FHWA-NJ<u>-EA-84-03</u> Federal Highway Administration Region 1 Fed. Proj. No. 1-F1-280-6 (58) 59

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> > 1984

COP 11 -

Route 280/21 Ramp City Of Newark, Essex Co., New Jersey

Environmental Assessment 97490 E62

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION AND NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Submitted Pursuant To. 42 U.S.C. 4332 (2)(c)

JUNE 1984



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974.90 E62 1984D COPY 2 ROUTE 280/21 RAMP

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New Jersey State Library Department of Education Trenton, New Jersey 08625



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

> REGION ONE 25 SCOTCH ROAD, 2ND FLOOR TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08628-2595

Proj.	Name I-2	280/21 Ramp	•		
Proi	location	Essex county			
Proj.	Number_	1-280/21		-	
		I-FI-280-6(56)59	-	,

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FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

Based on the Environmental Assessment for the subject project as reviewed and approved by the Federal Highway Administration on Nov. 13, 1984 , and on the New Jersey Department of Transportation's letter of Sep. 14, 1984 , discussing both public and agencies' comments, it is concluded that this project will not have a significant impact on the quality of the human environment.

Lloyd D. pacobs Staff Specialist for the Environment TO:HEV-NJ

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Federal Project No. | 2800658

FHWA-NJ-EA Federal Highway Administration Region 1

Route I-280/21 Ramp City of Newark Essex County, New Jersey

Environmental Assessment

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION AND NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

For N.J. Department of Transportation

6 - 4 - 84

The following persons may be contacted for additional information concerning this document:

N.J. Department of Transportation Mr. Andras Fekete, Chief Bureau of Environmental Analysis 1035 Parkway Avenue Trenton, New Jersey 08625 (609) 292-6543 Federal Highway Administration Mr. Lloyd Jacobs Staff Environmental Specialist 25 Scotch Road Trenton, New Jersey 08628 (609) 989-2169

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I. INTRODUCTION

This Environmental Assessment (EA) has been prepared by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the N.J. Department of Transportation (NJDOT) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) as implemented by the Council of Environmental Quality Regulations, 40 CFR 1500, and FHWA Procedures, 23 CFR 771. This EA presents and updates the results of the Newark Access Feasibility Study as they refer to the proposed I-280/Route 21 Ramp in the City of Newark in Essex County, New Jersey. The primary purpose of this EA is to evaluate and identify any social, economic or environmental impacts associated with the proposed roadway improvement and any alternatives considered.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION

The proposed action consists of the construction of a new exit ramp from eastbound I-280 to Route 21 (McCarter Highway). This intersection is located in the northeast section of the City of Newark, Essex County, New Jersey. See Figure 1.

The proposed ramp from I-280 originates west of University Avenue behind the Erie Lackawanna Railroad Station. The ramp lies eastly from this point spliting off of I-280 on structure and continuing on structure across University Avenue and Eroad Street. After crossing Broad Street the ramp continues on fill ultimately merging with the existing I-280 westbound exit ramp to Route 21. From this point forward the existing exit ramp will be widened to accommodate the additional traffic movement. See Figures 2 and 3 for details of the existing road system and the proposed exit ramp. The proposed ramp will be approximately 1100 feet in length. The cost of this project is estimated at \$4.3 million.







III. HISTORY AND NEED

This project has been advanced as a result of the findings of the Newark Highway Access Feasibility Study (on file with NJDOT), which investigated alternatives for improving highway access into the City of A number of studies had been undertaken previously to improve Newark. access into the City. However, these studies had focused on providing freeway facilities in the Irvine Turner Boulevard/Hillside Avenue Corridor and/or the Route 21 Corridor. Because of the impacts on existing residences and businesses resulting from the construction of either facility, representatives of the City requested that a study be performed to investigate the overall highway network and develop systemwide improvements rather than concentrate on an individual corridor. This approach would provide alternatives to the freeway concepts. The city could then develop and evaluate an integrated transportation system to provide optimum service to the City and assist in revitalization efforts.

In response to the City's request, the NJDOT, in conjunction with the FHWA, initiated the Newark Highway Access Feasibility Study. With cooperation of the City of Newark this study developed and evaluated short and long range alternative highway improvements within the primary access corridors to the City; I-280, Route 21, Irvine Turner Boulevard/ Hillside Avenue and the I-280 Downtown Connector. Each alternative was evaluated individually, and in conjunction with alternatives in other corridors, to determine the overall improvements and associated impacts necessary to service the projected travel demand.

The project was divided into three phases. The first and second, completed in March 1979, analyzed the existing highway network and

recommended short-term, quickly implementable solutions to the City's current traffic and safety problems. The third phase included the development of long range transportation improvements based upon projected development. The I-280/Route 21 Ramp and other interim improvements along these roadways were recommended at the completion of the second phase of work. One of these other interim improvements is the I-78/Irvine Turner Boulevard, the subject of another EA now being processed concurrently.

The City of Newark is centrally located among several transportation facilities, as shown on the Regional Location Map (Figure 1). With Newark Airport, Port Newark, and rail service located within the City boundaries, and major highways on all sides, it would appear that Newark would be very attractive to industry and business because of its access to this transportation network. However, this is not the case.

The major highways which surround the city also serve to isolate Construction of I-78 and I-280 has it from the surrounding region. provided the means of transporting people and goods around the city, rather than into it. While certain connections between these roadways and the City do exist, they are inadequate and do not directly serve the major employment centers. According to the Technical Support Document for the I-78 EIS through the Watchung Reservation (Volume II, 1978), the following comments were recorded concerning Industrial Impacts Analysis. Economic and development officials and businessmen from Newark specifically pointed out that poor access to the surrounding regional highway network, and inadequate internal circulation are the major reasons for industry and business to leave the City. These problems have caused commerce to relocate from the City of Newark to areas remote from both markets and raw materials, thus further isolating the depressed urban area.

One critical area investigated in the study was the access between I-280 and the Newark Central Business District (CBD) and industrial areas along Route 21. Currently the only exit is located in the westbound direction of I-280. Traffic on eastbound I-280 trying to reach the above areas must use either the First or High Street exit ramps and then use the local street system or take the Harrison exit and return to Route 21 by crossing over the Passaic River on Bridge Street. Truck traffic is limited to the Harrison exit because trucks are prohibited from the First and High Street ramps. Interstate 280 west of Sixth Street is a ten-lane freeway. At Sixth Street it divides to form two freeways; one, a four-lane freeway which continues as the mainline of I-280 across the Stickle Bridge into Harrison. The remaining section, a six-lane freeway, currently deadends at First Street. The original alignment was to continue between Orange Street and Sussex Avenue and split to become the Route 75 Freeway to I-78 and the I-280 Connector to Raymond Boulevard. With the deletion of both of these proposed roadways from the State Highway Master Plan, a temporary exit for eastbound traffic at First Street along an existing service road was constructed. A second eastbound exit ramp was recently constructed to allow vehicles to exit from I-280 to High Street.

Traffic exiting I-280 at either First Street or High Street does not have an efficient route to reach the downtown area. Traffic using these exits are causing capacity problems along the entire length of First and High Streets south of I-280. Contributing to these conditions are the substantial traffic volumes that use these streets and the high volume east-west arterials including Orange Street, Central Avenue and Market Street which results in intersection congestion. See Figure 2. These interesections now operate near capacity and experience high yearly rates

of accidents. As volumes increase in the future these problems will likely worsen. Further, complications arise because of the location of a high school on First Street south of the exit ramp, and a nearby elementary school. The First Street intersections with the exit ramp and Sussex Avenue are school crosswalk locations. Because of the high volumes, school children experience great difficulties in crossing these intersections.

The proposed ramp from I-280 to Route 21 will alleviate the problems of congestion in the residential areas between I-280 and Route 21. However, unless several interim improvements are implemented along Route 21 the new ramp will simply shift the congestion.

Route 21 is the only major road which provides access into Newark from the north. North of the city, Route 21 is a six-lane limited access freeway. In the city, Route 21 becomes a four-lane at-grade arterial roadway with numerous at-grade intersections and traffic signals. Aside from carrying the highest traffic volume of any arterial street in the city, Route 21 is the only through truck route within the study area and eastern Newark. The intersections of Route 21 and Bridge Street and Raymond Boulevard currently operate at capacity during peak hours. Travel demands will cause the volumes to further increase on Route 21 adding to the present congestion.

A number of interim improvements are being advanced to improve traffic operations and safety along Route 21. These projects are mainly minor in nature and have been classified as categorical exclusion. See Table 1 for a description of these improvements, their effects, and status. If these improvements are not implemented, the benefits which could be expected from the proposed ramp would be minimal.

TABLE 1

THE ROUTE 21 CORRIDOR INTERIM IMPROVEMENTS

Project Section and Description	Effects	Status
Route 21 Section 2E		
Resurfacing from River Street to Route 1 & 9.	Improve Traffic Flow and safety	Currently Being Implemented
Route 21 Section 2F		
An additional reversible lane from Raymond Boule- vard to Clay Street.	Increases roadway capacity by providing three through lanes for major flow and two through lanes for minor flow during peak hours. No displacements required.	Currently Under Design
	Does not increase capacity enough to provide for future travel demands. Traffic lanes must narrow from 12 feet to 11 feet under the Erie Lacka- wanna Railroad Bridge.	
Remove unwarranted signals at Rector Street, Fulton Street, and Lombardy Place.	Improves traffic flow. Eliminates unnecessary stops.	Currently Under Design
Post new "No Stopping or Standing" signs along McCarter Highway.	Avoids traffic congestion and conflicts due to non-moving vehicles.	Currently Under Design
Improve Route 21 inter- sections at Clay Street, Lombardy Place, and Bridge Street.	Improves traffic flow. Increases capacity of inter- sections. Minimizes conflicts with through traffic.	Currently Under Design
Mark left turn lanes at Raymond Boulevard for left turns only.	Improves traffic flow and safety while eliminating confusion.	Currently Under Design

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TABLE 1 (Continued)

THE ROUTE 21 CORRIDOR INTERIM IMPROVEMENTS

Project Section and Description

Effects

Status

Route 21 Section 2G

Implement modernization program to provide inter-connected system of traffic signals.

Widen entrance and exits to Route 21 Viaduct.

Prohibit left turns during 4-6 PM at Route 21 intersections with 3rd Avenue, Gouverneur and Clark Streets.

Establish truck routes.

Improves peak hour speeds and overall capacity of corridor, thus, reducing congestion. Does not increase capacity sufficiently. Route 21 will continue to operate at low level of service.

Improves traffic flow into and out of the City.

Eliminates delays and improves outbound flow during evening rush hours.

Eliminates trucks from using residential streets. Forces trucks to use only major arteries and intersections designed for truck traffic. Limits number of areas where trucks can turn. Increases truck traffic on major arterials.

Increases volume of trucks turning at key intersections.

Currently Being Implemented

Currently Under Design ...

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Currently Under Design

Being Evaluated By Newark City Engineer

IV. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The proposed project has been derived from the Newark Highway Access Feasibility Study. The I-280/21 Ramp was recommended as a short term project at the completion of the Phase Two studies. The described alternative was the only Build Alternative evaluated at this location.

As a result of this study, other projects are also being advanced to improve internal circulation and access to the City. These projects include a reversible lane on Route 21, various interim improvements to Route 21 (see Table I), improvements to the existing First Street ramps and new entrance and exit ramps from I-78 to West Peddie Street.

The No-Build Alternative was also evaluated. This alternative involves no new ramp from I-280 to Route 21. The selection of this alternative will not meet the transportation objectives discussed under Project Need. Under this alternative existing traffic congestion would worsen and potentially hazardous conditions involving pedestrian/vehicular traffic conflicts could result.

V. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A. Transportation

The proposed ramp will be built on structure over University Avenue and Broad Street and will continue on fill east of this point to its terminus with Route 21. Therefore, construction of the ramp will not interfere with either pedestrian or vehicular access to the Erie Lackawanna Railroad Station. Additionally this project will not have any significant adverse impact on the local, regional or mass transportation network. The proposed ramp will attract few new trips. Instead, trips will be diverted from the First Street, High Street and Harrison exits and the local street system to the new exit for direct access to the commercial and industrial areas along Route 21.

The Tri-State Regional Planning Organization (now the Northeast New Jersey Metropolitan Planning Organization) developed the traffic forecasts for the proposed ramp and local road network. These forecasts indicated that in 1985 the proposed exit ramp would have an average daily traffic (ADT) volume of 4000 vehicles. Tri-State's traffic assignments indicated that approximately 2100 vehicles ADT would be diverted from the First and High Street exits to the proposed ramp. The remaining 1900 ADT would be diverted from the Harrison exit.

The projected traffic volume for the proposed ramp indicates a high demand for direct access from eastbound I-280 to Route 21. Several interim improvements are being advanced for implementation along Route 21 to improve capacity for the projected traffic demand. These improvements and their potential impacts are described in Table I. Removal of traffic from the local road system, by providing direct access to Route 21, will alleviate traffic impacts on many residential areas.

B. Socioeconomic Impacts

The proposed ramp will not adversly impact the social character of the project area. The construction of the ramp will not result in relocations or disturbances to families, community facilities, or service organizations. The new ramp will not divide or create a barrier between established neighborhoods as it borders existing I-280 and the Erie Lackawanna Railroad and it will have a positive impact on pedestrian traffic. The project will not impact the Erie Lackawanna Railroad Station.

The immediate benefits of the proposed ramp will be realized in the mixed residential/commercial area in the southwest quadrant of the intersection of I-280 and Route 21. See Figure 2 for residential areas. The land use on Route 21 is largely commercial and industrial as this is the center of the Newark Central Business District. A large percentage of the traffic entering or exiting I-280 in Newark has its origin or desitnation along Route 21 in the central business district. Currently traffic seeking the Newark CBD along Route 21 from eastbound I-280 must use the First or High Street ramps and the residential street system to reach their destination. This routing carries traffic through a predominately residential area. Pedestrian safety levels, particularly for children and the elderly, becomes difficult to maintain as traffic volumes continue to grow. The proposed ramp will alleviate this problem by routing much of the traffic to and from I-280 directly to or off Route 21. This route will largely reduce traffic use of the residential streets, thereby greatly improving pedestrian safety.

No significant adverse impacts are anticipated on the economy of the project area as a result of the proposed ramp. The right-of-way (ROW) study for this project, dated April 13, 1982 indicates that the City of

Newark will not experience a loss of housing, tax revenue, nor business. This project will require no relocations. Minor ROW acquisitions will be required along the railroad ROW and a 10' x 200' strip of ROW from the Lincoln Motel parking lot. No parking will be lost from the lot, as the spaces can be shifted away from the proposed ramp by 10 feet. Positive economic impacts to the city may result due to improved access to Newark's Industrial Corridor.

A benefit/cost comparison, was calculated for the proposed construction of the I-280/21 ramp. This comparison is based on formulas found in the "1977 AASHTO Manual on User Benefit Analysis of Highway and Transit Improvements". The benefits of the project were based on savings from travel time reduction and savings from reduced stops for Build versus No-Build conditions of traffic and congestion. This comparison resulted in an overall savings of \$1.1 million in 1985 as a result of the construction of the proposed ramp from I-280 to Route 21, provided that the proposed improvements to the Route 21 corridor are also made.

C. Noise Impacts

The location of the proposed ramp is characterized as a non-noise sensitive commercial strip. The ramp will be located between I-280 on the north, Erie Lackawanna Railroad on the south, Route 21 on the east and University and Broad Streets on the west. See Figure 2. The land use consists of an access road to a railroad maintenance building and a parking lot. The future land use is expected to remain the same.

No traffic noise impacts are anticipated as a result of this project. There is one noise sensitive receptor (The Lincoln Motel) located in the southeast quadrant of the intersection of the Erie Lackawanna Railroad line and Broad Street. The Lincoln Motel, which is air

conditioned, lies in close proximity to existing high noise level generators (the Erie Lackawanna Railroad, I-280, and Route 21). Existing L_{eq} noise levels in this area are in the mid-70 to mid-80 dE range. Route 21, I-280, and in particular the Erie Lackawanna Railroad are the dominate noise generators. Noise levels from the proposed ramp will be masked by these existing noise sources. The addition of the proposed ramp will not change exterior or interior noise levels at the motel. Since the motel is air conditioned, and there will be no change in noise levels as a result of this project, additional noise abatement measures were not evaluated. No other noise sensitive receptors are located in the project limits.

Short-term construction noise will be alleviated by the standard construction noise mitigation measures. They are:

- 1. All construction equipment powered by an internal combustion engine shall be equipped with a properly maintained muffler.
- 2. Air compressors shall meet current EPA noise emission exhaust standards.
- 3. Air powered equipment shall be fitted with pneumatic exhaust silencers.
- 4. Stationary equipment powered by an internal combustion engine shall not be operated within 150 feet of noise sensitive sites without portable noise barriers placed between the equipment and the noise sensitive sites. Noise sensitive sites shall ininclude residential buildings, motels, hotels, schools, churches, hospitals, nursing homes, libraries and public recreation areas. Portable noise barriers shall be constructed of plywood or tongue and groove boards with a noise absorbant treatment on the interior surface (facing the equipment) as shown on the plans.
- 5. Powered construction equipment shall not be operated before 8 a.m. or after 8 p.m. within 150 feet of a noise sensitive site.
- D. Air Quality

As described in previous sections, construction of the ramp will allow a more direct access to the Newark CBD and will remove traffic from

circuitous routings near residential areas on High and First Streets thereby improving air quality in those areas.

An air quality study using the FHWA and EPA certified CALINE 3 model and MOBILE 2 emission factors was completed for this project. The Carbon Monoxide (CO) receptor point was located at the southwest corner of Route 21 and I-280. See Figure 3 for the location of the receptor point. Listed below are the results of this study. This analysis has shown that the construction of the proposed ramp will not cause any violation of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The new ramp will cause a slight increase in the carbon monoxide (CO) levels in the vicinity of the new ramp, but will still be below the NAAQS.

Carbon Monoxide Concentrations (PPM) at Project Receptor Point

				1985		
N.A.A.Q.S.		No-B	No-Build		Build	
1 hr.	8 hr.	1 hr.	8 hr.	<u>l hr.</u>	<u>8 hr.</u>	
35	9	16.3	7.9	17.2	8.2	

This project is in an air quality non-attainment area which has transportation control measures in the State Implementation Plan (SIP) which was approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on April 15, 1981. The FHWA has determined that both the transportation plan and the transportation improvement program conform to the SIP. The FHWA has determined that this project is included in the transportation improvement program for the Northeast New Jersey Transportation Coordinating Committee. Therefore, pursuant to 23 CFR 770, this project conforms to the SIP.

E. Cultural Resources

No impacts to cultural resources will result due to the construction of this project.

An architectural and historical resource inventory was conducted for the Newark Highway Access Feasibility Study. The report dated May, 1979 found no significant historic or archaeological resources in the project area.

F. Ecology

1. Soils, Geology, Groundwater & Hazardous Wastes

This project is located within an urbanized area where the original soil structure has been extensively altered and paved. With the exception of the vegetated side slopes of the existing ramps the area is mostly impervious to water infiltration. Because of this situation the project will have no significant impact on soils, geology, or groundwater.

There are no known hazardous waste sites in the area, and the project is not located within a sole source aquifer.

2. Surface Water & Aquatic Ecology

There are no water bodies located in the project area. Storm water runoff will be discharged into the existing storm sewer system, and no significant impacts to surface water or aquatic ecology will result.

3. Vegetation & Wildlife

The project area is totally urbanized. Vegetation is limited to the exposed side slopes. Wildlife consists of city dwelling species, such as starlings, pigeons, cats and rats. The project will not cause any significant impact to the vegetation or wildlife of the area.

4. Floodplains & Wetlands

Since floodplains and wetlands do not exist within the project area no impacts to these resources will occur.

5. Aesthetic Impacts

The existing visual character of the area is a typical urban environment. The addition of a partial ramp onto the existing ramp system will not significantly alter the visual character of the area.

VI. PROJECT COORDINATION & COMMENTS

On August 9, 1982, a Notice of Planned Action for the I-280/ Route 21 exit ramp project was sent to various Federal, State and local organizations. This notice described the proposed action and requested comments from interested agencies. The Notice of Planned Action, list of agencies receiving this notice and all comments received are included. Most responding agencies had no comments on the proposed action, while others expressed their support for the project.

Public hearings were held for the Newark Feasibility Study/ Interim Improvements in April, 1979 to solicit comments from interested citizens living in the vicinity of the project area. No objections to the proposed project were raised at these hearings, and most comments expressed positive support.

Also included is a letter from the Mayor of Newark dated December 6, 1982, giving the City's official support for the project.

NOTICE OF PLANNED ACTION DISTRIBUTION LIST

A. AGENCIES REQUIRING COORDINATION

State and Federal Agencies

Director, Office of Environmental Project Review US Department of the Interior Room 5311 - Interior Building Washington, DC 20240

Chief, Environmental Impacts Branch US Environmental Protection Agency Region II 26 Federal Plaza, Room 400 New York, NY 10278

Federal Soil Conservation Service US Department of Agriculture PO Box 219 1370 Hamilton Street Somerset, NJ 08873

US Department of Housing & Urban Development Gateway Building No. 1 Raymond Plaza Newark, NJ

ATTENTION: Environmental Clearance Officer

Mr. R. A. Ginman State Review Coordinator Division of State & Regional Planning NJ Department of Community Affairs 329 West State Street Trenton, NJ 08625

Lawrence Schmidt, Chief Office of Cultural & Environmental Services Department of Environmental Protection Labor and Industry Building John Fitch Plaza Trenton, NJ 08625

Charles E. Cornell, Jr., Chief Office of Industrial Development Department of Labor and Industry John Fitch Plaza Trenton, NJ 08625 N.J. Department of Agriculture State Soil Conservation Committee P.O. Box 1888 Trenton, New Jersey 08625

ATTENTION: Samuel R. Race

Office of the Commissioner N.J. Department of Energy 101 Commerce Street Newark, New Jersey

Metropolitan Planning Organization

Tri-State Regional Planning (Tri-State) Coordinated through Division of Comprehensive Transportation Planning N.J. Department of Transportation

County and Municipal Officials and Local Organizations

:

Honorable Kenneth Å. Gibson Mayor, City of Newark 920 Broad Street Newark, N.J. 07102

John Christ Essex Co. Traffic Engineer Roads & Briges Department 900 Bloomfield Avenue Verona, N.J. 07044

Nicholas Koral Supervisor Principal Planner Essex Co. Planning Department 520 Belleville Avenue Belleville, N.J. 07109

Mr. Fernando Rubio Senior Transportation Planner Mayor's Policy & Development Office 2 Cedar Street Newark, New Jersey 07102

Alvin Zach Director of Engineering City of Newark 920 Broad Street Newark, NJ 07102

Committee for Better Transportation N.J. Task Force Box 139 Middlesex, NJ 08846 Newark Transportation Council Blair Olmstead, Chairman 786 Broad Street, Room 901 Newark, NJ 07102

Reita Greenstrone, Director Essex Co. Board of Chosen Freeholders Hall of Records 465 High Street Newark, NJ 07102

People United Against Commuting Hassles c/o Jesse Taub 10 Colonial Court Edison, NJ

Institute for Public Transportation 514 Madison Avenue Plainfield, NJ 07060

Joseph P. Capalbo Senate Transportation and Community Committee State House, Room 318 Trenton, NJ 08625

N.J. Citizens Highway Committee P.O. Box 98 Hopewell, NJ 08525

Residents for Community Action 201 Bloomfield Avenue Newark, NJ 07102



IN REPLY PLEASE REFER TO

Project No. I-280-6(58) Route I-280/Route 21 Ramp, Essex County

State of New Jersey DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

UIS J. GAMBACCINI MMISSIONER 1035 PARKWAY AVENUE P.O. BOX 101 TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08625

August 9, 1982

Dear Sirs:

The New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) have determined that environmental studies leading to an Environmental Assessment or Environmental Impact Statement are required for the referenced project.

In accordance with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), NJDOT hereby initiates an early coordination process to assist in the identification of reasonable alternatives and the evaluation of the social, economic, and environmental impacts of the proposed action and measures to mitigate adverse impacts which may result from this project.

You are requested to review this Notice of Planned Action and the attached information and address any questions or comments to the person named below within thirty days. Your response will help assure early and continuous consideration of your agency's concerns during the development of the environmental studies for this project.

You are invited to participate in this process to determine the scope and the significant issues to be analyzed in depth in the environmental studies. If sufficient interest is shown we will conduct a formal scoping meeting as defined by the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations issued on 11/29/78.

All responses or requests for further information may be directed to Mr. Ernest Hahn, Bureau of Environmental Analysis, Phone (609) 452-9525 Ext. 268.

Very truly yours,

F. Howard Zahn, Chief Bureau of Environmental Analysis

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Attachments

New Jersey Is An Equal Opportunity Employer



COUNTY OF ESSEX DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

DIVISION OF ENGINEERING 900 BLOOMFIELD AVENUE VERONA, NEW JERSEY 07044 201-226-8500 PETER SHAPIRO COUNTY EXECUTIVE

FRANK M. CUMMINS COUNTY ENGINEER

Re: Project No. I-280-6(58) Route I-280/Route 21 Ramp, Essex County

F. Howard Zahn, Chief Bureau of Environmental Analysis N.J.Department of Transportation 1035 Parkway Avenue P.O.Box 101 Trenton, New Jersey 08625

Dear Mr Zahn:

This office has reviewed the Notice of Planned Action for subject project. Our only comment is that this appears to be a highly desirable project and we do not foresee any significant impact. The reduced traffic volumes at the First Street Ramp are an important benefit.

Sincerely,

1. Cummun

FRANK M. CUMMINS, P.E. COUNTY ENGINEER

FMC:jc



ESSEX COUNTY IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER



HUDSON-ESSEX-PASSAIC SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

201 BLOOMFIELD AVE. VERONA, N.J. 07044 Telephone: (201) 239-1886

August 25, 1982

F. Howard Zahn, Chief Bureau of Environmental Analysis State of New Jersey Department of Transportation 1035 Parkway Avenue P.O. Box 101 Trenton, New Jersey 08625

Re: Project No. I-280-6(58) Route I-280/Route 21 Ramp, Essex County

Dear Mr. Zahn:

In compliance with Chapter 251, P.L. 1975, amended and as per agreement with Mr. Sam Race, NJDA, and the New Jersey Department of Transportation, the Hudson-Essex-Passaic Soil Conservation District has reviewed for comment the above mentioned project.

It would appear that the project should not cause any significant soil erosion and sediment control problems.

These comments should suffice pending development of final procedures and agreement between the State Soil Conservation Committee and Department of Transportation relative to Chapter 459.

Very truly yours,

KurmanDen

. Raymond Dean District Manager

RD:hb

cc: Sam Race

PETLANGO

AUG 2 6 1982



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS DIVISION OF PLANNING

240 AFST STATE STREET (A EOG FRENDEN NYM BERSEE 086-25

August 26, 1982

Mr. F. Howard Zahn, Chief Bureau of Environmental Analysis Department of Transportation 1035 Parkway Avenue P.O. Box 101 Trenton, NJ 08625

: ::<u>:</u>:...

RE: State Application Identifier Number NJ8208230630 - Environmental Studies Project No. I-280-6(58) Route I-280/Route 21 Ramp Dear Mr. Zahn:

The New Jersey State Clearinghouse has received and is processing your Project Notification as required by the provisions of Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs" and Chapter 85, New Jersey Laws of 1944. This project has been assigned the State Application Identifier Number NJ8208230630.

Effective with the date of this letter, the Clearinghouse has assigned a 30 day review period, which is consistent with our internal procedures and Federal regulations relevant to your program. The appropriate review agencies have been requested to comment directly to you and the Federal funding agency on your application. If conflicts or issues arise, the review agency will notify you directly. You are free at the end of the review period to forward your final application to the Federal funding agency, accompanied by a copy of this letter. As an applicant, it is your responsibility to include any comments with your final application submission to the Federal agency. Please note that due to budgetary and staffing constraints the Clearinghouse cannot be responsible for extensions of the stated 30 day review period. Any extensions must be arranged among the applicant, the reviewer and the Federal funding agency.

If you encounter any problems or have any questions, at any time during the review process, feel free to contact Mr. Vincent Amico at (609) 292-2963 for general information or Mrs. Arlene Danka at (609) 292-2869 for processing information.

Very truly yours,

Kenneth J. Butko State Review Coordinator



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KJB:mam

It is extremely important that you put your State Application Identifier Number on all forms and correspondence (especially SUMMARY FORM 424), prior to final submission to the Federal funding agency.

OMMITTEE FOR BETTER TRANSIT, INC.

NEW JERSEY TASK FORCE BOX 139 - MIDDLESEX, N. J: 08846

September 8, 19^{82}

Re: Project No. I-280-6(58) Route I-280/Route 21 Ramp, Essex County

Mr. F. Howard Zahn Chief Bureau of Environmental Analysis Department of Transportation 1035 Parkway Avenue Trenton, New Jersey 08625

Dear Mr. Zahn:

We have reviewed the proposal for the ramp between I-280 and NJ 21 (Project No. I-280-6(58)) and have the following comments:

1. During construction this project should not in any way interfere with easy pedestrian, bus, or taxi access to the Broad Street railroad station. Also, the flow of traffic, including the heavy bus traffic, along Broad Street and University Avenue should not be impeded.

SEP 15 198

2. Models should be able to support a position that there would be no diversion of traffic to automobiles from public transit, especially the parallel rail line, if this ramp is constructed.

Our concerns here are that the massive investment being made to upgrade the Morris and Essex Division rail line could make that service so attractive as to encourage people to use the train instead of driving. The environmental benefits, as well as reduced wear and congestion on I-280 should that occur, are obvious. On the other hand, if this ramp construction makes use of I-280 in the AM peak period easier or if the construction makes access to the railroad station difficult, more people may abandon the train and drive instead. Not only would this have a negative environmental impact, it would also negate part of the value of the investment in the railroad upgrading made by the state and federal governments.

Sincerely,

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Stephen R. Lax





STEPHEN B. DOBROW, Ph.D. PRESIDENT

STEPHEN R. LAX · NEW JERSEY COORDINATOR



COUNTY OF ESSEX DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT **PETER SHAPIRO** COUNTY EXECUTIVE

LUNA I. MISHOE, II, P.P. PLANNING DIRECTOR

September 16, 1982

NUISION OF PLANNING 35 FRANKLIN AVENUE ELLEVILLE, N.J. 07109 61-8238 / 751-7300

> Mr. Ernest Hahn State of N.J. Department of Transportation 1035 Parkway Avenue P.O. Box 101 Trenton, New Jersey 08625

Dear Mr. Hahn:

Please be advised that the Division of Planning is in receipt of your requests dated August 9, and 11, 1982, to review the Environmental Assessment, Notice of Planned Action Reports for two projects, Route I-78/West Peddie Street, Ramps No. M-7640 (100) and Route I-280/Route 21, Ramp No. I-280-6(58), which are located in the City of Newark, Essex County, New Jersey.

Upon review of the above, we find no adverse problems with these projects, and would like to see the construction completed so as to tie in a complete Highway Access Network.

office.

If you have any questions, please contact this

Sincerely,

LUNA I. MISHOE, II, P.P. PLANNING DIRECTOR

Charles and NICHOLAS T. KOVAL SUPV. PRIN. PLANNING AIDE

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KENNETH A. GIBSON MAYOR NEWARK, NEW JERSEY 07102

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December 6, 1982

Honorable John P. Sheridan, Jr. Commissioner State of New Jersey Department of Transportation 1035 Parkway Avenue CN 600 Trenton, New Jersey 08625

71707

RE: Newark Highway Access Feasibility Study Interim Improvements

Dear Sir:

In response to the request of Russell S. Stephenson, Chief, Bureau of Project Location of your Department, November 12, 1982, please be advised that our Administration fully supports the implementation of the two projects recommended in the recently completed "Newark Highway Access Feasibility Study" which are described as follows:

- 1. Additional entrance and exit ramps to Route I-78 at Irving Turner Boulevard and West Peddie Street.
- Exit ramp from Route I-280 eastbound to Route 21 southbound.

Notwithstanding, I hereby reiterate that the latter project shall be preceded by the implementation of a complimentary project increasing the traffic capacity on the McCarter Highway corridor. Additionally, I would appreciate having our Department of Engineering directly involved in the review of each phase of the development of said projects before the final approval of the corresponding plans, specifications and estimates. Honorable John P. Sheridan, Jr. December 6, 1982 Page 2

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Ċ. Very traly yours, Kenneth A. Gibson

KAG:lc

VII. LIST OF PREPARERS

Federal Highway Administration

Lloyd J. Jacobs: Staff Specialist for Environment, New Jersey Division, FHWA. Bachelor Degree in Civil Engineering, Syracuse University, 1964; Masters Degree in Transportation Engineering, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, 1971. Registered Professional Engineer, New Jersey. Registered Professional Planner, New Jersey. Graduate Study in Urban Planning, Environmental and Social Impacts. Other courses in ecology, air quality, noise quality, water quality, community involvement, archaeology, historic and cultural resource preservation, and land use law/zoning administration. Has authored articles in several national publications in the environmental field.

N.J. Department of Transportation

<u>Mr. Ken Hart:</u> Principal Environmental Specialist, Bureau of Environmental Analysis, NJDOT; M.A. Degree in Administration; Rider College, 1983; B.S. Degree in Environmental Science, Davis and Elkins College, 1977; Work Experience: Bureau of Environmental Analysis, 6 years. Provided direction to Mr. Hahn in preparation & review of EA.

Mr. Ernest P. Hahn: Senior Environmental Specialist, Bureau of Environmental Analysis, NJDOT; Bachelor of Science Degree in Wildlife Biology; College of Agriculture and Environmental Science, Rutgers University, 1976; Work Experience: Bureau of Environmental Analysis, NJDOT, 3 years; Bureau of Wildlife Management, NJDEP, 4 years. Project Manager and Reviewer of I-280/21 Ramp EA.

