

974.90
R628
1967M

FACTS ABOUT ROUTE I-95

Route I-95 is a major component of the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways, as established by the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956. Route I-95 will extend from Maine to Florida.

The presently approved corridor for this portion of Route I-95 extends from Scotch Road in the Township of Hopewell, County of Mercer, to Route I-287, in South Plainfield, County of Middlesex.

This interstate route will provide adequate highway capacity and service to the public, to industries, and to the highway user.

This route will enable the Counties of Mercer, Somerset and Middlesex and their municipalities to plan and accomodate population and industrial growth in an orderly manner, beneficial to the people and their environment.

Status:

1. The corridor public hearing for Route I-95 from Scotch Road to Route I-287 was held on May 18, 1966.
2. The portion of the route from Scotch Road to the Route I-295 interchange in the County of Mercer is presently under design.
3. An additional connection from Route I-95, at a point east of the Millstone River to Route I-287 in the vicinity of South Bound Brook, has been approved by the Federal Highway Administration. This proposed connection is to be known as Route I-695.

The subject of today's design public hearing is the 8.6 mile portion of Route I-95 from County Road 518, in the Township of Montgomery, to County Road 514 (Ammwell Road) in the Township of Hillsborough, County of Somerset. The estimated cost for this portion of the project is \$30.7 million.

Interchanges will be constructed at Route 206 and County Road 514 (Ammwell Road).

ROUTE I-95

County Route 518 to County Route 514

SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

The design process for Route I-95 involves social, economic and environmental considerations. These considerations include the following:

Fast, Safe and Efficient Transportation -- Measurable benefits to users of the interstate highway system occur in the form of time savings, reduced operating costs, and fewer accidents. To achieve maximum benefits, it is necessary to design a facility that will provide the proper level of service for potential users. This proposed facility will provide this service by constructing three lanes in each direction with a 60 foot median. The proposed project will be safe by accepted engineering standards, and will be capable of carrying the expected traffic volumes. It will also provide a direct and scenic route for the motorist.

The controlled access provided on the interstate system has been shown to reduce accident rates in the corridors where interstate highways have been built. These reductions reflect the main design characteristics for increased safety built into interstate highways and, therefore, into this project.

National Defense -- Route I-95 is an important link in the national system of interstate and defense highways. The 42,500 mile network of interstate routes is selected to serve strategic areas and objectives. Convenient, safe and speedy access by the interstate system is vital to the country. This project will conform to the latest design criteria for such highways as established by the American Association of State Highway Officials.

Employment and Economic Activity -- Route I-95 will increase the accessibility of this area and, therefore, may have a beneficial affect on the economy of the area. Easy access to employment and retail centers contributes positively to economic stability.

Parks, Recreational Opportunities and Natural and Historic Landmarks -- This project does not infringe on any recreational or park land. It also will not affect any natural or historical landmarks.

Aesthetics -- This design will provide an aesthetically pleasing roadway. The 60 foot median and roadside areas will be landscaped, thus providing a pleasing effect. In addition, every effort has been made to blend the proposed alignment both vertically and horizontally with the surrounding topography.

Fire Protection -- Fire protection in the vicinity of this project is provided by both the Montgomery and Hillsborough Township Volunteer Fire Companies. No fire department facilities or areas served by them will be affected by construction of this project.

Public Utilities -- Construction of a major highway facility usually requires the relocation of some existing utilities. Plans for the relocation of utilities affected by construction of Route I-95 will be coordinated with the utility companies to insure that essential services to the public will be maintained at all times. The tracks of the Reading Railroad will require temporary relocation in one area, but service on this railroad will be maintained at all times.

Public Health and Safety -- The proposed project will incorporate many features to provide greater safety for the motoring public. Among these are full shoulders, three 12 foot traffic lanes, a 60 foot median, breakaway signs constructed so that damage to a vehicle striking any sign is reduced to a minimum; offset or protected bridge abutments, horizontal and vertical alignment adequate for the proposed design speeds, and full control of access to prevent unauthorized and dangerous encroachment on the facility by vehicles, animals or pedestrians. In addition, two railroad grade crossings will be eliminated by this project and the project will provide fencing where required for the safety of the residents in the area. The over or underpasses proposed for the local road network will prevent interference between interstate and local traffic.

Residential and Neighborhood Character and Location -- The existing character of the neighborhood will not be disrupted by this project. This project is contiguous with the Reading Railroad through a large portion of Montgomery Township and will, therefore, have little affect on the character of the area. In Hillsborough Township, the project will parallel the railroad approximately 1200 feet away and will provide for the development of an industrial area between the railroad and the facility.

The existing street pattern in the vicinity of the project will not be altered. All existing roads and streets in the area are carried across the facility with the exception of Line Road. A connection for Line Road to Griggstown Road, by means of a proposed access road, will be provided so that the integrity of the existing street network can be preserved.

Religious Institutions and Practices -- None of the religious institutions in the area will be affected by this project. Access to these religious institutions from the local road network will be maintained during and after construction since the local road network will be preserved by the project.

Education -- None of the schools in the vicinity of this project will be affected physically or functionally by the proposed project. A minor adjustment in the school bus transportation routes may be required in the vicinity of Line Road

Conducting and Financing of Government -- The conduct of local government in the area will not be directly affected by this project. The project will have little direct impact on the cost and financing of government in either Montgomery and Hillsborough Townships or Somerset County. The project will remove 228 acres from the tax roles in Montgomery Township and 103 acres from the tax roles in Hillsborough Township. The acreage required is presently farm land and will, therefore, not have an appreciable effect on the existing tax rate.

These tax revenue losses, however, are far outweighed by the increase in tax revenues that can be expected by virtue of the project's impact on the economy of the region.

Conservation -- The effect of the project on the natural environment will be minimized and construction operations and the movement of equipment will be controlled to preserve the existing vegetation and to avoid erosion which might result in deposits of sediment in the local streams. Provisions will be made in the construction specifications for the project to avoid any such problems. No unique or significant biological communities are present in the project area. Most of the indigenous wildlife will relocate to adjacent natural areas and no danger to any species is expected.

Noise, Air and Water Pollution -- The consideration of highway noise is one of the factors that was considered in the design of this project. The most effective design to reduce highway noise is a depressed highway. The design of this project provides for a depressed section wherever possible. The profile had to be adjusted in order to provide a compromise between the economics involved in the cost of rock excavation and the design of a depressed facility. The grades on this project were kept to the minimum in order to further reduce the noise that will emanate from the vehicles utilizing the facility.

The combustion products emitted by the internal combustion engine, hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide oxides of nitrogen, etc., are the most significant contributors to air pollution. Concentrations of these pollutants are determined by traffic volumes, traffic speeds, age and condition of the engines, and the number and kind of pollution control devices installed. Because of the Air Quality Act of 1967, automobile manufacturers are required to equip all automobiles with pollution control devices. As more stringent pollution abatement standards are required, less pollution should result from motor vehicle operations during the life span of this project.

The discharge of roadway drainage from the proposed project does not threaten the streams in the area. Surface run-off from highway pavements contains trace amounts of oil and grease from vehicle engine drippings and residues of chemicals used to treat highway pavements. The run-off volumes expected from this project are small in comparison with the drainage area and will be diluted to the extent that no appreciable effect is foreseen.

Property Values -- The property values in the area should increase as a result of this project. Areas in the vicinity of completed interstate routes have appreciated in value mainly as a result of the improved access to the area. Property values in this area, therefore, should appreciate.

Displacement of Families and Businesses and Replacement Housing -- Three families will be displaced as a result of this project. No businesses will be affected. Adequate replacement housing for the three displaced families has been found to be available in the area.

Engineering, Right of Way and Construction Cost of the Project and Related Facilities -- The cost of this project is estimated to be as follows:

Engineering	\$ 854,000
Construction	28,700,000
Right of Way	<u>2,000,000</u>
TOTAL	\$31,554,000

Maintenance and Operating Cost of the Project and Related Facilities -- Costs expended for highways are of two types, first, the capital construction cost and the cost of property acquisition and, second, the annual recurring cost of operation and maintenance. Operation expenses include traffic services, such as lighting, traffic control devices, snow and ice control and highway patrol. Highway maintenance costs include those for roadway, roadside and structural upkeep. Maintenance costs on this project will be minimal and consist mainly of pavement maintenance. This facility will, of course, also require snow removal and roadside maintenance. The cost, however, to provide this service should be minimal for many years.

Operation and Use of Existing Facilities During Construction and After Completion -- All existing facilities in the area of this project will be maintained during construction, including the Reading Railroad. The only facilities that may be closed for minimum periods of time would be the local roads, where structures are required. These roads would only be closed if alternate means of access is available. After completion of the project, of course, all facilities will be unaffected since structures are provided in all cases excepting the Line Road location, where an access road is proposed to provide service.