

THE NASSAU HUB STUDY ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS/ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (AA/EIS)

**Technical Advisory Committee Meeting
June 2, 2011**

MEETING SUMMARY

I. Introduction

A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting was held Thursday, June 2, 2011, at the Nassau County Legislative Chamber, Mineola, NY. The purpose of the meeting was to provide a Study update to the TAC; review the results of the initial phase of the alternatives screening process and preliminary results of the second phase; obtain TAC comments and feedback; and provide an overview of the next steps of the screening process. The attached list provides the names and contact information of TAC members attending the meeting.

Prior to the formal portion of the meeting, TAC attendees were invited to view display boards with maps of alignment alternatives and the results of the first phase of the alternatives screening process, and discuss them with Study Team members. The meeting presentation commenced at 2:15 pm with Mr. Aryeh Lemberger of the Nassau County Planning Department welcoming the committee members and thanking them for their participation in the third TAC meeting. Mr. Lemberger reported that the Study Team has performed a great deal of work since the last TAC meeting and requested input and feedback from the committee on the information presented at this meeting, focused on the alternatives screening process. Input could be provided directly to Study Team representatives at the meeting, on comment cards available at the sign-in desk, through comment forms on the Study website (www.nassauhub.com) or by contacting the Study Team after the meeting. Mr. Lemberger then turned the meeting over to Mr. Jeffrey Stiles of Jacobs Civil Consultants, Inc., the AA/EIS consultant team's project manager.

II. Technical Presentation

Mr. Stiles began his presentation by clarifying that the Nassau Hub Study is distinct and separate from the ongoing Coliseum redevelopment efforts, although decisions regarding the Coliseum redevelopment will be factored into this study. Mr. Stiles stated that the Nassau Hub Study is examining opportunities for transit improvements to serve a range of locations within the core of Nassau County. The Study, which is following the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) AA process, has a planning horizon year of 2035. As with other planned land use or zoning changes in the Hub Study Area, a redevelopment plan for the Coliseum property, which



would clearly be a major attractor and trip generator, will be incorporated in the AA's technical studies to consider its potential effect on transit to, from and within the Study Area.

Mr. Stiles then provided a Study update. The Draft Final Problem Statement, Purpose and Need, and Goals and Objectives have been completed, and the respective Technical Memoranda are available in both summary and full versions on the Study website. These documents were prepared in accordance with FTA guidance.

The results of the Transit Origin/Destination (O/D) Study, which was completed in June 2010, were reviewed. Mr. Stiles stated that approximately 7,000 surveys were distributed to MTA Long Island Bus riders along multiple bus routes in and around the Study Area. Approximately 4,000 surveys were returned and analyzed, which is a very satisfactory return rate. The results of these surveys provide useful information regarding existing transit riders' travel characteristics, such as their primary trip origins and destinations. The survey results indicate that the majority of riders are not 'choice' riders (i.e., riders have no other available means of travel), and many have limited economic means and low rates of auto-ownership. Major destinations for these riders within the Study Area include the Village of Hempstead, Mineola, the Roosevelt Field Mall, and Nassau Community College.

Mr. Stiles presented a 'dot-density' map showing the most frequently visited destinations in the Study Area, based on the O/D Survey results. Locations such as the Village of Mineola, the Village of Hempstead, Roosevelt Field Mall, Nassau Community College, and Hofstra University are primary destinations for current transit users. Portions of the Study Area occupied by lower-density, single-family homes (such as portions of Garden City and Hempstead) are generally not popular transit destinations.

Mr. Stiles then presented a map showing essential and important trip attractors and generators within the Study Area. These locations in the Study Area either currently have high transit ridership or, because of their particular use or future plans for the locations, may support transit ridership in the future. In addition to the primary destinations mentioned during presentation of the transit dot-density map, essential and important trip attractors and generators include the Nassau County government center area, the Source Mall and its immediate surroundings, Museum Row, the Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum site and the Nassau University Medical Center (NuHealth).

With identification of the primary origins and destinations and with input received at the first two TAC meetings, the Study Team mapped a series of alignment segments that could be variously arranged to connect the identified attractors/generators in the Study Area. After further review and consideration, these segments were refined and linked to create 14 conceptual travel corridors, each one representing a potential Nassau Hub transit alignment alternative. The 14 alignment alternatives comprise the Preliminary Long-List of Alternatives.

Mr. Stiles stated that the Study Team began its formal screening process with the 14 Preliminary Long-List Alternatives. The screening process has three phases:

1. An initial, qualitative Fatal Flaw screening of the Preliminary Long-List Alternatives to eliminate infeasible alternatives.
2. A Long-List screening to qualitatively and quantitatively evaluate Refined Long-List Alternatives advanced from the Fatal Flaw screening against the Study goals and objectives.
3. Detailed, quantitative analyses to evaluate Short-List Alternatives advanced from the Long-List screening, and further detailed in terms of mode and alignment, against multiple criteria and evaluation measures.

The alternatives screening process will conclude with selection of a Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA), which will be presented to the FTA to obtain permission to begin the federal environmental review process.

Mr. Stiles described the criteria against which each Preliminary Long-List Alternative was reviewed to determine if it is fatally flawed. Alternatives 13 and 14 failed on the basis of the first Fatal Flaw criterion, regarding institutional or physical barriers to implementation. Alternatives 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14 failed the second criterion, regarding transit demand potential. No alternative failed the third Fatal Flaw criterion, regarding the ability to connect identified essential attractors. Alternatives 13 and 14 also failed on the basis of the fourth Fatal Flaw criterion, regarding compatibility with existing or planned future land use. Based on the Fatal Flaw Screening results, the Study Team recommended elimination of Alternatives 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14. Mr. Stiles asked if the committee had any comments or suggestions concerning the Fatally Flawed screening analysis and results; while no comments were provided at the meeting, Mr. Stiles reminded attendees that comments could also be provided following the meeting.

Mr. Stiles then presented the next phase of the screening process. For each of the eight alternatives (the Refined Long-List Alternatives) advanced from the Fatal Flaw Screening, the Study Team has developed conceptual, descriptive information including the following:

- Approximate Track/Lane Miles of Alignment (indicator of capital cost)
- Approximate Annual Vehicle Miles of Travel (indicator of operations cost)
- Number of Activity Centers Served in the Study Area
- Order-of-Magnitude Travel Times between Selected Attractors/Generators
- Order-of-Magnitude Demand Potential (approximate number of daily trips)

Mr. Stiles presented each of the Refined Long-List Alternatives and their associated descriptive information. A member of the committee asked if the travel times used in the screening process include rush hour in the morning versus midday. Mr. Stiles responded that the ridership figures represent average daily trips (usually 5:00 AM to 1:00 AM service) while travel times are for the morning peak, which



represents a worst case. Mr. Stiles concluded his presentation on the Refined Long-List Alternatives and asked the committee if there were any questions.

The following summarizes the questions and responses:

Question: Will these alternatives require new construction?

Answer: The alternatives as presented generally use existing rights-of-way (roads and existing rail corridors). Each alternative involves some new construction. It is anticipated that these alternatives would not require major property takings.

Question: Will you be constructing sidewalks to assist pedestrians at certain areas (i.e. Roosevelt Field Mall)?

Answer: We are not at that stage at this time but we will be considering issues related to pedestrian and bicycle access at a later stage of the screening.

Question: Was the demand potential constructed using only the results of the Origin/Destination Survey?

Answer: No, we utilized a planning model developed by the FTA called the Aggregate Regional Rail Forecasting (ARRF) model. This model is GIS-based and uses census data such as population, employment, and journey-to-work, as well as the results of the Transit O/D Survey. The Study Team has been updating and calibrating a more comprehensive regional travel demand model and will use it for detailed ridership forecasting at a later screening phase, using methodology and modeling acceptable to the FTA and other entities.

Follow up question: Does this model use daily trips?

Answer: Yes.

Follow up question: Does it use one-way trips?

Answer: yes.

Mr. Stiles then continued with the presentation. He discussed the ongoing Stated Preference Survey effort and encouraged TAC members to take the survey at www.nassauhub.com. The Stated Preference Survey was developed to receive input from all population sectors. The survey has been administered at locations such as the Roosevelt Field Mall and Nassau Community College. Mr. Stiles stated that the Study Team will report on the Survey results at the next TAC meeting.

Mr. Stiles then completed the presentation by outlining near-term activities. The Study Team will use input from the TAC and Stakeholder Committee (Stakeholder Committee meeting to be held later that evening) in the technical studies conducted during the summer. A public open-house meeting will be scheduled for after the summer. The Study Team will continue to refine the alternatives and develop descriptive information to assist in the public review process. After concluding the second phase of screening and receiving input and feedback at the

public meeting, the Study Team will develop the Short-List of Alternatives to be studied in detail. Another series of committee and public meetings will be held to review and receive input on the Short-List Alternatives. After careful consideration of the results of the technical analyses and committee and public comment, the Study Team will make a recommendation to the TAC and Stakeholder Committee for a LPA, after which the LPA will be presented to the public. Eventually, the LPA will be advanced to the FTA for its consideration and permission to initiate the federal environmental review process. It is expected that the AA process and LPA selection will be complete in late Winter/Spring 2012.

The meeting was then opened to any remaining TAC members' questions:

Question: How will the remaining alternatives be screened?

Answer: The Study Team is still defining some of the screening criteria. Each screening phase will be more quantitative than the last.

Question: Will the presentation be posted on the website?

Answer: Once it has been presented to the public, it will be posted on the website.

Mr. Stiles closed the meeting by thanking the members for attending.

Attachments:

1. Sign-In List
2. Presentation

