paid my taxes. We've paid our dues. We just like living where we live.

I'm not being displaced so I'm lucky but these people aren't. So would you please help.

Thanks for hearing me out and thank you for giving a great presentation.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Ms. Lutak.

Okay. Next I would like Jonathan Peters.

MR. JONATHAN PETERS: Hi. Good afternoon.

I'm Jonathan Peters from the

22 College of Staten Island. I'm Associate Professor

23 of Finance. And I'm also speaking on behalf of Alan

24 Benimoff who will be at tomorrow's meeting on

25 Staten Island.

Our particular concern about the EIS Statement for the Goethals Bridge is that it relates to what's called environmental justice which is provision of transit services or mobility services towards what's considered protected classes.

In particular, the Executive Order of the President, 12898 in 1994, mandated that we do an environmental justice analysis to make sure that you serve the low-income and a number of different protected classes in terms of transit needs.

The EIS as proposed doesn't look at the negative impacts of the building of the facility. However, it doesn't look at the benefit of mobility for the low and moderate income households. It's primarily focused on private vehicle facility, which again, we just heard about the traffic issues in this region.

And we're extremely concerned

22 about the fact that there's no transit proposed as

23 a part of this process. Mass transit will be a key

24 critical component for the particular areas that

25 we've identified as areas of environmental justice,

particularly low-income populations, minority populations, elderly populations and the disabled. These are all identified by the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, as the EJ community in Elizabeth has a large, large population in many of these areas.

Initially there was some discussion about using transit as an alternative to replacing the Bridge. I don't think that given the age of the facility and the structural deficiencies that have already been pointed out, that that's a viable option.

However, the transit component should be part of the solution. And the reality is that we've done an analysis at the College of Staten Island. We took at look at the proposed bus routes which were in the initial EIS. And there were 34 different stations on three different routes in each state.

We found there was 8,885 persons

22 on average around each station which is very good

23 in terms of transit demand on the 34 stations.

24 So basically we installed a modern

25 transit system and we would put about 237,000

people within walking distance of transit.

But particularly, the current analysis uses the existing auto users on the Bridge as way to predict what the transit use would be and I think that's a major issue, because the fact of the matter is our work in New York City has identified that the people who use toll facilities tend to have about $35,000 higher income than people who are non-toll bridge users.

So the fact of the matter is I think we need to really seriously consider the impact of this facility on the low-income and minority populations in this area and make sure that we replace this facility, which is an obsolete facility, with a facility that serves the needs of all the residents of both of these communities.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Mr. Peters.

Next up is Ron Stefanowicz. Did I

say that sort of right?

MR. RON STEFANOWICZ: That's very good.

Rather than being redundant and go

over the same issues, I just want to make a couple of comments.

THE MODERATOR: I'm sorry. Could you tell us your organization first.

MR. RON STEFANOWICZ: Oh, yeah, I'm sorry.

Ron Stefanowicz, Linden Economic Development Corporation.

I just wanted to make a few comments and I don't want to be redundant because Councilwoman Yamakaitis articulated the issues and concerns about the traffic.

In addition to her particular Ward, we know -- we anticipate that there will be a lot more traffic coming into Linden primarily because we're in an economic renaissance and we're developing over 600 acres of industrial land which will be bringing a lot of commodities and traffic.

In addition to that, we're building shopping centers that will be bringing in

22 more shoppers. Currently, we did a few studies and

23 we know that the Staten Island people, even people

24 from Brooklyn, are using the Goethals Bridge to

25 come to shop into Linden so we need to mitigate

that.

Also, in participating with the New York Port Authority, we'd like to just thank you for the opportunities in keeping us abreast for the type of activities and the project. Because it does a lot in eliminating the anxiety of the people not knowing exactly what's going on.

And the comments from the Councilwoman, as well as John Papetti, I think it's a great idea to have more meetings to share the progress because it eliminates a lot of anxiety.

So we are looking for our continued relationship with the Port Authority and the project, even though Missing Link and Goethals Bridge is a part of our major problem, but it's a step in the right direction.

So I'd like to just thank you. And Gary, you're very good in keeping us informed and I do hope that we will have a lot more public meetings in the future.

22 Thank you.

23 THE MODERATOR: Thank you,

24 Mr. Stefanowicz.

25 Next is Raymond Lee.

How are you?

MR. RAYMOND LEE: Good afternoon.

My name is Raymond Lee. I'm Vice Chair of the Republican Committee in Elizabeth.

What I have to say is, I would like to see what is the projected total cost of this Bridge;

How much the Federal Government is going to share in the dollar amount percentage-wise;

How much it's going to cost New York; and

How much it's going to cost New Jersey.

That's the end of my comment.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Mr. Lee.

Armando Alvarez.

How are you?

22 MR. ARMANDO ALVAREZ: My name is

23 Armando Alvarez. I'm a resident of that area.

24 My comment is that area have the

25 stuff to be a residential area long time ago. With

a new bridge I think it's not going to be any improvements for the quality of life for the residents. In a way I think that area should be complete industrial. No more residential.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Mr. Alvarez.

And Mr. McClain.

How are you?

MR. LEROY MCCLAIN: Yes. Leroy McClain, Committee Member Second Ward and representing an organization called Elizabeth Community Activist.

I don't have anything written. I just have a few questions.

Just like you said, we do need more meetings to let the community know 'cause it's a lot of people that should have been here that don't know about it. And I got it through word of mouth. I didn't see it advertised. And you need to

22 work in the communities more, Elizabeth and other

23 areas to let their citizen know about this meeting.

24 Okay?

25 The one question I wanted to ask

is, because I hear rumors coming down that they're going to relocate people. People saying this neighborhood going to be done over, this is going to be done over. But you need to have more of these meetings and get that in time so the community really know about it.

THE MODERATOR: Actually, if you would, I'd be very interested in knowing some of your networking mechanisms for your organization. So if you could leave your contact information with the front desk, we'll be in touch to make sure that we expand our work list to include some of the people that you talked about meeting. We'd be delighted to have them.

MR. LEROY MCCLAIN: Oh, all right. Then all right.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

John Surmay.

MR. JOHN SURMAY: Okay. I'm John

22 Surmay, the Health Officer for the City of

23 Elizabeth.

24 I'm sorry they turned the podium

25 around because my remarks are more for the

audience.

As you officials know that we've been participating and I'm here to support what Mayor Bollwage said in his remarks, as read by Mr. Papetti.

We're here to see -- I'm on the Environmental Committee as the generic reference to the various subcommittees that this whole community as a whole has. Mr. Papetti and members of the Engineering Department, the County of Union Engineering Department, the City of Linden Engineering Department, we're all part of that. So we're there to make sure that the comments that were made by the elected officials are fulfilled.

And one of the things that Mayor Bollwage said right from the beginning, he urged that their meeting be done between the City of Elizabeth officials, Linden officials and the County Union officials. And I understand that has been accomplished.

22 He also stressed that the houses

23 in the Krakow Street area be given full value, not

24 just what is required by law, full value for what

25 they're giving up in that place. And also for the

economic development of the area for the benefit of Elizabeth and the roadways. It's a nightmare to come off of the Goethals Bridge on the Elizabeth side and we just can't absorb any more of that traffic.

Also, the noise - that's my area of expertise - noise and air pollution. And I think it's one of the concessions that I got last time is that the air hammers that would be used in pile-driving of the pillars that would be used in the construction of the Bridge would be all reduced noise compression, right?

MR. KEN HESS: Things are being worked out.

MR. JOHN SURMAY: Pardon me?

MR. KEN HESS: The details are going to be worked out and presented in the Final --

THE MODERATOR: I just want to remind you that this is not a --

22 MR. JOHN SURMAY: Yeah, I

23 understand. I just wanted to make sure that many of

24 the facts were -- I just want to reassure the

25 audience that the Mayor has a --

MR. GARY KASSOF: Sir, sir. That is a question that we can answer. And I appreciate it if you would come to the back with some of the --

MR. JOHN SURMAY: Well, we can -- I'll submit some comments which you'll have in --

MR. GARY KASSOF: You can make your comments but address them to us.

MR. JOHN SURMAY: But what I wanted to reassure everyone was that what the Mayor said in text, he assigned members of his staff to make sure that it's being done. And that's Mr. Papetti, that's myself and members of the Engineering Department and all the other people that I mentioned before.

And I just would like to assure the members of the audience that if you can't get in touch with the members of this Goethals Bridge Committee, you can always come to Mr. Papetti's office or myself or the Mayor's office and we'll

22 make sure that your concerns are addressed at these

23 meetings that have we generally at the Coast Guard

24 building in New York City next to the Staten Island

25 Ferry Terminal.

Okay. Thank you very much.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Mr. Surmay.

MR. JOHN SURMAY: That's all I wanted to say.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

Next up is William Sharkey.

MR. WILLIAM SHARKEY: So far so good.

My name is William Sharkey. I'm from 1000 Allen Street in Linden.

And what I'd like to know is, what does this mean (indicating?) I keep going to these meetings two years now. I got work to be done in the house. I've been putting everything off. I don't know what's going on. I can't see where it takes two or three years just to set a job up.

I mean it's going to take me longer to set it up than actually build it. It's unbelievable.

22 But anyway, where are we at?

23 Where are we at with this? 1000 Allen Street is a

24 very -- I think everybody got a notice on the

25 Linden side all the way to Route 1 and 9 about

going to these meetings. That started like three years ago. I'm -- the Bridge -- as far as I'm concerned you need a bridge. It's just how you going to get there back and forth. That's the only problem.

But the Bridge was built in the 1900's. The thing's falling apart. They finally did some work on it a couple of years ago and that was it, just to reinforce why they build a new one. And that was $83 million.

But I don't know how this thing is progressing. It seems very slow. I don't know. I'm not knowledgeable in that area. But to me I mean I keep getting these notices.

I come here because I thought the bridge was done. I thought you's had all the land, you were buying property and what not; is that true?

THE MODERATOR: In this part of our meeting we're not responding to questions. So

22 what I would encourage you to do though is take

23 advantage of our of project staff out in the open

24 house area and they can explain to you the process

25 that we're going through so you can understand

where are we going and answer any questions about what's been done to date.

MR. WILLIAM SHARKEY: The only thing, I had missed the presentation. I had come in late. I don't know what was said.

THE MODERATOR: We're going to be repeating the presentation at 6:30 p.m.

MR. WILLIAM SHARKEY: 6:30?

THE MODERATOR: You can stay and you'll see the presentation.

MR. WILLIAM SHARKEY: Okay. Very good.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

Okay. That is everyone who has signed up to speak up till now.

MS. ELAINE LUBAS: Excuse me, ma'am. I didn't have a chance to sign up. Can I just make a comment?

THE MODERATOR: If you go to the

22 desk and fill out a speaker request card, we will

23 be delighted to hear your testimony. And, again,

24 we're going to be here to 8 p.m. so take your time.

25 I would encourage the rest of you

to take advantage of our open house area and have a snack. The people with the tags are there to answer questions. But again, just to remind that only the comments made here in front of our stenographer will be for the record.

And, again, we'll be repeating our presentation at 6:30 p.m.

And thank you so much for your attention.

Okay. We have another speaker who has requested to make a comment and that's Elaine Lubas.

Thank you and sorry.

MS. ELAINE LUBAS: That's quite all right. I just wanted to get in.

Commissioner Elaine Lubas, Environmental Commissioner, City of Linden.

I'd like to say that as part of the environmental concerns, I would like to emphasize and stress minimization of air, noise and

22 work time constraints during the -- in the

23 construction of the Bridge in order to ensure the

24 health, safety and quality of life of the residents

25 of the City of Linden as well as the City of

Elizabeth. Okay?

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Ms. Lubas.

MS. ELAINE LUBAS: I think it's a very vital issue. And during any kind of construction there's bound to be a lot of, either it's traffic or noise or air pollution and I think the citizens should be taken in consideration.

Thank you very much.

(At 5:24 p.m., the hearing was temporarily recessed.)

(At 6:10 p.m., the hearing was resumed.)

THE MODERATOR: We have an additional speaker.

Please introduce yourself and your organization, if you have one.

MR. JOE DOHERTY: Okay. Joe Doherty, 190 Bayway Avenue, Elizabeth, a resident. I do not represent any organization, just myself

22 and my brother-in-law and my family.

23 I would like to know if Port

24 Authority will take all the residential and

25 commercial property south of the present structure

between Krakow Street/Amboy Avenue to the north side of Bayway Avenue.

If so, when will this occur and how will monetary compensation for property and relocation expenses be determined?

Also, will the often-dreaded eminent domain come into play?

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, sir.

Right now we don't have anyone else signed up to speak. So we will be here to repeat the presentation at 6:30 and so we'll see you then.

(At 6:12 p.m., the afternoon session was concluded.)

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FPM E2



July 8, 2009

(6:30 p.m.)

E V E N I N G  S E S S I O N

THE MODERATOR: So for those of you who have been waiting, thank you for your patience and we're going to be getting started in just a moment with the presentation again.

We had given some introductory remarks at 4:30. Gary Kassof from the Coast Guard had explained the rules and regulations that we were following in this hearing. And we are not going to repeat those.

But I just wanted to introduce myself. I'm Maura Fitzpatrick. I'm going to be facilitating the second half of this hearing.

And after the presentation, I'm going to explain to you the ground rules if you want to make any oral comments to our stenographer. But if you do, you need to sign up to do so at one

22 of our desks and fill out a speaker request card.

23 So I will be back in a few moments

24 but I'm going to introduce Ken Hess from the

25 consultant team to give a brief presentation on the

background of the project.

MR. KEN HESS: Okay. Thank you, Maura.

Thank you all for being here.

I know many of you have been involved probably going back to the scoping process and it's been great that you've been so involved and we continue to look for your involvement.

That's really what this is about tonight. We want to hear your comments, what you have to say. And as a result, I'm going to have a very abbreviated presentation on some materials that have been presented in the past. But we really want to hear from you tonight.

So what I'll be talking about is the purpose and need for the proposed project and how that purpose and need has led to the conceptual bridge design that's has been proposed.

We will also talk about some of the key project impacts and mitigation measures

22 that have been presented in the Draft EIS.

23 And we'll talk about the public

24 comment period that we're currently in and some of

25 the next steps.

There are a number of elements of purpose and need that are driving this project. One is the need to address design deficiencies that make the Bridge functionally obsolete. Given the fact that the Bridge was constructed in 1928, there are substandard ten-foot lane widths and that's really not adequate for handling the volume and the size of the vehicles that are used in the Bridge today.

There's a lack of emergency shoulders on the Bridge and there's a very difficult span alignment on the New Jersey approach to the Bridge.

There's a need to provide safer operating conditions and to reduce the number of accidents on the Bridge, and also a need to improve traffic service on the Bridge and its approaches. And I'll be discussing that particular aspect in a few minutes in more detail.

There's also a need to enhance the

22 structural integrity and to reduce the lifecycle

23 costs associated with the aging Bridge.

24 Just to keep the Bridge going for

25 an additional hundred years, to keep it functional,

hundreds of millions of dollars would have to be invested just to keep it going and it would not have the benefit of the additional needs being addressed.

There's also a need to provide reliable transportation system redundancy to ensure that there's an adequate number of lanes connecting Staten Island to New Jersey at all times.

There's a need to provide for the safe and reliable truck access for regional goods movement. And this is particularly important because of the ongoing and anticipated future growth at the New York Container Terminal on Howland Hook.

And finally there's a need to provide additional width on the Bridge so as not to preclude potential future transit in the corridor. It could accommodate such types of transit as a bus rapid transit or a light rail system, if and when determined to be warranted or feasible at some

22 point in the future.

23 So looking at the various elements

24 of need for the project, it's been determined that

25 the cable-stayed design would fully address the

various elements of need. And that's what we're presenting here, a conceptual image of what the cable-stayed design might look like.

Essentially what you're seeing here is generally along the existing alignment of the Bridge, although it would vary depending on which alternative alignment would be selected, it could either be south, a little bit south of the Bridge or a little bit north.

What you're seeing here particularly would be a little bit south of the existing Bridge, but still very close to where the Bridge is.

Concerning the alignments, I want to point out that I'm not really going to be discussing in the presentation the actual alternative alignments, but we do have set up out in the corridor, detailed graphics that you can learn more about the alternative alignments that have been developed. And we've got people that

22 will help to explain the differences between those

23 alignments.

24 The basic design concept is that

25 we're talking about a single bridge with

cable-stayed supported roadway decks. And as you can see, there would be two roadways, one in each direction.

Each roadway would contain three 12-foot wide lanes, a 12-foot wide outer shoulder, and a 5-foot wide inner shoulder.

Now what you see here is the cross section -- what you see here is the cross section of the entire bridge. And the two roadways that I just talked about, we've got the westbound roadway and the eastbound roadway, each with three lanes and shoulders in each direction.

In the middle would be the potential future transit corridor that I mentioned in the beginning. In between that area and the two roadways is where the towers would be constructed as well as the inner support cables. That's where they would connect to the roadways.

We've also got outer support cables that will come in out from the outer edges.

22 And on the north side there's a bicycle/pedestrian

23 facility that's proposed.

24 So that's the basic concept and

25 it's been applied to the four alternative

alignments. And that's what we evaluated when we looked at the various types of environmental impacts and proposed mitigation measures.

As you can see, the list here is rather long. This is the full range of types of environmental impacts that we've studied in the Draft EIS.

Once again, because we want to hear from you, I'm abbreviating this. I'm just going to be talking about those that are shown in red or underlined. So I think those are some of the key elements that you're going to be most interested in hearing about.

So let's start with socioeconomics.

One of the major elements of socioeconomics is the displacements that would occur in terms of businesses and residences.

These would vary depending on which alternative alignment is ultimately selected.

22 But the range would be anywhere from nine to twelve

23 businesses that would be impacted. Now that

24 includes outright displacements of the businesses,

25 or in some cases it would be an operational impact

such as an encroachment on a parking lot or on a support structure on the property.

The range of residences that would be displaced go from zero to 51. And they're all located in Elizabeth in the area of Krakow Street.

And regardless of what the final alternative is that's selected and what the final number of displacements would be, compensation will be provided in accordance with the law.

Now, during the construction period, which would range anywhere from 56 months to 70 months, once again, based on which alternative is selected, there would be jobs generated in the construction phase.

For each year during the construction period there would be anywhere from 400 to 500 construction jobs that would be generated. There also would be 5500 to 5900 jobs that would be indirectly generated through expenditures and services.

22 We also looked at historic and

23 archeological resources. The State Historic

24 Preservation Offices for both New York and New

25 Jersey have concurred with the Coast Guard on their

determinations regarding that there is no known adverse effect on archeological resources in either state.

And also that there is an adverse effect on three historic architectural resources, and they're all considered to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

So three resources that we're talking about, one is the Goethals Bridge itself and that would be an adverse effect because of the fact it would be demolished. We've got two other resources, the Staten Island Railroad Historic District in New Jersey, as well as the Staten Island Railway Lift Truss Bridge over the Arthur Kill. They would be visually adversely affected because there's a visual relationship between those resources and the Goethals Bridge.

So the next step on this is to work with the State Historic Preservation Office

22 for both states to come up with a Memorandum of

23 Agreement to establish appropriate mitigation for

24 dealing with the impacts to those resources. And

25 that would be done during the Final EIS

preparation.

Regarding wetlands, permanent impacts are those impacts that would be in place for at least six months.

And as you can see here, the variation between the four alternative alignments is not that great. We're talking anywhere from 5.2 approximately to about 5.5 acres of impact among the four alternatives. And primarily the differences would really be in the location of where those impacts would occur.

Temporary impacts are primarily associated with cofferdam construction and would only be in place for less than six months and it's very minor in comparison to the permanent impact.

Most of the wetland impacts are on the New York side because that's where the large tidal wetlands system is located.

There's various mitigation measures that are also being proposed, a possible

22 wetland mitigation bank in New Jersey and rather

23 various on and off-site wetland mitigation

24 opportunities in New York.

25 And moving onto traffic.

Traffic is generally assessed on the basis of level of service which is an operational condition. And it's like a report card. It ranges from level of service A to level of service F with level of service A being the best, level of service F being the worst.

A is generally is defined as a free-flowing condition with high travel speeds. Level of service F is considered to be a breakdown condition with excessive congestion and delay.

And we're showing a level of service F in red. And what we looked at was the year 2034, which is the Design Year, which essentially is twenty years after the Bridge construction would be completed. So that's what the analysis was based on.

So in the year 2034 for the AM peak period in the No Build Scenario -- and No Build mean no new bridge. It would be the existing bridge that's there -- what you see here is that on

22 the Goethals Bridge you have level of service F

23 conditions in the westbound direction, level of

24 service E, which is the next one up, still

25 operationally not acceptable in the eastbound

direction.

On Outerbridge Crossing you have both directions level of service F.

Now, if you were constructing the improvements at Goethals Bridge so you have the Build Scenario, what happens is that you get improvement from both directions on Goethals Bridge where you go from level of service D which is considered to be operationally acceptable.

On the Outerbridge Crossing you would also get, in the westbound direction during the PM, you would get some improvement going from F to E.

The reason you're going to get some improvements at the Outerbridge Crossing is because some of the traffic that would otherwise use the Outerbridge will now travel to the Goethals Bridge because of the increased capacity.

Now we did a similar analysis for the PM peak period. And as you can see here very

22 similarly, we got level of service F and level of

23 service E along the Outerbridge. Once again, level

24 of service F along the Outerbridge Crossing.

25 And similarly changed -- and

that's the No Build.

And a similar change with the Build where you go from a level of service D in both directions on the Goethals and some improvement to the level of service E at the westbound direction on Outerbridge Crossing.

So based on that information, obviously there's going to be improvement to the bridges going across to Staten Island and generally improvements to the region as a whole because of this. However, there are some locations that would actually experienced some increased congestion and reduced speeds as a result of the project being constructed.

And as you can see here, some of those locations are in both New York and in New Jersey. We're generally talking about some access ramps to the expressways. We're talking about some local intersections. So we want to do something to try to mitigate those impacts, to the extent that

22 we can.

23 So what's been incorporated into

24 the project are two types of mitigation measures.

25 One is a managed use lane on the new bridge. And

that would be for each of the two roadways, the three-lane roadways, one roadway in each direction, you would have two general use lanes and one managed use lane that would accommodate buses and high-occupancy vehicles during the peak commuting hours.

And then there's also, at some of the intersections that would experience some impacts, there are local improvements that have been proposed such as new signal changes, new signals, street re-striping and off-street parking and that would really be done on a case-by-case basis.

So with those two types of mitigation improvements that are proposed as part of this, the majority of the impacted locations will, in fact, be improved back at least to the No Build level of service so there will not be worsening.

There are a few locations,

22 however, in New York, that would remain unmitigated

23 and those are primarily related to access ramps

24 along the Staten Island Expressway.

25 Similarly, there's a couple of

ramps in the vicinity of Interchange 13 in New Jersey that would also not be fully mitigated.

Moving onto air quality and noise.

Once the bridge has been constructed, there will actually some improvement in terms of air quality because there would be a decrease in some of the regional greenhouse gases and other mobile source emissions.

In terms of noise, at a couple of locations there would be imperceptible noise level increases, less than two decibel an increase and therefore no mitigation is being provided or really required in the case of air and noise.

During the preparation of the Final EIS, once a Preferred Alternative has been identified, there will be a construction phase air quality and noise analysis that will be undertaken and the results of that analysis will be reported in the Final EIS.

As I mentioned earlier, we're in

22 the midst of a public process which closes on July

23 28th.

24 You've been given information. In

25 the handouts there's a newsletter that identified

how to submit your comments after this public meeting, either by mail, fax or online.

We will be taking all of your comments. We'll be addressing them and considering them as we prepare the Final EIS. And we will then release the Final EIS which at this at this point we're anticipating will be time in the early part of next year.

And then a Record of Decision, which is really the Coast Guard's decision document, that will occur some time later in the year, in the mid-portion of next year.

So with that, I'm going to give you back Maura.

And as I said, we're looking forward to hearing your comments today.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Thanks, Ken.

So I was going to give the ground rules, but I want to remind everybody that if you

22 want to speak, you need to fill out a speaker

23 request card at the desk. And we will let elected

24 officials speak first.

25 If there are others who choose to

speak, I'm going to ask that you come to this microphone and I'm going to ask you to identify yourself by name and by your organization.

And if you have a written copy of your statement, by all means that makes it easier for us and for Marc to take it all down. We appreciate that.

We are going to limit you to three minutes and I'll give you warning when you get close to that.

And with that, right now we don't actually have anyone registered to speak. So we'll be here till 8. If people prefer to join us back at our open house area, there are people with the badges that can answer your questions.

I want to remind everyone that comments and discussions in the open house area are not part of the formal record. You can give your comments this evening either orally or in writing or we have comment sheets that you can take with

22 you. All the information is there about how to

23 submit your comments to us July 28th.

24 And as Ken said, we won't be

25 responding. This is to hear your comments and

questions. And those will be responded to in the final EIS. But we will be there for conversation and there are cookies.

So we'll be here to 8 but help yourselves to the open house.

And thank you.

(At 6:46 p.m., the hearing was temporarily recessed.)

(At 8:00 p.m., the hearing was resumed.)

MR. GARY KASSOF: On behalf of the Coast Guard, I thank everyone for your participation and I compliment you on your adherence to the rules set forth for this public meeting.

Many thanks to John Papetti of the City of Elizabeth for the use of their facilities.

In closing, everyone is reminded that the Coast Guard will be accepting written comments on the proposed project through 28 July,

22 2009.

23 Once again, this meeting was

24 intended to solicit comments and should in no way

25 be construed as a decision being made or opinion

formed by the Coast Guard on the merits of the proposed project before us.

The time is now 8 p.m.

This meeting is adjourned.

Thank you.

(At 8:00 p.m., the proceedings were concluded.)

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C E R T I F I C A T I O N.

STATE OF NEW YORK )
SS.
COUNTY OF NEW YORK )

I, MARC RUSSO, a Shorthand (Stenotype) Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of New York, do hereby certify that the foregoing pages 1 through 76 taken at the time and place aforesaid, is a true and correct transcription of my shorthand notes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my name this 23rd day of July, 2009.

_____

MARC RUSSO

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# "FPM SI1 & SI2"

***(DEIS Public Comment Period)***

FPM SI1

1 1

2 THE UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

3 ----------x

4 Public Meeting:

5 Re: Draft Environmental Impact Statement

6 For the Proposed Goethals Bridge Replacement

7 ----------x

8 The Staten Island

9 Hotel

10 1415 Richmond Avenue

11 Staten Island, New York

12 July 9, 2009

13 4:30 p.m.

14

15 B e f o r e:

16

17 GARY KASSOF
Bridge Program Manager
18 The United States Coast Guard

19 MAURA FITZPATRICK
Moderator
20 Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates

21 KEN HESS

Project Manager
22 Louis Berger Group

23

24

25

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Gary Kassof

Chris Bisignano

Zack Strauss

For Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates:

Maura Fitzpatrick

Christie A. Marcella

Ryan Walsh

For Louis Berger Group, Inc.:

Ken Hess

Jean Philippe Magron

Craig Hanlon

For Parsons Brinckerhoff:

Judy Versenyi

Peter Sucher

For URS:

Stefan Armington

ALSO PRESENT:

The Public

22 The Press

23 The Media

24 Marc Russo,

25 Reporter

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P R O C E E D I N G S

THE MODERATOR: So good afternoon, everyone.

My name is Maura Fitzpatrick and I will be facilitating this afternoon's hearing.

I am here behalf of the United States Coast Guard and welcome you all here.

And we're working to make this louder? Does that work? Is that better?

(Adjusting microphone.)

THE MODERATOR: We will try that again. I will just project, how's that? Okay.

We're going to begin this afternoon with a very short presentation and mostly the reason why we're here this afternoon is to hear from you. So we're keeping our presentation brief.

We're going to be repeating this presentation also at 6:30 and we expect to have a new batch of people then.

22 But mostly I want to stand here

23 and remind you that if you are interested in making

24 oral comments this afternoon, you need to fill out

25 a speaker request form in the back of the room.

And you need to do that with Christie in back.

And without further adieu, I'm going to introduce Gary Kassof from the U.S. Coast Guard. He's the Bridge Program Manager of the First Coast Guard District.

MR. GARY KASSOF: Thank you, Maura.

I'll try to do this without a mike. If I'm not projecting, let me know.

And before we begin, I would like to recognize some elected officials and representatives of elected officials:

Mr. Tom Aiello of Governor Paterson's Office, welcome;

Jack Vokral of Staten Island Community Board # 2;

Patrick Hyland from Congressman McMahon's office; and

Jeanette Beck of New York City Councilman James Oddo's office. So welcome all and

22 welcome to you all for participating in this

23 process.

24 We are here to listen to your

25 comments regarding the Draft Environmental Impact

Statement for the proposed Goethals Bridge Project.

As Maura mentioned, I am Gary Kassof, the Bridge Program Manager for the First Coast Guard District.

The U.S. Coast Guard, an agency within the Department of Homeland Security, by virtue of its authority to consider the issuance of a bridge permit for the proposed action, is the lead federal agency in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and its enabling regulations which are found at Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations part 1500.

Therefore, the Coast Guard is responsible for ensuring that the Federal environmental process is properly conducted.

In addition, this process is being conducted in compliance with Section 106 of the National Environmental Policy Act -- I'm sorry. Of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

With me this evening, this

22 afternoon and evening are members of my staff as

23 well as members of the joint venture consultant

24 team of The Louis Berger Group, and PB World who

25 assisted the Coast Guard in preparing the Draft EIS

about which we're going to hear comments from you.

This meeting therefore, is very --

is a very critical part of this environmental

process.

There are numerous federal, state

and local agencies with expertise or jurisdiction

in the environmental review process that have

provided consultation to the Coast Guard through

the Technical Advisory Committee and Environmental

Task Force in order to ensure conformance with

existing laws and regulations.

Further, public input has been a

key component of the process to date via the EIS

scoping meeting held in October of 2004, two rounds

of public open houses at key junctures in the

process, and established stakeholder committee

meetings of organizational representatives in the

project area which were held throughout the

development of the Draft Environmental Impact

Statement.

This is one of two formal public meetings that are being held in communities nearest to the project. We are here to hear, again, comments on the Draft EIS.

The other meeting was held yesterday, July 8th at City Hall, Elizabeth, New Jersey between the hours of 4 p.m. and 8 p.m.

This public meeting is conducted under the authority granted to the Coast Guard under Section 115.60 of Title 33 of the Code of Federal Regulations.

The decision to hold this meeting was announced in the Federal Register on May 28, 2009.

Once again, the purpose of this meeting is to obtain views of interested and affected parties and to gather information concerning the impacts of the proposed project on navigation and its effect on the quality of the human environment.

A brief presentation describing the proposed action, its purpose and need, project alternatives, and potential mitigation will follow my remarks.

22 Informational boards located in

23 the room behind us are provided for your review

24 along with the handout that can be taken home for

25 you to study further.

In addition, members of the consultant team are available to provide answers for clarification wherever possible.

It's important to note the discussions held in those areas will not be made part of the official record. So I encourage you to make -- to make oral comments here in this room or submit comments by the various methods available so that they can be included in the official record.

We will address comments received and statements made in the ensuing Final Environmental Impact Statement. Therefore we are here to listen to you.

This meeting is not an adversarial proceeding, rather it is one in which all interested parties have the opportunity to present a full and frank statement of their views regarding the impact of the proposed project.

Statements will not be given under oath and cross-examinations of speakers will not be

22 permitted. However, the presiding official may ask

23 for clarification or amplification of statements

24 made.

25 Shortly, Maura will provide the

ground rules for conducting this meeting.

The record of this meeting will remain open for the receipt of comments until July 28, 2009.

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the project sponsor, submitted a preliminary bridge permit application to the Coast Guard in June 2004. The U.S. Coast Guard, pursuant to the General Bridge Act of 1946, found at 33 U.S. Code 525, will ultimately make a decision on the bridge permit application based on the merits of the case.

At this point it's important to state that the U.S. Coast Guard has not made a final decision on the merits of the case or the application before us. Our decision will be based upon an evaluation of the probable impacts of the proposed activity on navigation and on the quality of the human environment.

Pertinent factors such as

22 information concerning public parks, wetlands,

23 water quality, fish and wildlife, coastal zone,

24 historic and archeological sites and navigational

25 safety, among others, will be made part of the case

record and will be fully considered prior to taking final agency action on the bridge permit application.

Having said that, I welcome you once again. And I'd like to introduce Mr. Ken Hess.

THE MODERATOR: Before you do that.

MR. GARY KASSOF: Oh. Okay.

Mr. Philip Maravolo of Assemblyman Cuzik's office, I would like to recognize you and thank you for coming and for participating.

Ken Hess.

MR. KEN HESS: Thank you, Gary, and thanks to all of you for being here today.

I know many of you have probably been involved from the beginning during the scoping process and it's been great to have you involved and we're going to give you more opportunity to hear from you today.

22 As has already been mentioned, we

23 really want to hear from you so I'm going to give a

24 very abbreviated presentation on materials that

25 have been presented in the past. And specifically

focusing on the purpose and need for the project and how that purpose and need has led to the conceptual bridge design that's currently proposed.

We will also talk about some of the key project impacts and mitigation measures that have been identified in the Draft EIS. And we'll talk about the public comment period that we are in and next steps.

There's a number of elements of purpose and need for this project. The first is the need to address design deficiencies that make the bridge functionally obsolete. Given that the bridge was constructed in 1928, the substandard ten-foot lane widths really are not adequate for handling the sizes and the volumes of vehicles that are currently using the bridge.

There's also a need -- there is also a lack of emergency shoulders and a very difficult span alignment from the approach on the New Jersey side.

22 There's also a need to provide

23 safer operating conditions and to reduce the number

24 of accidents on the Bridge as well as to improve

25 traffic service on the Bridge and its approaches.

And I'll be talking more about the traffic aspects in a few minutes.

There's also a need to enhance structural integrity and reduce the lifecycle cost with the aging Bridge.

Just to keep the existing Bridge going to another hundred years would require an investment of hundreds of millions of dollars and that would not include any of the other benefits of the other needs mentioned here.

There's also a need to provide reliable transportation system redundancy to ensure that there's an adequate number of lanes between New Jersey and Staten Island at all times.

There's a need to provide for safe and reliable truck access for regional goods movement which is particularly important in light of the fact that the ongoing and anticipated future growth at New York Container Terminal at Howland Hook.

22 There's also a need to provide

23 additional width on the Bridge so as not to

24 preclude potential future transit in the corridor

25 so that if there was at some point in the future a

rapid rail transit or a light rail system that is determined to be feasible and warranted, that this could accommodate that.

So in looking at the various elements of need, it was determined that a cable-stayed design would fully meet all of those elements of need and that's what we're showing here. It's a concept of that cable-stayed bridge and this is what it could look like.

It generally follows the alignment of the existing bridge, but depending on which alternative is actually selected, would either be to the north or to the south a little bit of the existing bridge.

In this particular scenario, it's a bit to the south of the existing bridge.

Regarding the alternatives, I'm not going to be getting into that in the presentation today, but we do have display boards set up in the other room that you can look at, find

22 out about the four alternative alignments. And

23 we've got people that would help to explain those

24 alignments to you.

25 The basic concept is that it's a

single bridge with cable-stayed supported roadway decks and with two roadways, one in each direction. Each roadway would contain three 12-foot wide lanes, a 12-foot wide outer shoulder, and a 5-foot wide inner shoulder.

Now on this cross section, these are the two roadways that I've just described, westbound and eastbound, with three lanes and the shoulders involved.

The area in the middle is the area that I talked about in the beginning for potential future transit corridor. The areas between this potential future transit and the two roadways, this is where the towers would be located as well as the inner support cables. You've got outer support cables coming down at the outer edges of the Bridge and then also on the north side would be a bicycle/pedestrian facility.

So we've taken that basic concept as applied to the various alternative alignments

22 and that's what was evaluated in the Draft EIS. We

23 looked at the full range of disciplines that you

24 see on this board here. However, as was mentioned

25 earlier to you, we really want to hear from you

today so I'm not going to have much time to really talk about all of these.

I'm going to highlight or focus on the ones that we've highlighted in red and underlined here because I think those are the ones that you're probably most interested in hearing about anyway.

I do want to call to your attention that one of the handouts that you received is a matrix. And that provides a summary, in a very summary fashion, the impacts and mitigation for all of the different environmental disciplines that you see on the screen and for the various alternative alignments so you get a better idea there.

So let's start with socioeconomics.

And one of the key elements of socioeconomics are the displacements that would occur, specifically businesses and residences.

22 Regarding businesses, depending on

23 which alternative alignment is selected, would be

24 anywhere from nine to twelve business impacts. And

25 that would involve, I would say in most cases, it

would be the actual taking of the business, full displacement, or in some cases it could be an operational impact where it would be encroachment on some developed facility of the property such as a parking lot or some kind of a support structure.

In the case of residences, once again, dependent on the particular alternative, it would range anywhere from zero to 51 residences that would be displaced. They're all located in Elizabeth in the Krakow Street neighborhood.

Regardless of what the final number is and what the final alternative would be, compensation will be provided in accordance with the law.

Now, also during the construction period, which would range anywhere from 56 to 70 months depending on the alternative, actually there would be jobs that would be generated.

For construction jobs specifically on an annual basis it would be 400 to 500

22 construction jobs throughout that period on an

23 annual -- annually. There would also be 5500 to

24 5900 jobs that would be indirectly generated during

25 the construction period. And that would be through

expenditures and services that would be provided.

We also looked at historic and archeological resources. The State Historic Preservation Offices for both New York and New Jersey have concurred with the Coast Guard's determination that there's no known adverse effect on any archeological resources in either state.

We also agreed that there is an adverse effect on three historic architectural resources, all of which are considered to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

Those three resources are: The Goethals Bridge itself and that would be adversely affected because of the fact that it will be demolished, the existing bridge.

The Staten Island Railroad, historic district in New Jersey, and the Staten Island Railway -- I don't know why this isn't working well -- but the Staten Island Railway Lift

22 Truss Bridge over the Arthur Kill.

23 Those are -- there's a visual

24 relationship between those resources and the

25 Goethals Bridge, and as a result there will be --

they would be visually adversely affected.

So the next step is during the development of the Final EIS, there will be a Memorandum of Agreement worked out with the two State Historic Preservation offices to establish appropriate mitigation for these resources. And it's anticipated that that would be worked out at the time of the Final EIS when that's released.

Regarding wetland impacts, permanent impacts. As you can see by the numbers here, what a permanent impact is, is any impact that's in place for greater than six months and those are the ones that are really the most important to look at.

And the differences between the four alternative alignments are not that great. It's only about 5.2 to about 5.1 acres and so it's about three-tenths of an acre separating them.

The greater difference is really in the actual location of those impacts.

22 Regarding temporary impacts, which

23 are those impacts that would be in place for less

24 than six months, usually related to cofferdam

25 construction, we're only talking about a quarter of

an acre or so. Most of the impacts are in New York because that's where the greatest tidal wetlands system is located.

Mitigation is being explored and being proposed. And there's a plan that has been coordinated and it's being continuously coordinated with the regulatory agencies and we're working on all of that to provide full mitigation for the impacts.

Going onto traffic.

The way that traffic is normally evaluated is you look at level of service which is really an operational condition that you identify. And level of service is like a report card where you have level of service A is considered to be the best. Level of service F is the worst and you have various grades in between.

Level of service A is defined as a free-flowing condition with high travel speeds.

Level of service F is a breakdown

22 condition with excessive congestion and delay.

23 And what we do is we look at the

24 design year, which in this case is 2034 which is

25 about twenty years beyond when it's anticipated

that the construction would be completed. So in this case here, we're looking at the AM peak period. And this is the No Build Condition so this would be with the existing bridge in place with no replacement, no improvement.

And what we see here is that red is level of service F which is the lowest. In the westbound direction on Goethals it would be the level of service F. The eastbound would be level of service E which is also considered to be operationally deficient.

The Outerbridge crossing you've got level of service F in both directions. Now, what happens when you look at that same time period, the AM peak period in 2034, for the Build Condition, which is with the replacement bridge, this -- this is the brown and it correlates with level of service D. So you're getting improvement in both directions on Goethals Bridge to what's considered to be operationally acceptable.

22 At the Outerbridge Crossing, you

23 also get some improvement going from a level of

24 service F to E in the westbound direction.

25 Now we also looked at the PM peak

period and in the No Build analysis it's the same. You get level of service F and E and level of service of F in both directions at Outerbridge.

The Outerbridge with the improvement to Goethals, the same basic improvement occurs. You got to level of service D in both directions on Goethals Bridge and you do get some improvement on the westbound version on the westbound direction of Outerbridge Crossing to a level of service E.

So there is definite improvement on the bridges and as a result, to the region as a whole. However, by doing the project, there would be some locations that would experience some increased congestion and reduced speeds. And those locations we're talking about maybe individual local intersections or they could be expressway ramps, off and on-ramps. And you can see that there are locations in both New York and New Jersey in the AM and PM peak hours.

22 So as part of the project, what's

23 being proposed is mitigation. And there's two

24 types of mitigation proposed. And the first is that

25 there will be a managed use lane on the new bridge.

I talked about the two 3-lane roadways, one in each direction. So for each of those roadways, two of the lanes would be for general use and then the third lane would be a managed use lane to accommodate buses and high-occupancy vehicles, autos. And that would work to serve only during the peak commuting hours in the morning and afternoon.

The other -- the other type of mitigation are the local improvements at some select intersections that would have been impacted. And we're talking about things like signal timing changes, new signals, street re-striping, removal of on-street parking, as appropriate, for each intersections.

And by applying these mitigation measures, most of the areas that I've identified to you, which would have been impacted, will eliminate the impacts that the operational level will come back at least to what the No Build Scenario is. It would not be any worse than that.

22 There are a few locations,

23 however, in New York that would remain unmitigated

24 and they are basically some of the on and off-ramps

25 along the Staten Island Expressway.

There's a couple of locations in New Jersey as well and once again, their ramps in the vicinity of the Interchange 13 of the New Jersey Turnpike.

Regarding air quality, there will be some improvement in air quality because there's going to be some decrease in regional greenhouse gases and other mobile source emissions.

In the case of noise, there are a couple of locations which will receive only imperceptible noise level increases. And as a result, no mitigation is really required or proposed.

We've looked at or we will be looking at also construction phase air quality and noise once a preferred alternative has been identified. And that analysis will be conducted as part of the Final EIS and will be recorded in the Final EIS document.

So those are the basic

22 environmental impacts and mitigations that I wanted

23 to discuss.

24 As was mentioned, we are in the

25 middle of a public comment period which ends on

July 28th. One of the handouts that was given to you, which was a newsletter, that identifies where you can submit, if you want to submit your comments by mail or by fax or online.

We will be taking your comments into consideration and addressing then in the Final EIS. And then it's anticipated at this point that the Final EIS will be coming out some time in early next year with a Record of Decision, which is the decision document by the Coast Guard, some time a little bit later that year.

And with that, we want to hear from you and I'll give it back to Maura right now.

THE MODERATOR: Okay. I'm now going to be calling up people in the order in which you signed up, the people who have registered to speak.

We will be here till eight p.m. and you can register to speak at any time between now and then by filling out one of our registration

22 cards.

23 When I call your name, I'm going

24 to ask you to come up to this microphone that I'm

25 pointing to because we're going to be taking down

your statement. Marc, our stenographer, will be taking it.

I would ask you to state your name, please, and your organizational affiliation, if you have one.

And if you have any problem coming up to the microphone, just please alert one of the team members. We all have our badges around our neck and we'll be happy to accommodate you in another manner.

Okay. And I'm going to actually ask you to limit your comments to three minutes if we could.

And I want to remind you, and Gary had said this earlier, we're not going to be responding to your comments here in this room. We are taking down testimony and all comments received will be addressed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. However, in our informal area in our open house area where the boards are, we will be

22 able to discuss and answer your questions, but

23 those comments made in that room, I want to remind

24 you again, are not part of the formal record.

25 So with that, I think I've covered

all the ground rules. So I would like to introduce our first speaker and ask him to come up to the microphone, and that's Richard Gualtieri.

Hi, Richard. How are you?

MR. RICHARD GUALTIERI: Okay.

I am Richard Gualtieri and I'm speaking on my own behalf.

I would like to state that I feel that this hearing could be much more fruitful if more of a presentation were offered in terms of the alternatives being considered, being discussed openly and some of the pluses and minuses of all of the decisions that the organization is having to make.

And in this way I feel that people would be able to comment much more intelligently about what their feelings are about these various alternatives.

The other thing that I would like to stress is the importance of doing something

22 about the Outerbridge which is obviously in as

23 serious a condition in terms of its physical

24 attributes as is the Goethals Bridge. So I would

25 most strongly urge that something should be done

about improvement -- replacement probably for the Outerbridge which would help to balance transportation on this Island.

The other thing is that I think that it's very important that we have public transportation to and from New Jersey. It's fine that you provide a special use lane, but I wonder -- but I feel that by the time that the Bridge is open, we should have some public service for this lane because I think that it's vitally important.

Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Gualtieri.

Our next speaker is Kyle Wiswall.

Hi, Kyle.

MR. KYLE WISWALL: Hi.

Good afternoon. My name is Kyle Wiswall and I'm the Staff Attorney at the Tri-State Transportation Campaign.

Tri-State's a regional nonprofit

22 organization working for a fiscally responsible,

23 equitable and environmentally friendly

24 transportation system.

25 Tri-State supports many aspects of

the new Goethals Bridge design as presented in the Draft EIS. The Port Authority and the Coast Guard demonstrate foresight by providing space for future transit on the span. And the planned bus and HOV three-lane will help mitigate traffic congestion at the peak hours.

However, even with the mitigation, we're concerned about the level of traffic projected in the areas on either side of the Bridge and the effects these increases will have on the surrounding communities.

The DEIS notes that the new capacity will attract 28 percent to 40 percent more traffic on the roads and approaches to the bridges. We support, as I said before, the option 3 mitigation plan contemplated in the DEIS. This includes the bus and HOV 3 lane over the Goethals and traffic system management upgrades.

The mitigation will go a long way to ameliorate the traffic increase. However, the

22 mitigation only brings traffic back to the No Build

23 levels which is still a very high level of

24 congestion.

25 In the hopes of providing deeper

congestion relief for the new Goethals, the approaches and for other Staten Island crossings, especially the Outerbridge Crossing, we urge the Port Authority and the Coast Guard to further investigate variable tolling to respond to different volumes on the roadways.

In addition, Tri-State has long been supportive of the Port Authority's study of electronic and cashless tolling and supports these technologies being implemented on the Goethals as well.

Traffic growth on the Staten Island Expressway and the West Shore Expressway will increase due to the to Goethals project and we recognize that improvements on these roads are out of the scope of the Port Authority in this project.

We agree that traffic relief on these roads and for some of the other roads on either side of the Bridge will require the participation of the New York State Department of

22 Transportation primarily.

23 Especially problematic for us

24 right now, however, is the proposed HOV 3 lane on

25 the bridge and the interaction with the so-called

pilot program, HOV 2 lane that has taken over the bus way on the Staten Island Expressway. The New York State DOT's decision to allow HOV 2 cars in the dedicated bus way undermines the utility of that lane and has been strongly opposed by Tri-State, by my organization.

The traffic projections on the Goethal's DEIS underscore the critical role that dedicated bus lane plays in moving people efficiently during the peak hours. At the very least, the DOT's HOV Pilot project should be limited to HOV 3 which offers more congestion relief than HOV 2, as you know.

Now, the Port Authority can help with this by keeping the implementation of HOV 3 on the Goethals Bridge and then request that the DOT reconcile their HOV lane and the differences between the two towards HOV 3. So working with the DOT to get the entire corridor HOV 3.

Having different requirements at

22 different points in these proximate projects causes

23 confusion, enforcement problems and increased

24 delays.

25 Finally, Tri-State is happy to see

the inclusion of a pedestrian and bikeway on the north side of the new Bridge. But it's concerned that no mention is made of efforts to work with communities on either side to ensure that access to the facility is safe, easy and guaranteed.

As you're well aware, the current sidewalk has been closed for some time.

We urge the Port Authority and Coast Guard to pursue agreements with the communities regarding access to the Bridge for pedestrians and cyclists and to include documentation and access plans in the Final EIS.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to comment.

MR. GARY KASSOF: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Mr. Wiswall.

Our next speaker is Michael Arvanites.

Hi, Michael.

22 MR. MICHAEL ARVANITES: Hello.

23 Thank you for getting that right.

24 It's been a while.

25 Michael Arvanites, State Senator

Diane Savino's office.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak and applaud your efforts with this Goethals rebuild.

And I noticed that a lot of the concepts that we originally spoke of at the last meeting were taken under consideration.

I would like to highlight access, as the previous speaker did, and that the HOV lane will be open to general use after it's -- you said it was just going to be used during rush hour. I want to clarify if it's going to be open to general use after that rush hour period is open.

As well as just the 135-foot height, maximum height, the super panamax ships. And anyone who's dealing with the Bayonne Bridge, including yourselves, will know that that's causing some problems with the Bridge that is actually, it did have future use for transportation alternatives and trestles.

22 We want to make sure that if we

23 build this bridge to those specs, that it allows

24 for the GATX site or sites on the Jersey side of

25 the Arthur Kill to access those ships, super

panamax and the panamax ships that are calling the Port of New York and New Jersey home more and more often. And that's it.

Thank you.

MR. GARY KASSOF: Thank you.

THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Mr. Arvanites.

And just to remind you, you could get your questions answered, but in our open house area.

That is currently everybody who signed up to speak.

Again, we will be here all afternoon and evening. And at this point we would welcome you to return to our open house area and you can have discussions with the project staff. And if you change your mind and want to speak, just please by all means, fill out a form.

And we'll be repeating the presentation again at 6:30 p.m.

22 (At 5:03 o'clock p.m. the

23 afternoon proceedings were concluded.)

24

25

FPM SI2



July 9, 2009

(6:30 p.m.)

E V E N I N G  S E S S I O N

THE MODERATOR: Good evening.

I just want to introduce myself. I'm Maura Fitzpatrick and I'll be facilitating this evening's hearing for you, our public meeting. And I'm here to welcome you on behalf of the United States Coast Guard.

And I just want tell everybody and remind you that if you want to speak this evening, you need to fill in a speaker request card and you can do that in the back corner. And we will be giving a short presentation of about fifteen minutes and then we will be taking your comments.

So without further adieu, I'd like to introduce Gary Kassof who is the Bridge Program Manager of the First Coast Guard District.

Thank you.

22 MR. GARY KASSOF: Good evening.

23 Welcome, to the public meeting for the Draft EIS

24 Goethals Bridge Project.

25 As Maura indicated, I'm Gary

Kassof, the Bridge Program Manager of the First Coast Guard District.

The Coast Guard is an agency within the Department of Homeland Security. And by virtue of its authority to consider the issuance of a bridge permit for the proposed action, we are the lead federal agency in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and its enabling regulations found at Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations Part 1500.

Therefore, because of that responsibility, we do have responsibility for ensuring that the Federal Environmental process is properly conducted.

In addition, this process is being conducted in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

With me this evening are members of my staff as well as members of the joint venture consultant team of Louis Berger Group and PB World

22 who assisted the Coast Guard in preparing the Draft

23 EIS about which we're going to hear comments from

24 you.

25 Again, we are hear to listen to

your comments and they are very critical in the EIS process.

There are numerous federal, state and local agencies with expertise or jurisdiction in the environmental review process that have provided consultation to the Coast Guard through the Technical Advisory Committee and Environmental Task Force in order to ensure conformance with existing laws and regulations.

Further, public input has been a key component of the process to date via the EIS scoping meetings held in October of 2004, two rounds of public open houses at key milestones in the process, and established stakeholder committee meetings of organizational representatives in the project area which were held throughout the development of the Draft EIS.

This is one of two formal public meetings that are being held in communities nearest to the Bridge to hear comments on the Draft EIS.

22 The other meeting was held

23 yesterday in Elizabeth at the Elizabeth City Hall

24 between the hours of 4 p.m. and 8 p.m.

25 This public meeting is conducted

under the authority granted to the Coast Guard by Section 115.60 of Title 33 of the Code of Federal regulations.

The decision to hold this meeting was announced in the Federal Register on May 28, 2009.

The purpose of this meeting, again is to obtain views of interested and affected parties and to gather information concerning the impacts of the proposed project on navigation and its effect on the quality of the human environment.

A brief presentation describing the proposed action, its purpose and need, project alternatives, and potential mitigation will follow my remarks.

Informational boards located outside of this meeting room are provided for your review along with handouts that can be taken home with you.

In addition, members of the

22 consultant staff are available to provide answers

23 or clarification, wherever possible.

24 Discussions held in those areas

25 will not be made part of the official record. So I

encourage you to make oral comments here in this room or submit comments by the various methods available so that they can be included in the official record.

We will address comments received and statements made in the ensuing Final Environmental Impact Statement. We are here to listen to your comments.

This meeting is not an adversarial proceeding, rather it is one in which all interested parties have the opportunity to present a full and frank statement of their views regarding the impacts of the proposed project.

Statements will not be given under oath and cross examinations of speakers will not be permitted. However, the presiding official may ask for clarification or amplification of statements.

Shortly, Maura will provide the ground rules for conducting the meeting.

The record of this meeting will

22 remain open for receipt of comments until July 28,

23 2009.

24 The Port Authority of New York and

25 New Jersey, the project sponsor, submitted a

preliminary bridge permit application to the Coast Guard in June 2004. The Coast Guard, pursuant to the General Bridge Act of 1946, found at 33 U.S. Code 525, will ultimately make a decision on the bridge permit application based on the merits of the case.

At this point it's important to state that the U.S. Coast Guard has not made a final decision on the merits of the case or the application before us. Our decision will be based upon an evaluation of the probable impacts of the proposed activity on navigation and on the quality of the human environment.

Pertinent factors such as information concerning public parks, wetlands, water quality, fish and wildlife, coastal zone, historic and archeological sites, navigational safety, among others, will be made part of the case record and will be fully considered prior to taking final agency action on the bridge permit

application.

Having concluded that, I would like now to introduce Mr. Ken Hess of the consultant team to make a short presentation.

Thank you, Ken.

MR. KEN HESS: Thank you, Gary.

And I'd like to thank you all for being here this evening as well.

When we started this process back in 2004 with the initial scoping and subsequent meetings, we've received a lot of great input in this forum and we hope to get more tonight.

And as a result, we want to -- because we want to offer you the maximum time to be able to comment, I prepared a brief presentation on a lot of materials that we have presented in the past, starting with the purpose and need for the project and how that has led to the conceptual bridge design that is currently proposed.

We will also be talking about some of the key project impacts and mitigation measures that have been presented in the Draft EIS. And we'll talk some about the public comment period that we're in and some of the next steps.

22 There's a number of elements of

23 purpose and need for this project.

24 The first is the need to address

25 design deficiencies that make the Bridge

functionally obsolete. Given that the Bridge was constructed in 1928, the substandard 10-foot lane widths really are not adequate for handling the types of traffic and the volumes of vehicles that are currently used on the Bridge.

There's also a lack of emergency shoulders and a very difficult span alignment from -- on the New Jersey approach to the bridge.

There's a need to provide safer operating conditions and reduce the number of accidents on the Bridge, and also to improve traffic service on the Bridge and its approaches. And I'll be talking about that aspect in a little more detail in a few minutes.

There's also a need to enhance structural integrity and reduce lifecycle cost with the aging Bridge.

In order to keep the Bridge functional for the next hundred years, an investment of hundreds of millions of dollars would

22 be required and that's without the benefit of

23 accommodating some of these other needs.

24 There's also a need to provide

25 reliable transportation system redundancy to ensure

that there's an adequate number of lanes connecting Staten Island to New Jersey at all times.

There's a need to provide for safe and reliable truck access for regional goods movement which is especially true now with the ongoing and anticipated future growth at New York Container Terminal at Howland Hook.

There's also a need to provide additional width on the bridge so as not to preclude potential future transit in the corridor so that it could accommodate a light rail transit system or a bus rapid transit system, for instance, if and when determined to be warranted or feasible in the future.

So looking at the various elements of need, it has been determined that a cable-stayed design would fully be able to address all of those elements of need. And that's what we're showing here. This is a concept of what the cable-stayed design could look like.

22 Basically it's along the alignment

23 of the existing bridge, although some alternatives

24 would be slightly to the north and some would be

25 slightly to the south.

In this particular case, what you're seeing here, it's slightly to the south of where the existing bridge is.

Regarding the alternative alignments, I'm not going to be getting into that in the presentation today, but we have display boards that are set up in the other room that you can look at and people are there to help explain the information on those boards so you have a better understanding of the differences between the various alternative alignments.

The basic design concept is that it's a single bridge with cable-stayed supported roadway decks, with the roadways, one in each direction. And each roadway would contain three 12-foot wide lanes, a 12-foot wide outer shoulder and a five-foot wide inner shoulder.

Now what we see here is the cross section for the entire Bridge. I just mentioned the roadways. Here and here are the eastbound and

22 westbound roadways, three lanes in each direction

23 as well as shoulders.

24 I talked in the beginning about

25 the potential future transit corridor which will be

right behind the center. Between that potential future transit corridor and the two roadways, would be located the towers and the inner support cables. At the outer edges of the Bridge is where the outer support cables would connect with the Bridge. And then on the north side is where the bicycle/pedestrian facility is proposed.

So taking that general concept and applying it to the various alternatives, that's what was analyzed in the Draft EIS. We looked at impacts and came up with, where appropriate, various mitigation measures.

The full range of types of environmental disciplines, you can see on this slide here. Because of the fact that we're looking to hear from you tonight, I'm not going to be able to get to all of these, the disciplines in the presentation. So I'm just going to focus on those that are shown in red and underlined. I think those are probably the ones that you're most

22 interested in hearing about anyway.

23 I should say though, that one of

24 the handouts that you had received is a matrix.

25 And on that matrix, it does show, in a summary

fashion, the environmental impacts associated with all of the alternative alignments and for all of the individual environmental disciplines that are shown on the slide.

So let's first talk about socioeconomics.

One of the key elements of that would be the number of displacements, especially businesses and residences.

And that number is entirely determined on the basis of, depending on the particular alternative alignment that would be selected. The range of displacements would be nine to twelve businesses. And that actually is, or would be in most cases, outright full displacement of the business. In some cases we're talking about operational impacts where some encroachment would occur on some support facility for that business, whether it be a parking lot or some kind of a support structure.

22 Also depending on the particular

23 alternative selected, there would be anywhere from

24 zero to 51 residences that would be displaced.

25 These are all located in Elizabeth in the Krakow

Street neighborhood.

Regardless of what the final alternative is that's selected and the actual number of displacement, compensation will be provided in accordance with the law.

Now, during the construction period, which would range anywhere from 56 to 70 months, once again, depending upon on the specific alternative alignment, there would be jobs that would be created during that period. Four hundred to 500 construction jobs would be directly generated on an annual basis throughout that construction period.

In addition, there would be 5500 to 5900 jobs that would be generated throughout that period, in an indirect fashion, you know, through expenditures or services that would be required.

We also looked at historic and archeological resources. And the State Historic

22 Preservation offices for both New York and New

23 Jersey have concurred with the Coast Guard's

24 determination that there's no known adverse effect

25 on any archeological resources in either state.

We have also agreed that there is an adverse effect on three historic architectural resources, which are all considered to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

And those three resources are: First of all, the Goethals Bridge, which would be adversely effected because it's going to be demolished. The other two resources would be the Staten Island Railroad Historic District in New Jersey and the Staten Island Railway Lift Truss Bridge over the Arthur Kill.

And those are included as being visually adversely affected because there is a visual relationship between those resources and the Goethals Bridge.

So the next step in this regard is that we'd be working with the New York and the New Jersey State Historic Preservation offices in developing a Memorandum of Agreement. That would be done as the Final EIS is being prepared.

22 And the purpose of that agreement

23 is to establish appropriate mitigation measures for

24 those three resources and with the intent that that

25 MOA would be in effect at the time of the Draft

EIS, the Final EIS.

Going onto wetland impacts.

Permanent impacts are those that would be in effect for at least six months and that's the majority of the impact that would be involved.

What you can see here though, the spread between the four different alternative alignments, it ranges anywhere from 5.2 approximately to about 5.1 acres of taking. So the difference is not that great between the four alignments. It's more the location that would be different.

There's also temporary impacts to wetlands. And those are the ones that would be in effect for less than six months. They're usually associated with the cofferdam construction which would be removed after a few months. And as you can see here, the number there is very small in comparison.

22 Most of the impacts are on the New

23 York side and that's because you've got a large

24 tidal wetlands system on both sides of the Bridge.

25 There are various mitigation

options that have been identified and they're being pursued and are being discussed with the regulatory agencies. And we're working very closely with the regulatory agencies to make sure that the adequate mitigation is presented to satisfy the requirements in both states.

Now moving onto traffic impacts.

The basic way to evaluate the traffic impact is looking at level of service and that's really an operational condition of a roadway. And it's like a report card. It starts, ranges from level of service A to a level of service F with level of service A being the best, level of Service F being the worst and various grades in between.

Level of service A is considered to be a free-flowing condition with high travel speeds, while level of service F is a breakdown condition with excessive congestion and delay.

And what we're showing here, what

22 we looked at is the design year, 2034, which is

23 twenty years into the future after the bridge would

24 be constructed and completed.

25 So in that 2034 period, in the AM

peak period for the No Build -- and that No Build would mean with the existing bridge in place and not the improvement -- what would happen on the Goethals Bridge is that we have level of service F which is noted by red, level of service F in the westbound direction, which is the worst and you'd have level of service E in the eastbound direction which is the next worst.

On Outerbridge Crossing you would have level of service F in both directions. Now, what happens in that same AM peak period in the Build Scenario, which would be with the No Build in place, where you had level of service E and F before, it now goes to level of service D, it improves, so that it becomes what's considered to be operationally acceptable.

On Outerbridge Crossing where we have level of service F in both directions, we actually get some improvement on the -- in the westbound direction going from level of service E.

22 The reason you get improvement on

23 Goethals Bridge -- on the Outerbridge is that there

24 are vehicles that would otherwise be using the

25 Outerbridge that will now travel up to the Goethals

Bridge because of increased capacity.

Now we did a similar analysis for the PM peak period and essentially the results are the same, level of service F and E on Goethals Bridge and then level of service F in both directions on the Outerbridge.

And then with the project in place and the Build Scenario, level of service D, once again, in both directions and some improvement to the level of service E in the westbound direction.

So despite the fact that there's going to be great improvement on the bridges and in the region as a whole as a result of this project, there are some locations that actually will experience some increased congestion and reduced speeds.

And some of these locations would be, we're talking about local intersections, some expressway ramps, on and off-ramps. And you can see here that there's a number of them in both New

22 York and New Jersey during the AM and PM peak

23 hours.

24 So in order to eliminate those

25 impacts as much as possible, there's a couple of

mitigation measures that have been incorporated into the project.

One of them is to include a managed use lane on the new bridge during peak commuting hours. And that would mean for each of the three-lane roadways, two of the lanes would serve as general use lanes and one would be a managed use lane for buses and high-occupancy vehicles, autos, once again, during the peak commuting hours.

The second type of mitigation would be local improvements that would be provided at select locations where we determined that there would be an impact. And some of those mitigation measures may include signal timing changes, new signals, street re-striping, and removal of on-street parking.

So based on those mitigation measures, most of these problematic areas go away. We're going to be able to get the level of service

22 back up to at least the level of service that would

23 be in the No Build Conditions.

24 There are a few locations,

25 however, in New York that will remain unmitigated

and they are primarily on and off-ramps along the Staten Island Expressway.

There's also a couple of locations in New Jersey that would not be fully mitigated and those are primarily ramps in the vicinity of Interchange 13 of the Turnpike.

Now in terms of air quality, there would actually be some improvement in air quality because there would be a decrease in the regional greenhouse gases and other mobile source emissions.

In terms of noise, there would be only imperceptible noise level increases at a couple of locations so no mitigation is really required for air or noise on the project.

As far as air and noise impacts during the construction period, once the Preferred Alternative has been identified during the course of developing the Final EIS, then there will be a detailed construction phase air quality and noise analysis that would be performed and the results of

22 those analysis will be presented in the Final EIS

23 document.

24 So that completes the

25 environmental impacts that I wanted to present to

you today.

As was mentioned earlier, we're in the midst of a public comment period that is proposed to end on July 28th. There's a handout that you've been given, one of the newsletters, that identifies where you can submit comments either by mail or by fax or online.

And what will happen is, any comments that are received either tonight or subsequently during this comment period, we will review those comments, address them and incorporate them, as appropriate, in the Final EIS.

And then the Final EIS will be released. And at this point we anticipate some time in the early part of next year. And then there would be a Record of Decision which will be the decision document on the part of the Coast Guard and that's envisioned for some time mid-year.

And that completes the presentation. We want to hear from you all today

22 and I'm going to pass it back to Maura.

23 Thank you.

24 THE MODERATOR: Okay. Thanks,

25 Ken.

What I'm going to be doing now is calling the names of the people who have signed up to speak. And we are going to be here until 8:00 and you can register to speak at any time between now and then by filling out a speaker request form in the back corner.

When I call your name, we would like you to come up to this microphone, please that I'm pointing to. And if you could identify your name and your organization for us and Marc will be taking your statement, our stenographer here.

I would like you to limit it to three minutes if possible. And if for any reason you have any difficulty approaching the microphone, please just let one of the team members with badges around their necks know and we'll accommodate you as best we can.

We just want to remind everybody that we are only taking statements in this room and we will not be responding to your comments and

22 questions here. The comments and questions that

23 are made here will be responded to in the Final

24 Environmental Impact Statement. However, in our

25 open house area we're free there to converse to

answer your questions. But the comments made in the open house area are not part of the official record.

We are also happy to take written comments, as Ken said. And there's a number of ways in which you can give them to us all of which are available in the back.

So without further adieu, I would like to ask Jim Devine to please come up to the microphone.

Hi, Jim.

MR. JIM DEVINE: Good evening.

My name is Jim Devine. I'm the President and CEO of GCT U.S.A., which is the parent organization which oversees New York Container Terminal.

Just a couple of brief comments. I will paraphrase my written statement in deference to time and the fact I didn't bring my glasses up here with me.

22 (Laughter.)

23 MR. JIM DEVINE: But basically,

24 first, we were extremely pleased to see the project

25 moving forward. We were here at the early, four

years ago, I guess it was and I'm glad to see it moving forward. We think it's vital to the safety and well being of the residents of both New York and New Jersey. And it's equally vital to the health and well being of the New York Container Terminal, both near term and perhaps more importantly, long term.

Without the increased capacity that the Bridge will provide and the safety that it will provide, New York Container Terminal would not, would not continue be able to expand as is currently planned. So it is a vital component of our growth plan.

In terms of the alignment, I would like to make a second comment.

As we look at the diagrams and we read the report, we feel very strongly that the southern alignment is going to create a much safer, more efficient operation for the current and future traffic of New York Container Terminal.

22 As we look at what would be the

23 ramifications of a northern alignment, it would

24 change the entrance, queuing on North Goethals

25 Bridge Road. And that would, as currently

depicted, would create what we perceive to be an unsafe condition in terms of requiring this truck traffic to make a 90-degree turn, which would not only impede the traffic, but would have the potential for safety issues with trucks being over-turned or flipped over.

So we feel very strongly that the southern alignment, southern alignments, item 1, would be much preferred.

If there's any further questions on or thoughts on that, we'd be glad to point out more specifics.

The third and final comment is that we believe that the economic benefit of the Bridge is going to be significant in terms of allowing the Terminal to grow which means more truck traffic, but in the Bridge more efficiently and with the truck traffic, I think it's going to be a benefit to the Port Authority financially to expand this bridge capacity.

22 Thank you very much.

23 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Mr.

24 Devine.

25 And if you would like to leave a

copy of your comments with Marc, that would be terrific.

Thank you.

Next is Olaf Olsen, please.

Hi.

MR. OLAF OLSEN: I have a prepared statement.

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you very much.

My name is Olaf J. Olsen and I am representing the New York City District Council of Carpenters and Joiners of America. We represent 40,000 active and retired members in the New York, New Jersey and metropolitan area.

We are proud to boast that our active members are the most highly skilled and productive in the construction industry.

The New York City District Council of Carpenters wholeheartedly supports the EIS process and ultimately the construction of a new

22 Goethals Bridge utilizing the southern alignment.

23 The Carpenters Union applauds the

24 United States Coast Guard for this inclusive public

25 process and also greatly appreciates and admires

the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey for taking on such a great construction initiative and being a strong leader in regional transportation.

The end result and approval of the environmental review process will be the creation of several hundred good-paying union construction jobs with benefits for several years.

We have worked with the Port Authority before and I know they will ensure that the workplace will be safe, secure, clean and have the least impact to the surrounding communities in both New York and New Jersey.

Both states will greatly benefit from local economic boosts for merchants and construction services and material, food and other retail industries. Our hope is that others here tonight will join us in supporting this long overdue and extremely important connection between the great States of New York and New Jersey.

Thank you.

22 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Mr.

23 Olsen.

24 We currently have no one else

25 signed up to speak. So if there are no other

interested takers, we would invite you back to our open house area to have some conservation with us and have some cookies.

And we will be here to 8.

(At 6:59 p.m., the hearing was temporarily recessed.)

(At 8:00 p.m., the hearing resumed.)

MR. GARY KASSOF: Can I have your attention, please.

On behalf of the Coast Guard, I thank everyone for your participation and I compliment you on your adherence to the rules set forth at this public meeting.

In closing, everyone is reminded that the Coast Guard will be accepting written comments on the proposed project through 28 July, 2009.

Once again, this meeting was intended to solicit comments and should in no way

22 be construed as a decision being made or opinion

23 formed by the Coast Guard on the merits of the

24 proposed project before us.

25 The time is now 8 p.m. this

meeting is adjourned.

Thank you and have a good, safe trip.

(At 8:00 p.m., the proceedings were concluded.)

* * *

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25

C E R T I F I C A T I O N.

STATE OF NEW YORK )
SS.
COUNTY OF NEW YORK )

I, MARC RUSSO, a Shorthand (Stenotype) Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State of New York, do hereby certify that the foregoing pages 1 through 65 taken at the time and place aforesaid, is a true and correct transcription of my shorthand notes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my name this 23rd day of July, 2009.

_____

MARC RUSSO

22

23

24

25

# "WS"
## *(DEIS Public Comment Period)*

WS1

*Office Of The Mayor*
CITY OF ELIZABETH, NEW JERSEY

J. CHRISTIAN BOLLWAGE
*Mayor*

CITY HALL
50 WINFIELD SCOTT PLAZA
ELIZABETH, NEW JERSEY 07201-2462

TEL. 908-820-4170
FAX 908-820-0130

# STATEMENT OF MAYOR J. CHRISTIAN BOLLWAGE CONDITIONAL SUPPORT REGARDING GOETHALS BRIDGE WIDENING OR REPLACEMENT PROJECT

July 8, 2009 - City of Elizabeth

- This statement is submitted on behalf of J. Christian Bollwage, Mayor of the City of Elizabeth, regarding conditions that should be addressed before full support of the Goethals Bridge replacement project can be expressed.

- During previous meetings between representatives of the City of Elizabeth and the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the City has stated its concern about traffic in the area of the approach to the bridge, the road work that would be required, as well as the impact on the local residents and merchants.

- Certainly the addition of a second bridge will increase vehicular traffic, in particular truck traffic, with a tremendous impact on our local roads.

- One area of concern is the interconnection between Exit 13 of the Turnpike, Bayway Avenue, City streets and the Goethals Bridge, which is in need of significant improvement and will not be resolved simply by the current toll plaza widening.

- Of equal importance to the City is the fact that access from the bridge to relocated Bayway Avenue, an important industrial corridor for the City of Elizabeth, be significantly improved to ensure the smooth operation of business-related traffic.

- As we work to promote alternative transportation methods, the bicycle and pedestrian way inclusion in the widening or in any new construction is important. Subsequently, consideration should be given to how the bike/pedestrian way will emerge from the bridge to City of Elizabeth streets.

- Considering the overall critical impact the expansion will have on Elizabeth's residents and commuters we want to make sure that upon acquisition of current City property

owners' rights, that those owners be adequately adjusted for their land rights that have to be acquired for construction at fair market value.

- We want to stress the importance of minimizing noise and air pollution during all construction phases. Besides the adverse affect to local residents in the vicinity of the construction, a local school will also be directly impacted.

- An additional health concern is the design flaws, due to settling of the earth, at the stanchions of current bridge supporting pillars. Currently, the flaw has allowed for a concave configuration which retains rain water and results in potential breeding grounds for mosquitoes and West Nile Virus.

- The City of Elizabeth's last concern is vital to the success of the project as well as our overall transportation issues.

- The I-278 - US Routes 1&9 Interchange Ramp Improvements Project, also known as the "Missing Link" portion of the Bridge project, will enable a critical connection to be made to Routes 1 & 9 North/South.

- In order to ultimately alleviate vehicular volume on City streets, traffic must be re-directed via the "Missing Link" connection.

- In addition, the "Missing Link" connection will have its own environmental process, with the Federal Highway Administration serving as the lead agency.

- This initiative must be finished in conjunction with or before the completion of the Goethals Bridge Replacement project.

- If the inclusion of the bicycle and pedestrian way as well as the "Missing Link" component are not addressed in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, it provides the United States Coast Guard with the opportunity to ignore the concerns of the City and its residents.

- The City of Elizabeth will remain persistent in its efforts, and will not be disregarded or shortchanged with respect to the Goethals Bridge Replacement Project.

- The residents of the City of Elizabeth deserve more and we will continue to stand up for what is right, fair, and best for this community.

WS2

GOETHALS BRIDGE HEARING....ELIZ. CITY HALL....WEDNESDAY, 7/8/09/4&8

WILL PORT AUTHORITY TAKE ALL THE RESIDENTIAL AND COMMERCIAL PROPERTY SOUTH OF THE PRESENT STRUCTURE BETWEEN KRAKOW STREET/AMBOY AVENUE TO THE NORTH SIDE OF BAYWAY AVENUE? IF SO, WHEN WILL THIS OCCUR AND HOW WILL MONETARY COMPENSATION FOR PROPERTY AND RELOCATION EXPENSES BE DETERMINED? WILL THE OFTEN DREADED EMINENT DOMAIN COME INTO PLAY?

JOE DOHERTY

WS3

# UNITED BROTHERHOOD OF CARPENTERS AND JOINERS OF AMERICA

## NEW YORK CITY DISTRICT COUNCIL OF CARPENTERS

MICHAEL J. FORDE
Executive Secretary Treasurer

PETER THOMASSEN
President

DENIS SHEIL III
Vice President

INSTITUTED AUGUST 12TH, 1881

395 HUDSON STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10014
PHONE: (212) 366-7500
FAX: (212) 675-3118

Mr. Gary Kossof
United States Coast Guard
Battery Park Building
One South Street
New York, NY 10004

July 9, 2009

Dear Mr. Kassof,

My name is Olaf J. Olsen and I am a representative with the New York City District Council of Carpenters and Joiners of America. We represent 40,000 active and retired members in New York, New Jersey and the Metropolitan area. We are proud to boast that our active members are the most highly skilled and productive in the construction industry.

The NYC District Council of Carpenters wholeheartedly supports this EIS process and ultimately the construction of a new Goethals Bridge utilizing the southern alignment.

The Carpenters Union applauds the United States Coast Guard for this inclusive public process and also greatly appreciates and admires the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey for taking on such a great construction initiative and being a strong leader in regional transportation.

The end result and approval of the environmental review process will be the creation of several hundred good paying Union construction jobs with benefits for several years. We have worked with the Port Authority before and I know they will ensure that the workplace will be safe, secure, clean and have the least impact to the surrounding communities in both New York and New Jersey.

Both states will greatly benefit from local economic boosts for merchants in construction services and material, food, and other retail industries.

Our hope is that others here tonight will join us in supporting this long over due and extremely important connection between the great States of New York and New Jersey.

Respectively submitted,

Olaf J. Olsen

Olaf J. Olsen

WS4

NYCT
NEW YORK CONTAINER TERMINAL
300 Western Avenue, Staten Island, New York 10303
Tel: (718) 568-1700 • Fax: (718) 273-9121

Public Comment on Goethals Bridge Replacement Draft Environmental Impact Statement on July 9, 2009 at Staten Island Hotel:

New York Container Terminal is in favor of the Goethals Bridge Replacement Project and the two alternatives with the Southern bridge alignments. I have strong concerns regarding the two Northern alignment alternatives. The Northern alternatives will impact NYCT from a safety and operational perspective. NYCT is planning major improvements to our terminal to be able to handle over 500 truck trips in an hour through our gate. With the DEIS's proposed re-routing of Goethals Road North and relocation of our gate that would have a 90 degree intersection, this poses great safety and operational concerns. Incoming trucks would have to make a 90-degree turn at the intersection, which would increase the likelihood of an over-turn truck accident. Any accident will increase the chances of causing a back-up of traffic on Goethals Road North that would in-turn back traffic on 278 and Forest Avenue, blocking the driveways to and from Goethals Community. We are making major investments to our gate system so truck traffic does not queue onto public streets and the proposed DEIS roadway relocation will increase the likelihood of truck traffic backing-up onto public streets.

James J. Devine
President and CEO
New York Container Terminal

WS5

Statement Regarding the Proposed Environmental Impact Statement
Goethals Bridge Replacement
July 8, 2009

Jonathan Peters, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Finance
The College of Staten Island
&
Research Fellow
The University Transportation Research Center – Region II
The City College of New York

And

Alan Benimoff, Ph.D.
Department of Engineering Science and Physics
The College of Staten Island
&
CSI Geographic Information Systems Group

We are submitting the following comments regarding the proposed EIS for the Goethals Bridge Replacement.

We believe that there are significant deficiencies in the proposed plan of action and that any program in this corridor should reflect the need of all individuals.
In particular, we note the lack of any mass transit services in this corridor.
Environmental justice analysis was mandated by Executive Order of the President 12898 in 1994 and the current proposal lacks key services for protected classes. In addition, it is required that the agency perform an evaluation of transportation projects to reflect social equity and fairness.

While the proposed EIS does address to some degree the negative impacts of the proposed alignments with regard to noise, pollution and other negative impacts, it generally fails to evaluate the positive impacts of increased mobility.

As a private vehicle focused facility with only pedestrian and bike access, this facility does not provide the mobility options that one would expect give existing and proposed density and development patterns.

To quote the EIS. Page 17 – Appendix M

*3.3.7*

*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.*

Yet, that reflects the use of transit as a substitute for the replacement of this obsolete facility. We argue that transit is an augmenting use of this facility that is critical for social equity. In particular, we request that you show how you will serve the following groups identified by the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority as protected classes – these are:

1) Low Income Populations
2) Minority Populations
3) Elderly Population
4) Disabled Population

To Quote again from your web site:

Will there be transit on a new bridge?

Traffic modeling has demonstrated that there would not be enough riders to warrant a dedicated Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) lane or light rail on a replacement bridge with six lanes, and that dedicating a lane strictly to buses would result in unacceptable traffic volumes in the remaining lanes. However, conceptual designs for the bridge-replacement alternatives being studied in detail in the DEIS will not preclude the ability to accommodate some form of transit in the future, if and as warranted.

From Goethals Bridge EIS Web Site FAQ
http://www.goethalseis.com/faqs/
Accessed – July 6, 2009

Issues with Goethals Bridge EIS

1) No transit proposed for implementation - Why?
2) Transit use imputed from existing bridge users – is that valid?
3) OD matrix based upon existing user of toll bridge – is this valid in an auto access only corridor and what happens to users who cannot afford a car?
4) Did not examine S-89 service in context as evaluation
5) The EIS ignored the value of cross connection to local bus routes in New Jersey. Did anyone cross validate the demand to move between these systems?
6) Job base test as well as population density in Appendix B on page 48 of the Proposed EIS validated the BRT and basic Bus service in this corridor – yet it was discarded from implementation – why?
7) The College of Staten Island performed Geographic Information System analysis of the proposed BRT routes (Appendix B – Page 92 & 93) in the EIS. We geocoded the routes and then evaluated the population surrounding We found an average of 8,885 people per square mile within a ½ mile radius of the proposed 34 stops on the BRT service. This is well above standard thresholds for bus service and is close to justifying a light rail system for these corridors. In total, this system would put 237,277 people within walking distance of a cross state transit system.
8) Toll cost eliminates a significant number of users from system

9) Cost of automobile impacts the potential users – based on our research in New York City – income threshold on toll facilities is about $35,000 more than average user in same zip code.

In conclusion, these matters must be addressed and must be a part of any proposed solution in this corridor.

x

# "CS"
## *(DEIS Public Comment Period)*

CS1

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
GOETHALS BRIDGE REPLACEMENT

## Formal Public Meetings

(Please check which meeting you've attended.)

- ☐ Wednesday, July 8, 2009 – Elizabeth, NJ
- ☐ Thursday, July 9, 2009 – Staten Island, NY

Please use this comment form to let us know your thoughts.
These comments will become part of the official record.

Name *(required)*: Gary Johnson

Organization/Affiliation:

Street Address: 80 2nd Ave, Apt 31A

City: Newark State: NJ Zipcode: 07104

Telephone: (973) 482-3372 Fax:

Email: garyjohnson@hotmail.com

Comments: Please send a CD of the GIS via US Post Office. (send Regular Mail)

Please leave this form with us today or submit any time during the comment period, which ends on **July 28, 2009**, to:

Sent 7/10/09

Commander (dpb)
First Coast Guard District
United States Coast Guard
Battery Building, One South Street
New York, NY 10004
Attn: Mr. G. Kassof

Fax: (212) 668-7967

Your comments can also be emailed via the project Web site at www.goethalseis.com.

United States Coast Guard
Visit: www.goethalseis.com

Please use the back of this form for additional comments.

CS2

Comment Sheet Transcript
Received: July 28, 2009

Name: Frank & Carol Navarro
Organization: Bayway Scrap Metals
Street Address: 645 Amboy Avenue
City: Elizabeth
State: NJ
Zip code: 07202
Telephone: 908-436-1123
Fax: 908-436-1123

Comments:

We have been in business since 1982. It started out as a swamp and at a great cost to us we filled it in and concreted the ground. We put up a building and truck scales, fencing and office trailer and a great amount of advertising for our business to succeed.

Our three children grew up working side by side with us and they are now in their 30's and 40's. Our business supports all of us and our families. We are all concerned about losing our business. I am 59 years old, my husband is 62. We don't want to start all over again. We would like to know what you provide for us financially and physically. Will you help us locate? How does this work?

-Carol Navarro

# "L"
## *(DEIS Public Comment Period)*

L1

34 Beech St.
Cranford, NJ., 07016-1747

July 22, 2009

Commander (dpb) First Coast Guard District
Battery Building, One South Street
New York, NY., 10004

Attn: Mr. G. Kassof:

RE: DEIS widening of the Goethals Bridge

This project must be turned dowm as it fails to support the stated "social, economic, cultural, environmental and transportation impacts"in several ways. First, adjacent to and a part of the Port Newark/Elizabeth co,mplex is the Kill van Kull which is the prime egress to the entire port facility which oncludes Howland Hook. This vital waterway is spanned by the Bayonne Bridge, which is already so low as to deny passage of new generation comtainersips to the entire Port. The Port Authority is well aware of this shortcoming but has ignored its implication which inhibits the Port's ability to handle this growing portion of Ocean Shipping. This is also worsened by the fact both the area's "class one" rail carriers are based in the Southeast where states serving their ports from Norfolk to New Orleams are upgrading tunnel clearances alomng both CSX and NS in direct competition with Port Newark/Elizabeth.

Allowing the Port to proceed now with the widening of the Goethals will be an economic disaster for the Port which sits in an areas having a direct population greater than all of Canada. This will so worsen truck traffic from southeaster ports of containers which should be coming directly to Port Newark as to create an environmental nightmare.

The Port must be directed to put this project on hold until the substard clearance of the Bayonne Bridge has been corrected to support future growth of contaoinerships now limited by the clearance of the downstream Verranzano Bridge which already limits clearance to the profile of the Queen Mary II. After the Bayonne BRidge clearance has been dealt with then and only then can the rebuilt Goethas be addressed. And it must be addressed with a real transit rail system connecting in botj Staten Islamnd and New Jersey to operating rail transit systems now in place.

Youirs truly,

William R. Wright

cc; USDOT Secretary Ray LaHood
Senator Frank Lautenberg
Senator Robert Menendez
Representative Leonard Lance
NJ Commissioner Stephen Dilts
NJ Senator Thomas H. Kean, Jr.
NJ Assembylan Jon M. Bramnick

L2

**Statement of Denise M. Richardson**
**Managing Director, General Contractors Association of New York**

The General Contractors Association of New York represents the unionized public works heavy civil construction contractors that work throughout New York City and the metropolitan area. Our members built the bridge in the 1920's and we have worked on the various rehabilitation projects. We support the replacement of the Goethals Bridge.

The Bridge was originally built to accommodate smaller vehicles and light traffic. Since then, the volume traffic and the weight of vehicles have exponentially increased. In 1929, the Goethals Bridge carried 675,000 vehicles compared to the 15.68 million vehicles it carried in 2002. Along with an increased volume of truck traffic, the truck weights have also increased from an average of 8,000 pounds in the 1920's to the current weight limit of 80,000 pounds. These increases, along with deferred maintenance, are major causes for the deterioration and congestion of the Goethals Bridge. A 2000-2007 analysis found that 55% of total crashes recorded for the Port Authority's three Staten Island bridges occurred on the Goethals Bridge.

It is clear that something must be done. To simply keep repairing the bridge is a hazard to the public and costs the Port Authority millions in extra maintenance without providing increased capacity to mitigate present or future traffic congestion. In 2015, the Port Authority will need to undertake a $276 million rehabilitation merely to keep the bridge in service.

A new Goethals Bridge will create hundreds of construction jobs and provide the increased capacity that is necessary to facilitate consumer goods movement and regional commuting. In lieu of continued rehabilitation of a clearly outdated structure, building a new bridge with wider horizontal clearance, two additional traffic lanes, and capacity to add future mass transit access is the best use of the Port Authority's financial resources.

L3

Statement Regarding the Proposed Environmental Impact Statement
Goethals Bridge Replacement
July 28, 2009

Jonathan Peters, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Finance
The College of Staten Island
&
Research Fellow
The University Transportation Research Center
– Region II
The City College of New York

Address:
The College of Staten Island
2800 Victory Blvd
Staten Island, NY 10314
Room 3N-220
jonthan.peters@csi.cuny.edu

And

Alan Benimoff, Ph.D.
Department of Engineering Science and Physics
The College of Staten Island
&
CSI Geographic Information Systems Group

We are submitting the following comments regarding the proposed EIS for the Goethals Bridge Replacement.

We believe that there are significant deficiencies in the proposed plan of action and that any program in this corridor should reflect the need of all individuals regardless of income, race, age or disability. In particular, the proposal is deficient, as we note the lack of any mass transit services in this corridor. Environmental Justice analysis was mandated by Executive Order of the President 12898 in 1994 and the current proposal lacks key services for protected classes. In addition, it is required that the agency perform an evaluation of transportation projects to reflect social equity and fairness.

While the proposed EIS does address to some degree the negative impacts of the proposed alignments with regard to noise, pollution and other negative impacts, it generally fails to evaluate the positive impacts of increased mobility.

As a private vehicle focused facility with only pedestrian and bike access, the proposed facility does not provide the mobility options that one would expect give existing and proposed density and development patterns.

To quote the EIS. Page 17 – Appendix M

*3.3.7*

*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.*

We disagree with this assessment, as it reflects the use of transit as a substitute for the replacement of this obsolete facility. We argue that transit is an augmenting use of this facility that is critical for social equity. In particular, we request that you show how you will serve the following groups identified by the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority and The New York Metropolitan Transportation Council as protected classes – these are:

1) Low Income Populations
2) Minority Populations
3) Elderly Population
4) Disabled Population

Attachments 1 and 2 provide maps of the identified Environmental Justice Communities in Northern New Jersey as well as New York City. In addition, Attachment 3 is a GIS Map of the proposed Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Corridors that were identified in the EIS. We note that a number of the proposed BRT routes would clearly serve the mobility needs of these protected citizens. Yet no transit services were proposed in this corridor.

To quote from the Goethals Bridge EIS web site:

Will there be transit on a new bridge?

Traffic modeling has demonstrated that there would not be enough riders to warrant a dedicated Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) lane or light rail on a replacement bridge with six lanes, and that dedicating a lane strictly to buses would result in unacceptable traffic volumes in the remaining lanes. However, conceptual designs for the bridge-replacement alternatives being studied in detail in the DEIS will not preclude the ability to accommodate some form of transit in the future, if and as warranted.

From Goethals Bridge EIS Web Site FAQ
http://www.goethalseis.com/faqs/
Accessed – July 6, 2009

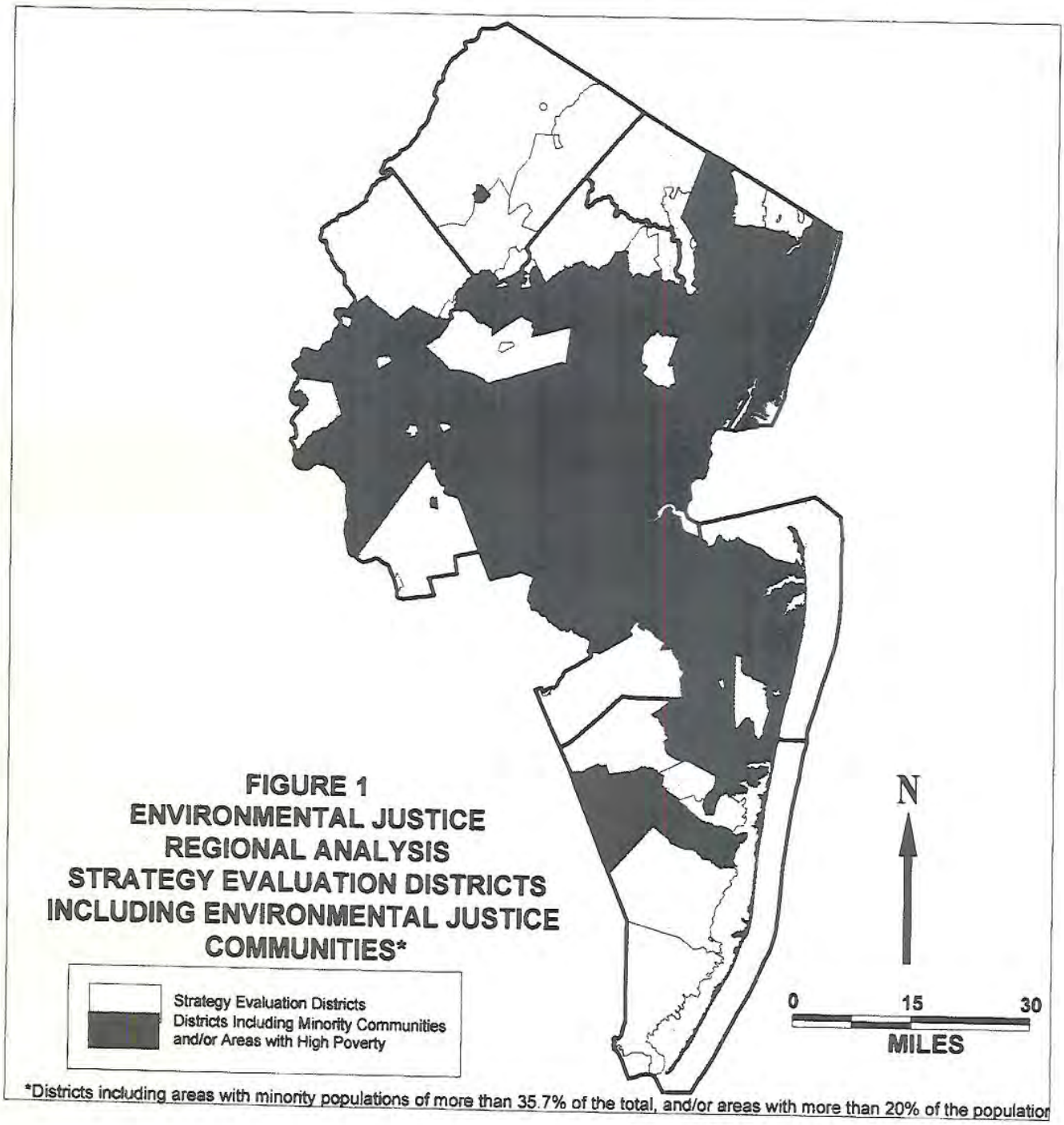
While it is important to include the option of transit capacity in this corridor, it is unacceptable to expect the protected classes to wait an undetermined amount of time – perhaps stretching into decades – for their mobility needs to be addressed. This facility has a strong and stable revenue stream from the current tolls. These tolls function both as a barrier to low income users as well as a funding source for transit services. We propose at a bare minimum that bus service be implemented immediately with the route serving the North Shore of Staten Island and linking Elizabeth, Newark Airport and Newark Penn Station.

Overall, the following issues must be addressed in the Goethals Bridge EIS prior to any final determination being rendered on this project:

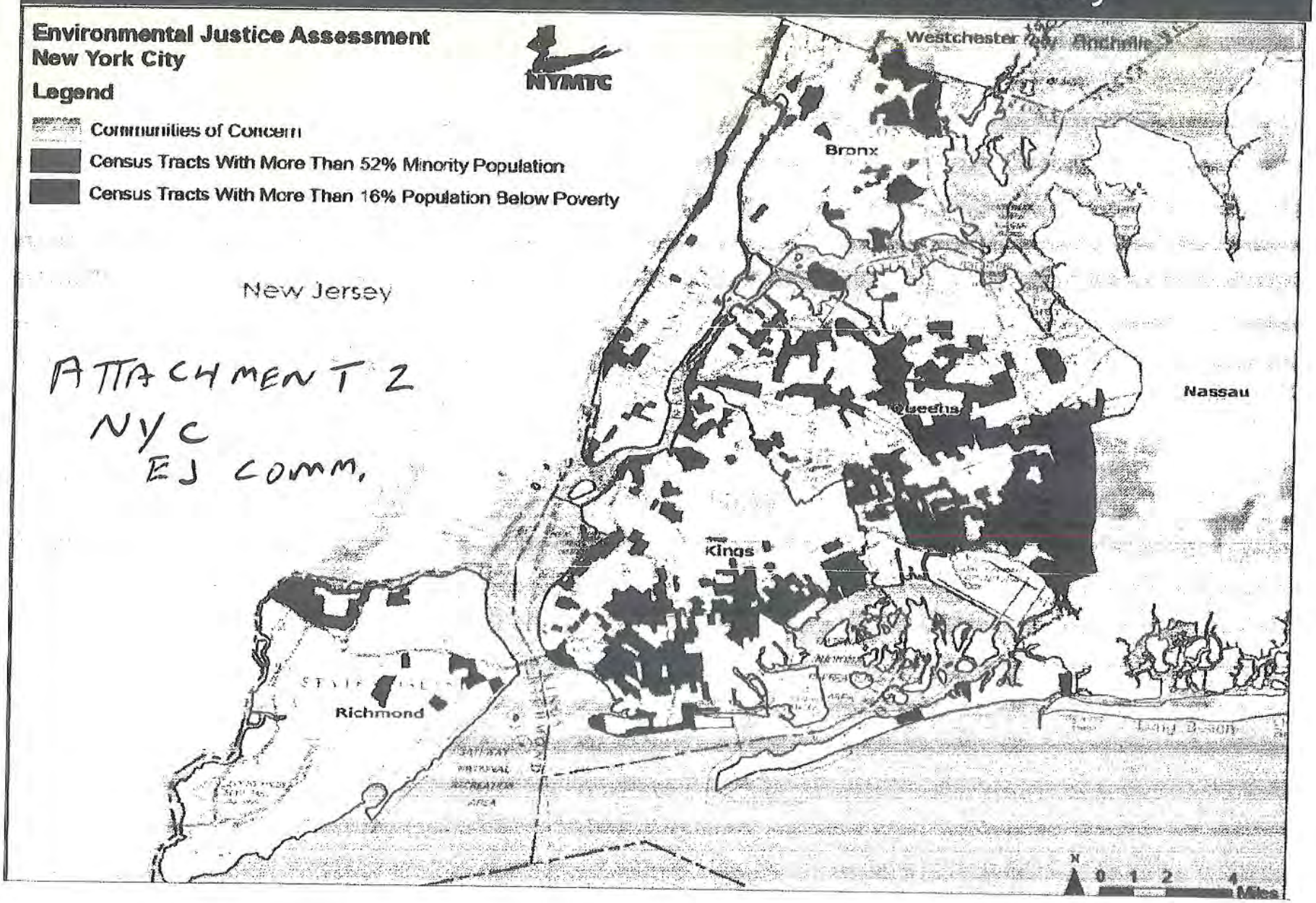
1) Why is no transit proposed for implementation in this corridor? It is not clear that demand is lacking or that the service would not increase ridership on transit. In fact, the opposite is the case.
2) The current EIS models estimates transit usage by imputed riders based upon the driver behavior of existing bridge users – We question if this is a valid method of estimating mass transit demand.
3) The Origin – Destination matrix for transit was based upon existing user of toll bridge – is this valid in a tolled, auto access only corridor and what happens to users who cannot afford a car or the toll? Clearly the needs of these citizens are not being analyzed.
4) The proposed EIS did not include analysis of the existing transit services over the Bayonne Bridge – the MTA's S-89 service. This service was implemented prior to the EIS release and provides us with useful knowledge about the impact of mass transit services in the New Jersey – Staten Island Corridor. It also provides validation of the value of cross connectivity between existing transit systems in this corridor. Ridership is strong and growing in this corridor and it should be used to augment the transit needs assessment.
5) The EIS appears to ignore the value of cross connection to local New Jersey Transit bus routes in New Jersey to the existing MTA Service on Staten Island. Did the EIS cross validate the demand to move between these systems?
6) The Employment Center Size test as well as Residential Density test that are shown in Appendix B on page 48 of the Proposed EIS validated both BRT and basic bus service in this corridor – yet transit was discarded from implementation – why? The significant job centers in the City of Newark, Newark Airport and The Port of Newark and Elizabeth all serve as significant job destinations that create demand for transit services.
7) The College of Staten Island performed Geographic Information System analysis of the proposed BRT routes (Appendix B – Page 92 & 93) in the EIS. We geocoded the routes and then evaluated the population surrounding these stops. We found an average of 8,885 people per square mile within a ½ mile radius of the proposed 34 stops on the BRT service. This is well above standard thresholds for bus service and is close to justifying a light rail system for these corridors (10,000 per square mile). In total, this system would put 237,277 people within walking distance of a cross state transit system. This data is provided in Attachment 4.
8) The cost of automobile ownership and high toll levels impact the potential users in this corridor and transit is a necessary alternative form of mobility that must be provided to serve the needs of low income populations. Based upon research presented at the Transportation Research Board of the National Academies of Science in January 2009 and based upon toll data from the MTA Bridges and Tunnels in New York City, Peters and Kramer found that the income of a toll bridge user in New York tended to have an income that was $38,827 more than the average resident from the same zip code. Therefore, any analysis of toll bridge users to predict demand for transit or other mobility options is highly suspect.

In conclusion, these matters must be addressed and mass transit must be a part of any proposed transportation solution in this corridor. We therefore object to the current proposed facility and insist that transit be added to the corridor to address the mandates of Presidential Order 12898.

ATTACHMENT 1 - NJ EJ comm.



# Communities of Concern – New York City




ATTACHMENT 2
NYC
EJ COMM.

# Goethals Bridge Proposed BRTs

ATTACHMENT 3 - PROPOSED BRT ROUTES

**Legend**

- WS3 Stops
- WS2 Stops
- WS1 Stops
- SIE3 Stops
- SIE2 Stops
- SIE1 Stops
- NS3 Stops
- NS2 Stops
- NS1 Stops
- WS1
- WS2
- WS3
- SIE1
- SIE3
- SIE2
- NS1
- NS3
- NS2
- Tristate Boundary

0 1.5 3 6 Miles

Map by Jonathan Peters and Nora Santiago
The College of Staten Island
June 20th, 2009

N

Mass Transit Impacts
Goethals Bridge Transit Corridor
Environmental Justice Analysis and Potential Ridership
Analysis by
The College of Staten Island GIS Group
Nora Santiago and Jonathan Peters
13-Jul-09

Routes Based Upon Proposed BRT Routes - Goethals Bridge EIS
Population Data from U.S. Census Bureau - 2000 Census

ATTACHMENT 4
- EJ ANALYSIS + DENSITY

**Goethals Bridge Proposed BRTs**
**Population within 1/2 mile of proposed stops**

| Total | POP2000 | WHITE | BLACK | AMERI_ES | ASIAN | HAWN_PI | OTHER | MULT_RACE | HISPANIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| NS1 / Summit | 115,009 | 64,187 | 28,664 | 419 | 6,480 | 45 | 10,094 | 5,120 | 27,291 |
| NS2 / Newark Airport | 56,894 | 24,869 | 18,878 | 322 | 2,807 | 27 | 6,897 | 3,094 | 14,933 |
| NS3 / Newark Penn Station | 93,205 | 40,574 | 31,159 | 442 | 3,203 | 50 | 12,317 | 5,460 | 26,754 |

| Total | POP2000 | WHITE | BLACK | AMERI_ES | ASIAN | HAWN_PI | OTHER | MULT_RACE | HISPANIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SIE1 / Summit | 127,712 | 86,936 | 19,456 | 304 | 10,148 | 54 | 6,284 | 4,530 | 21,330 |
| SIE2 / Newark Airport | 69,597 | 47,618 | 9,670 | 207 | 6,475 | 36 | 3,087 | 2,504 | 8,972 |
| SIE3 / Newark Penn Statior | 105,908 | 63,323 | 21,951 | 327 | 6,871 | 59 | 8,507 | 4,870 | 20,793 |

| Total | POP2000 | WHITE | BLACK | AMERI_ES | ASIAN | HAWN_PI | OTHER | MULT_RACE | HISPANIC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WS1 / Summit | 74,475 | 51,454 | 12,066 | 147 | 4,254 | 23 | 3,988 | 2,543 | 14,656 |
| WS2 / Newark Airport | 16,360 | 12,136 | 2,280 | 50 | 581 | 5 | 791 | 517 | 2,298 |
| WS3 / Newark Penn Statioı | 52,671 | 27,841 | 14,561 | 170 | 977 | 28 | 6,211 | 2,883 | 14,119 |

L4

WASTE MANAGEMENT

**WASTE MANAGEMENT**
448 Lincoln Highway
Fairless Hills, PA 19030
(215) 269-2100
(215) 269-2349 Fax

July 28, 2009

Commander
First Coast Guard District
United States Coast Guard
Battery Building
One South Street
New York, NY 10004

Attn: Mr. G. Kassof

Re: Goethals Bridge Replacement Project – Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Dear Mr. Kassof:

As noted in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Goethals Bridge Replacement Project, Waste Management of New Jersey, Inc. is the owner and operator of a solid waste transfer station facility located between South Front St. and Amboy Ave., Elizabeth, NJ. This facility and a nearby WMNJ truck scale are among the properties that will be affected by the Goethals Bridge Replacement Project. The Draft EIS identifies a number of socioeconomic impacts that will result from the re-alignment of the Goethals Bridge, but there are several additional factors which WMNJ wishes to make part of the record.

With respect to the two potential Northern Re-alignments of the bridge, and the possible displacement of WMNJ's current operation, please note the following, which are in addition to the impacts identified in the Draft EIS:

1. The WMNJ facility is a transfer station and material recovery facility which receives and consolidates solid waste for transport to final disposal sites located out of state. The facility also performs separation and recycling of various materials delivered to it, such as wood, concrete, and metals.
2. The transfer station / material recovery facility is fully licensed by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, and is permitted to receive 2000 tons per day of solid waste and/or recyclables. The facility operates 24 hours per day, six days per week.

3. The transfer station / material recovery facility regularly serves in excess of 150 customers. These include other solid waste collectors, building and demolition contractors, and individuals.
4. This facility is incorporated into the Union County District Solid Waste Management Plan. The Plan is required under New Jersey's Solid Waste Management Act; it has been formulated by the Union County Utilities Authority, approved by the Union County Freeholders, and certified by the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection.
5. Given the difficulties inherent in siting and permitting a new solid waste facility comparable to the WMNJ facility (and incorporating it into the County Solid Waste Management Plan), it is unlikely that the services provided by the WMNJ facility can be replaced. Displacement of this business location will result in the users of the facility travelling greater distances to gain access to another facility. Dozens of heavy collection trucks and other vehicles will be forced to make these trips over local highways.
6. WMNJ pays a monetary host community benefit to the City of Elizabeth for every ton of material that is received at the facility.

For the above-listed reasons, WMNJ supports the proposed Southern Alignments of the Goethals Bridge. Please feel free to contact the undersigned if you have any questions concerning the above.

Very truly yours,

Michael S. Keszler
Senior Group Counsel
215-269-2126

Via fax: (212) 668-7967

L5

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DEPT OF TRANSPORTATION DOCKETS

Donald J. Camerson, II
Member

direct: 973-660-4433
djcamerson@bressler.com

July 28, 2009

**Submitted Via Fax and Internet**
Docket Management Facility (M-30)
U.S. Department of Transportation
West Building, Ground Floor Room W12-140
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE.
Washington, DC 20590-001

**Re: Walter Baker (250 N. Washington Ave, Staten Island, New York) – Comments to Docket No. USCG-2009-0097**

Dear Sir/Madam:

This firm represents Walter Baker, owner of the property located at 250 N. Washington Ave., Staten Island, New York, also referred to as 250 Goethals Road North, Staten Island, New York (the "Property"). On behalf of Mr. Baker, please accept the following comments to the Goethals Bridge Replacement Project – Draft Environmental Impact Statement ("DEIS"). Mr. Baker's comments focus on certain erroneous statements contained in the DEIS regarding the Property. Mr. Baker's comments are without admission or waiver of any kind and with full reservation of all rights, claims and defenses he has or may have.

First, the DEIS mistakenly describes and/or identifies the Property as being owned by "R.T. Baker"[1], "R.T. Baker & Son Machinery Salvage Company"[2], "R.T. Baker & Son Machinery Dismantlers"[3], and R.T. Baker & Son"[4]. As stated above, the Property is owned by Mr. Baker. He and his father acquired the Property from America Export Lines Asberston, a shipping entity, in 1967. Mr. Baker's father passed away in 1974 and Walter Baker became and continues to be the sole owner.

The DEIS characterizes the Property as "handl[ing] the processing of batteries and auto parts"[5], a "junkyard for defunct transformers"[6], a "machine dismantling operation, which is filled

[1] See DEIS Page 3-14.
[2] See DEIS Page 4-11.
[3] See DEIS Page 5-15
[4] See DEIS Page 5-131.
[5] DEIS Page 4-11.
[6] DEIS Page 4-32.

with machine parts and metal debris"[7], and a "active junkyard [with] poor housekeeping and deferred maintenance."[8] All of the above are inaccurate and mischaracterize the Property and/or operations conducted thereon.

Since Mr. Baker's acquisition of the Property, it has been used to store construction equipment by various companies, including R. Baker & Son Machinery Dismantlers, Inc., which company no longer exists. From approximately 1967 to 1977, demolition equipment was stored on the Property. For a very limited time prior to 1977, R. Baker & Son Machinery Dismantlers, Inc. purchased obsolete transformers at auction from public and/or private entities including, but not limited to, Con Edison, Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, the New York Transit Authority, Long Island Railroad, General Electric, the United States Navy, PSE&G, Exxon, etc. These purchases of transformers were not frequent or numerous. A few of the transformers purchased from the private and/or public entities at auction may have been taken back to the Property for dismantling for purposes of selling the parts of the transformer, including, but not limited to, any oil that may have been left in the transformers by the sellers. All oil that was contained or may have been contained in the transformers was sold to oil scavengers. The oil was not discarded or dumped onto the Property. All parts of the transformers, including the oil, were ultimately sold and sent off-site. No waste materials were ever discarded or disposed of on the Property.

Furthermore, the Property has never been used for "handl[ing] the processing of batteries and auto parts" or a "junkyard". In all likelihood, the Coast Guard is confusing the Property with an auto parts facility in the area (possibly Abe's Auto parts).

The Coast Guard refers to past sampling activities that were performed at the Property. Mr. Baker was not provided with and does not possess much, if any, of the investigative results and/or Reports. Specifically, the Coast Guard refers to soil and groundwater sampling activities conducted by the PANYNJ from December 1993 through January 1994. Mr. Baker was not provided with the results and/or any other information regarding these activities (with the exception set forth below). Supplemental sampling activities were apparently conducted at the Property by the PANYNJ from November 1995 through January 1996. While Mr. Baker was provided, through the NYSDEC, with portions of the Sampling Analysis Plan dated October 1996, he was not provided with a complete copy of the Report (including attachments) that would be necessary for him to respond and submit comments. Finally, the Coast Guard's summary refers to a 2003 Phase I Environmental Site Assessment conducted at the Property for PANYNJ by Hatch Mott McDonald. This reference in the DEIS was the first that Mr. Baker learned of this assessment. Mr. Baker was not provided, nor does he have, a copy of the 2003 Phase I Environmental Site Assessment. This document would also be necessary to respond or provide comments to the Coast Guard's summary. Accordingly, Mr. Baker fully reserves all

[7] DEIS Page 5-70.
[8] DEIS, Appendix I, Page 37.

rights to submit comments and/or responses to the technical summary upon receipt of the information.

Based upon the information provided to Mr. Baker, the level of purported PCBs in both soil and groundwater has varied significantly in the various investigations. While elevated levels of PCBs were alleged to have been present in the soil and groundwater during the early investigations, these findings could not be duplicated in later investigations. Moreover, it appears that the reliability of investigations completed at the Property is questionable for a number of reasons, including, but not limited to, the lack of quality assurance and quality control procedures necessary to assure accurate sampling results. For example, the data from earlier investigations reporting elevated levels of PCBs in the soil and groundwater is either missing or lacking proper QA/QC data.

The DEIS also inaccurately describes the current status of the negotiations between Mr. Baker and the NYSDEC. The parties are currently in negotiations pursuant to which Mr. Baker intends to perform supplemental sampling at the Property. Mr. Baker disputes the Coast Guard's conclusion that remediation will be necessary or, if remediation is necessary, that he is responsible and/or liable for said remediation. Moreover, the statement (citing the information obtained from the NYSDEC) that "the likely remediation alternatives for the contaminated soils [at the Property] would be "hot-spot removal off-site disposal of the highly contaminated soils while other less contaminated soils will potentially remain in place with engineering and institutional controls, such as capping and deed notice" is premature.

Finally, three of the four alternatives considered for the Goethals Bridge Replacement Project would required the PANYNJ to exercise eminent domain to acquire the entire Baker Property.[9] The fourth alternative would only require a partial taking. While reserving any and all arguments or defenses to any future eminent domain proceeding, Mr. Baker submits that the Property has been in the Baker family for over 40 years. The Property produces income for Mr. Baker from various tenants and/or uses. The loss of this Property and the associated income will have a significant negative effect on Mr. Baker's financial condition. Moreover, it would displace the numerous tenants of the Property requiring them to relocate, if possible, at great cost. Thus, any taking of any portion of the Property must provide Mr. Baker with full market value compensation at the highest and best use of this income producing Property and the costs incurred by the tenants and/or other users of the Property resulting from the taking.

[9] The three alternatives that will require a complete a taking of the Property are New Alignment South, Existing Alignment South, and Existing Alignment North.

If you have any questions regarding the above, please do not hesitate to contact me. As set forth above, the above is without admission and liability of any wrongdoing and with full reservation of all rights, claims and defenses Mr. Baker has or may have regarding the above.

Very truly yours,

Donald J. Camerson II

Donald J. Camerson II

977148_1

**"EM"**

***(DEIS Public Comment Period)***

EM NO.1

The following DEIS comment was submitted to the Goethals Bridge Website:

---

Name: greg thursotn
Organization: Thurston International
Title: CEO
Street Address: 533 Division street
City: Elizabeth
State: NJ
Zip Code: 07201
Telephone: 908 351 5533
Fax Number: 908 351 5762
Email Address: greg@thurstoninternational.com

Comment:

Just want to make sure you plan on keeping old bridge open until you have built the new one.

EM NO.2

The following DEIS comment was submitted to the Goethals Bridge Website:

---

Name: Steve Radel
Organization: Jay Cashman, Inc.
Title: Consultant
Street Address: 549 South St.
City: Quincy
State: MA
Zip Code: 02269
Telephone: 508-254-0394
Fax Number: 888-239-0523
Email Address: sradel@sbrholdings.com

Comment:

On behalf of Jay Cashman, Inc. ("Cashman"), Cashman is concerned about the alignment of the new bridge. Cashman has a leases purchase agreement with the City of Elizabeth for property located at 632-650 South Front Street and is concerned that the northern alignment would wipe out Cashman's significant investment in the site and plans for future development. The site is a brownfield site and Cashman has already invested millions of dollars in engineering to evaluate the site and permit it for construction of a dredged material processing facility. Cashman also intends to utilize the site as a marine terminal for other operations. Cashman is working with the responsible parties preparing to implement the site cleanup in the near future. A southern alignment would also avoid any potential remaining environmental issues associated with the site. The remaining impacts will be capped as part of Cashman's reuse. As a result, Cashman prefers the southern alignment that will minimize any impact to the site.

Regards,
Steve Radel

EM NO.3

The following DEIS comment was submitted to the Goethals Bridge Website:

---

Name: Steve Greco
Organization: National Grid
Title: Manager - Project Engineering
Street Address: 175 East Old Country Road
City: Hicksville
State: NY
Zip Code: 11801
Telephone: 516 545 4314
Fax Number: 516 545-4949
Email Address: stephen.greco@us.ngrid.com

Comment:

For the existing bridge and each alternative, please provide the minimum clearance from the bridge (edge) to the TETCO Gas transmission main at the closest point anywhere along the bridge.

For the existing National Grid 30" gas transmission main exiting the Tetco Goethals Meter and Regulator Station and running east on Goethals Rd, are there any anticipated areas where the main will need to be moved.

EM NO.4

The following DEIS comment was submitted to the Goethals Bridge Website:

---

Name: yonatan reinberg
Organization:
Title:
Street Address:
City: brooklyn
State: ny
Zip Code: 11238
Telephone:
Fax Number:
Email Address:
Comment:
I think this new expansion of the Goethals bridge is tragic for many reasons, least of which is the noncommitment to a dedicated bike and pedestrian path, which I think should be addressed in terms of the larger scope of the project. I understand the Coast guard has no jurisdiction outside of the bridge itself and cannot guarantee access; but just like the traffic which will rise tremendously, we CANNOT continue to analyze traffic and transit options without seeing the community around.

A bridge is not just a bridge, it is a way between two existing places. This new expansion is a tragic, misguided attempt to address infrastructural problems with thinking that should have been outdated 20 years ago. Thanks very much.

EM NO.5

The following DEIS comment was submitted to the Goethals Bridge Website:

---

Name: Kenneth J. Vogel
Organization:
Title:
Street Address: 488 New Unionville Road
City: Wallkill
State: NY
Zip Code: 12589
Telephone: 845 401 1908
Fax Number:
Email Address: kenv.roehrscon@verizon.net

Comment:

The New York State Thruway Authority's Tappan Zee Bridge is outside of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey's twenty-five mile radius jurisdictional rights, but the Geothals is not. But think of the Metro-North's Stewart Airport Access Proposal to connect to the Port Jervis Line. Plans are also envisioned beyond Access to the Regions Core's Tunnel by connecting Penn Station to Grand Central. Presently the Long Island Railroad will be able to access Grand Central too. When the Atlantic Yards tracks in Brooklyn are extended to World Trade Center, then the LIRR will be able to get you to the THREE Core Stations in NYC. When the ARC extension as mentioned is completed NJ Transit will be able to get you to the THREE Core Stations in NYC. When the Tappan Zee Bridge is completed Metro North, West of Hudson will be able to get you to the THREE Core Stations in NYC. Then if a tunnel between Port Chester and Glen Cove Long Island is completed to join up at Jamaica Station, Then Connecticut DOT Rail LIRR will be able to get you to the to the THREE Core Stations in NYC. Not to Mention the FOUR Core NYC Airports.

The desire to complete the loop around New York City by way of a completed I-287 is driven by the fact that each US city that has a completed loop around the city experienced economic growth greater on the loop than in the center, and NYC is one of the few cities left with out one completed. This will only be possible with a Road / Rail tunnel between Port Chester and Glen Cove Long Island. There is the changing of certain roads to Interstate Highway standards like the Belt Parkway which would be a needed boost to Coney Island. But at least the Port Authority is upgrading the Goethals Bridges since a direct connection for commercial vehicals between the Outerbridge Crossing and the Verranzano Bridges does not exist in Staten Island to keep up that part of the loop.

EM NO.6

The following DEIS comment was submitted to the Goethals Bridge Website:

---

Name: Mike Kruimer
Organization: East Coast Greenway Alliance-NJ
Title: Chairman of NJ Committee
Street Address: 33 Parkerson Road
City: Edison
State: NJ
Zip Code: 08817
Telephone: 732-586-3981
Fax Number: 732-287-9092
Email Address: kliner54@optonline.net
Comment:

Sorry that I was not able to attend the last round of Public Comment meetings. I want to again note the importance of making the connection of the Goethals Bridge Multi-use trail to the Communities of Staten Island and Elizabeth. These Connections MUST be made so that entire bridge can be utilized as a safe transportation corridor. This would be well within the scope of the bridge design because you already are looking as far away as the Varrizano Bridge and the Bay Way Circle/Route 278 connectors. We need to make this bridge a "complete bridge" so that it can serve us for the next 100+ years as a well thought out transportation corridor.

EM NO.7

The following DEIS comment was submitted to the Goethals Bridge Website:

---

Name: Kamal Saleh
Organization: Union County
Title: Supervisor, Land Use & Transportation Planning
Street Address: Elizabehtown Plaza
City: Elizabeth
State: NJ
Zip Code: 07207
Telephone: 908-527-4086
Fax Number: 908-527-4715
Email Address: KSaleh@ucnj.org

Comment:

Overall the Draft Environmental Impact Statement follows the appropriate process of land use, environmental, historical, and transportation analysis. In some of the transportation descriptions they didn't include I278 or Routes 1&9 in New Jersey but in the analysis those roads were represented. The major concern is that the build condition with mitigations found in Section 5.20, Volume I of the Draft EIS. Associated NJ Turnpike Ramps/I 278 ramps has 5 out of 8 ramps analyzed have a degraded Level of Service (LOS) and two intersections in Elizabeth/Bayway/Route 1&9 area out of 7 analyzed that have degraded slightly in LOS. The Port Authority should explain if these ramps and intersections could be improved further. Please clarify.

EM NO.8

The following DEIS comment was submitted to the Goethals Bridge Website:

---

Name: Dr. Andrew Bernick
Organization:
Title:
Street Address: 5616 Glenwood Drive
City: Alexandria
State: VA
Zip Code: 22310
Telephone: 571-490-5314
Fax Number:
Email Address: bernickaj@yahoo.com

Comment:

Section 4 ("Existing Conditions") of the Goethals Bridge DEIS includes references to observational data that I provided to LMS in March 2005, based on their request for information on wildlife (specifically colonial waterbird) activity in the Goethals Bridge area. I collected these data during my doctoral dissertation research on colonial waterbird nocturnal foraging ecology (2002-2004).

The dataset I provided also included some observations of reptiles, amphibians and mammals. However, any observations of non-avian species were incidental, and did not follow methods to specifically detect the presence of reptiles, amphibians or mammals.

Tables 4.14-5, 4.14-6 and 4.14-7 in the DEIS provide lists of reptiles, amphibians and mammals observed during various survey efforts conducted in the Goethals Bridge area, including my own.

I feel that it is not appropriate to report my observations of reptiles, amphibians or mammals within the above tables or Section 4 text, as my study was not designed to detect the presence of these taxa and likely differed in effort and search methods from the other studies reported in the DEIS.

EM NO.9

The following DEIS comment was submitted to the Goethals Bridge Website:
---

Name: Paul Dengel
Organization: Construction & Marine Equipment Co., Inc.
Title: Operations
Street Address: 330 South Front Street
City: Elizabeth
State: NJ
Zip Code: 07202
Telephone: 908-820-9500
Fax Number: 908-820-9505
Email Address: Eport330@aol.com
Comment:

Construction & Marine Equipment Co., Inc. (CME) is a mid-sized business serving both the maritime and construction industries. Our facility is located at 330 South Front Street, Elizabeth, NJ on the Arthur Kill Waterway, just a few hundred feet north of the existing Goethals Bridge.

For the past 20 years this site has served as the company's office and operations yard. Originally CME was a monthly tenant on the premises, until the property was acquired by CME about three years ago.

Since CME purchased the land, a lot of time and money has gone into making aesthetic and vital alterations to the complex. Some of the new modifications include a new steel sheeting bulkhead, painting of various buildings and structures, general landscaping, and other necessary changes. All of this has been accomplished in good faith to please not only customers but also the local community.

Like many other businesses, CME's location is fundamental for our success. Due to the nature of CME's work, it is imperative that we are capable of shipping and receiving products by water, rail, and road. On a day to day basis CME utilizes all these modes of transportation.

Many of CME's representatives and employees, including myself, have attended all of the Goethals Bridge Environmental Impact Statement (GEIS) presentations and lectures. As a company we have been keeping close track of the future plans of the replacement bridge. We are extremely interested in the affects the new bridge may have on traffic flows in the Bayway, First Street, and South

Front Street corridors, any new bridge heights (for both road and rail trusses), foreseen construction delays and detours, and other major variations to the present layout.

Unlike the last Port Authority of New York/New Jersey (PA NY/NJ) sponsored project, the Arthur Kill Railroad Lift Bridge, any notable changes to the existing layout should be thoroughly studied and engineered. If major modifications are required, the proper mitigation resources should be applied to minimize impact.

The Goethals Bridge Replacement project should incorporate changes to the Bayway Avenue and First Street intersections to better accommodate truck traffic. Due to the large amount of trucks frequenting this area, the current intersections are totally inadequate and congested. Since these changes were caused by PA NY/NJ during the Arthur Kill Railroad Lift Bridge project, responsibility should be taken by them to rectify and redeem the area.

EM NO.10

The following DEIS comment was submitted to the Goethals Bridge Website:

---

Name: y fried
Organization: private
Title:
Street Address: box 180009
City: bklyn
State: ny
Zip Code: 11218
Telephone: (212) 714 - 7082
Fax Number:
Email Address: yfried@consultant.com
Comment:

1. Do you have figures on usage of the Goethals bridge by drivers bypassing Staten Island; i.e., travel between new jersey and points onwards from Staten Island (brooklyn, manhattan, long island, etc.)

Please present the figures broken down by passenger cars, trucks, other commercial (other) vehicles, other classes of vehicles, etc.

2. Do you have detailed figures from various counties in New Jersey to / from various counties in New York state? Please present the figures, also broken down by passenger cars, trucks, other comm (other?) vehicles, other classes of vehicles and broken down by counties.

EM NO.11

The following DEIS comment was submitted to the Goethals Bridge Website:

---

Name: Glenn Phillips
Organization: New York City Audubon
Title: Executive Director
Street Address: 71 W 23 St.
City: New York
State: NY
Zip Code: 10010
Telephone: 212-691-7483
Fax Number:
Email Address: gphillips@nycaudubon.org
Comment:
28 July 2009
Commander (dpb)
First Coast Guard District
Battery Building
One South Street
New York, NY 10004
Attn: Mr. G. Kassof
Fax: (212) 668-7967

Dear Commander:

Below are New York City Audubon's comments on Whereas New York City Audubon is committed to protecting birds and their habitats in all five boroughs of NYC; Whereas we have are on record in support of wetlands and have been active participants in such efforts as the Wetlands Transfer Task Force and An Islanded Nature; Whereas the suite of long-legged waterbirds, referred to as the 'harbor herons' are species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) in the region; and whereas NYC Audubon has a long-term commitment to protecting those birds: their nesting as well as their foraging habitat; New York City Audubon submits the following comments and requests regarding the draft EIS for the Goethals's Bridge Replacement Plan.

Habitat Concerns

The 5.5 acres of wetlands in the footprint of the replacement bridge will be impacting important habitat for Harbor Herons as well as other salt marsh avian species. In addition to the new bridge, there will be a permanent, paved road to replace the current dirt road beneath the bridge. To prohibit easy access to the bridge from the new road, a fence will be installed.

Supporting substrate material will need to be installed in the salt marsh to support a trestle. The parcel of land comprising the secondary area for the Goethals Bridge Replacement Plan will span Old Place Creek, a tidal wetland area important to and documented as Harbor Heron (herons, egrets, ibis, and cormorants) foraging grounds: part of the Harbor Herons complex. The secondary area parcel contains some of the last remaining patches of spartina in New York City. In 2002 this region underwent salt marsh restoration, mitigation for the oil spill of 1990, and is now in threat of being once again degraded. It is NYC Audubon's position that the salt marsh will once again be negatively impacted by fragmentation in the construction of a fence and by the disturbance to the salt marsh from installation and maintenance of that fence.

In addition, there are other committed development projects in that region that could impact habitat and wildlife: Verrazano Bridge rehabilitation project in NY, Missing Links Study in NJ, and the proposed development of the 675-acre GATX site, which is currently in the planning stage.

Avian Wildlife Concerns

Harbor heron species use the area for foraging; at least 54 other species of birds use that area for breeding. Some species, like the Savannah Sparrow, require a minimum area of unfragmented habitat in which to successfully breed. The Savannah Sparrow needs 1-2 acres. The habitat also provides foraging areas for Black Skimmers, a species of special concern in NY, and for Northern Harriers. The site provides potential habitat for Pied-billed Grebe nesting - a species that is limited by appropriate habitat, but has not been breeding in the Goethals's Bridge area since 1994.

Both the seaside and the Nelson's sharp-tailed sparrows, species of special concern and conservation concern in NY, have been documented breeding and foraging in Old Place Creek as well as in the primary bridge area within the last ten years. Sharp-tailed sparrows were seen during the 2002-2004 Breeding Bird Surveys. Salt marsh bird communities have been shown to respond to marsh isolation and human development, and landscape context mediates the influence of these parameters.

Fragmenting the landscape would accentuate negative impacts. Moreover, a suite of secretive marsh birds (Virginia Rail, Clapper Rail, Gallinules, Sora, Coots, and Moorhen) have been

observed/heard in both formal and informal surveys of the primary and secondary areas. Secretive marsh birds are notoriously difficult to survey, so their conservation status is not always known. However, these species respond well to restored marshland.

Construction Concerns:

Timing of construction and introduction of contaminants needs to be regulated. Building of the bridge and road will immediately impact birds during the breeding season: disturbing nesting habitat so birds will not build nests, fragmenting the landscape so that birds with minimum acreage requirements would not select those sites to breed, and causing disturbance to herons, egrets, and other birds foraging for food to raise their young. Heavy equipment used in construction may leak fuel and other contaminants into the marsh, resulting in the potential for bioaccumulation in prey and decreased productivity and nest success: issues that have threatened the Harbor Herons over the past 30 years.

If this project has been deemed essential to the region, and if the fence and road need to be constructed, then we find the standard 1:3 ratio as not acceptable for mitigation to this site based on the level of fragmentation, the repeated degradation of a previously restored mitigation site, and the value of the large, currently intact salt marsh habitat. Any mitigation must result in significant habitat protection/restoration on Staten Island.

To that end, we suggest substantial mitigation take place in the area of the GATX site.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this very important project for New York City.

Sincerely,

Glenn Phillips, Executive Director
New York City Audubon