Throughout the planning process, public input, outreach and local official advice was utilized to ensure that the process, information and outcomes were fully vetted, reviewed and considered.

### 8.1 Public Reaction and Feedback

Public reaction to the NTE throughout the study was mixed. Some felt that an expressway is the North Country’s ticket to economic revitalization, while others were more content with keeping the corridor as it is and protecting resources. It seems that those who were raised in the region and have experienced the economic decline of many of its villages are looking for a solution that restores jobs and stimulates growth. Those who have migrated to the region after living in urbanized areas, have difficulty understanding why anyone would want an expressway through such beautiful countryside.

The Route 11 Corridor Study represents a compromise to some NTE advocates that want an expressway in the near future. Still many feel that it is important to get projects underway that will build momentum for a longer-term expressway improvement. Those in favor of the expressway are anxious to see some progress on the NTE over the next 20 years. A measured approach to corridor development is acceptable to most provided that the ultimate goal of the NTE is not abandoned.

Both our Study Advisory Group (SAG) and the political leadership in the region’s central counties are solidly behind the concept and, in fact, the political debate is more – ‘We can do this in bite size pieces’ (the approach we’re recommending) versus ‘We want it now.’ Some anti-development sentiment has been expressed by the general public, but when we also include all of the public input received during NCTS, it is the view of a very small minority.

Perhaps the most vocal contingent along the corridor are the residents and business owners in the Village of Canton. Their opposition to any development along Route 11 within the Village is homogeneous. There is a strong desire to move through-trips away from the Village Center via a bypass with quality of life and pedestrian safety most often being cited as the argument(s) for a bypass. There is a similar contingent favoring a bypass of the Village of Malone. Feedback received at a public meeting in Plattsburgh resulted in the study area being extended to Rouses Point, where a bypass has been recommended.

Meeting notes from the final public meeting held in December 2008 can be found in section 8.4.

### 8.2 Study Advisory Committee

Throughout the study, the Study Advisory Group (SAG) met to discuss the progress of the planning effort and to make recommendations on a course of action to complete the study. These meetings were held over the course of the study and the meeting notes follow in section 8.5.

### 8.3 Project Website

As part of any effective outreach program today, a website providing project information for use by the public is necessary. The NTE Study used the existing Development Authority of the North Country (DANC) website for the posting of project information and materials. A single transportation studies webpage, www.danc.org/NTE, was utilized for both this study and the North Country Transportation Study (NCTS), effectively providing all current and previously completed study materials at one central location for viewing and downloading.
8.4 Final Public Meeting Notes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location/Date</th>
<th>Plattsburgh- 12/04/08</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of attendees</td>
<td>Approximately 15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Bruce Irwin, DANC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>Jim Levy, WSA</td>
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<tr>
<td>NYSDOT Representatives</td>
<td>Scott Docteur</td>
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<tr>
<td>SAG Representatives</td>
<td>Samuel Trombley</td>
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<td>Rodney Brown</td>
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<td>News Media</td>
<td>Denton Publications</td>
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The North Country Transportation Study, completed in 2002, attempted to show that there was a relationship between economic development and improved transportation. One of the recommendations from the NCTS was to conduct a Route 11 corridor study as part of the process to eventually develop a Northern Tier Expressway.

The Study Team is now in the final stages of the NTE - Route 11 Corridor Study.

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Steps, however, can be taken in the short term, as well as over time, to improve the Route 11 corridor. Hopefully, this step by step process will lead to a NTE.

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Meeting Comments, Questions and Statements Follow:

**Comment** – Would like to see a complete alternative to Route 11, not bypasses as proposed.

**Comment** – Passing lanes should be provided on Route 190.

**Comment** – The highway concept should be moved forward.

**Comment** – The bypass routes potentially impact or come close to existing properties. JL – We are aware of that but had to develop conceptual alignments following certain criteria and these two are the results of that study. Additional much more detailed design, environmental and engineering studies will be necessary before anything is constructed.

**Comment** – The smaller communities should be bypassed – the trucks and traffic running through the small built-up areas is detrimental to each of the communities.

Meeting Comments, Questions and Statements Follow:

**Location/Date** -- **Malone- 12/03/08**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of attendees</th>
<th>Approximately 45</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>Bruce Irwin, DANC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>Mike Morehouse &amp;</td>
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<tr>
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<td>SAG Representatives</td>
<td>Scott Docteur</td>
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<td>Al Ricalton</td>
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<td>Rob Haynes</td>
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<td>James Feeley</td>
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<td>Earl LaVoie</td>
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<td>David Werner</td>
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<td>Malone Telegram</td>
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<td>Plattsburgh Press Republican</td>
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Mike Morehouse and Jim Levy of Wilbur Smith Associates presented the Powerpoint slides and moderated the open house. Some comments were made during the presentation, but the majority of discussion occurred during the open-house question/answer session.

**Question** – I live on Rt. 11 in Brushton. Where are the passing lanes proposed? MM – conceptual locations and lengths of passing lanes are shown in the document and on the boards displayed in the room.

**Comment** – From Chateaugay east, the project is compromise by the location of the wind turbines. The turbines are already there and require a 400’ setback. This will be an issue.

**Comment** – MM – The black & white map distributed as attendees entered the room is not part of the study material – this is part of a presentation by Richard Dwight Church who is in the audience and will be making a statement.

**Comment** – Mr. Church discussed the black & white expressway concept created by his father. The sheet (previously mentioned by Mike) was distributed prior to the meeting. Other comments:

Passing lanes – a middle-lane passing lane won’t work and is dangerous; Route 88 – From Binghamton to Albany works and
was a great project for the area; Northern Forest Center – has discussed the need for a conceptual highway from Watertown to Maine for the logging industry and other commerce; Economic Values – Without a road, it is difficult to get around the region. A bypass will require purchase of land and then connects back to Route 11. Just build the full expressway outside of all these towns.

Comment – Glad to see the consultant team back in the region. There is an economic side to this concept and the economy is important. Not sure what the bypasses will do to the community and has some concern about them. A significant issue is the heavy truck traffic in the villages and the ability to slow down traffic in the village areas. There is a high crash rate issue in and around the Village that he believes is at least in part due to vehicle speed. Traffic speed reduction in the Village is necessary. It is difficult and dangerous to cross Route 11 at certain times of the day. The Village is looking for help in calming traffic in the near-term. MM – This issue is part of how traffic flows and the roadway is designed. This is a good example of a local initiative that should work to get the ideas going and then work with NYS DOT on improvements (b/c Rt. 11 is a state route).

Question – Need accessibility to the towns if an expressway is built. Narrow roads through Malone are inadequate. The expressway concept is great and would be good for the area. MM – This is not an interstate concept; it is a rural highway concept with areas of limited access.

Comment – The new administration is proposing an economic stimulus package and is looking for shovel-ready projects. How quickly can the proposed improvements in this plan be ready? Would we be able to potentially use these funds? MM – There is a backlog of projects currently that are more likely to utilize this funding. The expressway concept is still conceptual and not ready for construction. Under even the best circumstances, it would likely be at least 10 years for the process to be fully undertaken to the point of being ready to go to construction.

Comment – Wayne Miller (provided a copy of the statement) Why wasn't Rt. 11B used? At a previous meeting, the section of the corridor he wanted to review wasn't available. MM explained that Rt. 11 has the National Highway designation, not Rt. 11B. The largest percentage of traffic and truck traffic uses Rt. 11 and to get federal funding, need to be located on the National Highway to get federal funding.

Comment – A lot of trucks do use Rt. 11B.
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Meeting Comments, Questions and Statements Follow:

Comment – Richard Dwight Church – Dwight Church proposed a rooftop highway parallel to Route 11 in the 1950’s. A handout has been distributed for your review. At that time local towns were opposed to the idea. The center passing lanes proposed are dangerous. Bypasses of villages are ok, but they need to connect between communities. Should just build an expressway instead. The Expressway should be built – it will tie-in to the Northern Forest Center studies that have been on-going.

Comment – The analysis of B/C ignored 2 important issues: 1) Quality of life and 2) Economic Development. The focus seems to be on safety and speed as opposed to quality of life and economic development. A question on the process – With the Obama economic infrastructure proposal, ready-to-go projects will be needed. Is this project ready-to-go? MM – The projects for the administrations proposal will need to be shovel-ready and this project is not there yet.

Question – Watertown connector – Does it fit into the expressway concept? MM – Yes.

Comment – There are 2 visions for the region: 1) Series of villages tied together with a 2-lane roadway and bypasses with fragmented jurisdictions. No real comprehensive vision for the North Country or 2) an expressway with consolidation of jurisdictions and real potential North Country growth. If a bypass is going in, build the expressway.

Comment – Economic development – there is only one road in and one road out of this town. Quality of life and economic impacts should be part of the B/C ratio.

Question – The area needs to understand the goals and steps to implementation. What is the footprint? Are the steps being recommended working toward a final goal? MM – The ultimate goals is a full expressway but it is longer term. Improvements proposed now are incremental steps to an eventual expressway concept.

MM discussed the different cross-sections and the need for them as they relate to villages and hamlets, safety and accessibility.
Comment – I can’t believe that this isn’t proposed as a limited access highway parallel to Route 11. As proposed, it doesn’t make sense to me.

Comment – Can you provide additional information about the truck vs. automobile traffic? MM – Approximately 10-15% of the total traffic is truck traffic.

Comment – I am working on a project to move goods from trains to trucks in Waterford, NY. Intermodal stations will not be built in the north country. Trucks will be needed to bring in goods.

Comment – The area will grow into an interstate highway. The idea of upgrading Route 11 is a band-aid approach.

Comment – I am puzzled by the piece-by-piece approach. I don’t feel that this will eventually lead to an expressway and I don’t see how this is a phased approach.

Comment from Comment Form – Written submission attached to form: Good evening, I live in Canton. Thank you for providing this forum for public input into the proposed Northern Tier Expressway. I would like to limit my comments at this time to chapter 5 of the draft final study report. Chapter five describes the environmental analysis of this proposed project. I would like to focus my remarks on just two of the environmental resources mentioned in this section: endangered species and residential areas. These so called resources are appropriately identified as highly sensitive, which the first paragraph in this section describes as follows: “A high sensitivity is any resource that cannot be mitigated without significant expense and/or a lengthy regulatory approval process. These resources are typically referred to as ‘fetal flaws’ to development and should be avoided if possible. Now, given that Section 5.2.1.2 dealing with Other Environmental Resources states “Endangered species were not included because the data was not available at the time of this report”; And given that Section 5.2.2.1 dealing with Noise Sensitive Land Uses states that “Residential areas are also a noise sensitive land use but the data could not be obtained”; It seems to me that the Conclusion of the Environmental Analysis (section 5.6) which reads in part, “The purpose of this section has been to inventory the different environmental and cultural resources within the Route 11 corridor.” …and “the results suggest that most of the resources found within the vicinity of the different scenarios can be either avoided, or carefully planned around to mitigate potentially negative impacts.” Is at best premature, and at worst, intentionally deceptive, especially given the final sentence which reads, “The results from this study will inform future, more detailed development plans”. My understanding is that this is just a draft final report. As such, I would recommend that the final report wait until more complete data are available on endangered species and residential areas (recognized as being of high sensitivity) or that the conclusion that is drawn from this incomplete analysis be more explicitly qualified as inadequate and incomplete. Finally I would like to make it clear to you and my Canton neighbors that these comments are in no way intended to be an endorsement of the proposed widening of Main street in Canton. The issues dealing with that portion of the proposed project are equally important and need to be taken into consideration. Thank you.

Bruce Irwin stated that residents need to get organized – talk to legislators and fight for what they want.

Question – Why are we talking about a highway since most traffic is local? This study is a realistic approach that emphasizes the villages.

Comment – There is already 27 miles of highway corridor along the [St. Lawrence] river. Make the connection here.

Comment – This has evolved from a limited access highway to a segmented project, that if somehow money is available, the full highway will be built. From an economic development perspective, following Rt. 11 won’t provide any economic development benefit. Like in the Town of Clay (Syracuse area) – they built a road and development came. If towns have an issue, then deal with the Towns. We need to build a 4-lane highway. If it can only be segmented, it will not be completed. Don’t sell this as a north country expressway because it isn’t one.

Comment – The locations of Canton bypasses go past a school, daycare facility, other existing uses. The northern alignment has a lot of problems and the southern alignment goes through wetland areas around the river. I don’t think the locations shown are viable. I am against bypasses but I don’t want traffic to go through the Town either.

Wade Davis (Ogdensburg Port Authority) – Are the Transport Canada numbers included in the study? They did a study of Route 401. The Capital Corridor was formed to alleviate congestion at crossings for traffic coming from Canada. I suggest that the report be reviewed.

Comment – I am concerned about accessibility of the process and community involvement. Where is the survey showing support of bypasses? We want to be sure the community has a voice/involvement in the process.

Comment – Economics: It doesn’t happen in the north country. A limited access which way has not been planned – remember that local tax $ will be needed and this will change the use of roadways. Concerned that a limited access highway will require long routines for local trips. Economics of Route 12 between Utica and Lowville – plants are closing but people should be flocking there. Bypasses: Ogdensburg had significant commerce – because of bypass it has left the city center. The mayor has asked for three stoplights and lower speed limits on the bypass- why? Bike Lanes: People don’t pay for use of these through licensing. 4-wheelers are not discussed for tourism access to trails, rivers and streams.

Comment – There are more than 15,000 students in Canton and Potsdam colleges. Students go north-south - this is where the students come from. Schools are the only economic growth. They need a way to connect to areas in the south. We need vehicles to get outside the village and need something to move traffic. A north-south highway is needed quickly for the economic future of the area.

Comment – We need to use carpools more.

Question – Have we considered traffic from the border crossings in our study, MM answered yes.

Comment from Comment Form – Please focus on improving transportation within the villages for the locals before considering long term, expensive measures. Pedestrian/bicyclist improvements may change what larger infrastructure should be built. 20+ years is a long time; quite a bit is likely to change – i.e., economy, population, life style, community wants and needs. Much simpler improvements than expressways, passing lanes, etc will have greater positive impacts than predicted.

Comment from Comment Form – I am concerned about the comment that appears in the report that says that support for a Canton bypass is high. I wonder what survey methods were used and what the numbers are. My perception is that there are many vocal supporters in the Village of Canton, but that the exact level of support in the Canton community as a whole is not known. The current proposed bypass cuts through a historic cemetery, Taylor Park (a highly valued local beach park with a community play-ground) numerous highly valued natural areas, working farmland and many residential communities. My reading of the map suggests that the bypass will "buzz", so to
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Meeting Comments, Questions and Statements Follow:

Comment - Canadian traffic would use a RT 11 Expressway if built. These potential users should be considered. Don't like driving E-W in Canada.

Comment(s) - 1) Better lighting is needed along corridor. This should be considered in study. 2) Rail - Logging not economically viable now... promote industry and what needs are of any potential industry to help facilitate growth. MM - Economic Development was the focus of the NCTS. NTE didn't discuss economics of any particular industry on the transportation system, but this type of discussion can be found in the NCTS. 3) Concerns about safety were also expressed.

Comment - Passing lanes - similar to 4-lane cross section of RT 12 entering Utica? No, effectively a 3-lane cross-section. Passing lanes are definitely needed.

Comment – Rt. 12 by Antwerp - White-out (from snow) is an issue in the winter. Bruce Irwin suggested that this issue be brought to the NYSDOT Maintenance personnel.

Comment - B/C analysis - how do you monitor the safety aspect and what goes into the cost/benefit ratios? MM - Found research on cost of crashes (FHWA research), damage, etc. Looked at 4 years of accident data and developed costs. Looked at potential improvements and calculated benefits. Tried to account for as much crash data and as many potential improvements as possible when calculating the B/C ratios.

Question – What is next after passing lanes are constructed? MM – Most likely community enhancements would be considered next.

Comment - Pedestrian crossing - concerned about timing of lights and speed of cars. MM – Community enhancements are intended to address these types of issues.

Comment - Passing Lanes – I have property along a proposed passing lanes in Evan Mills. How was the passing lane need determined? MM - needed to prioritize the implementation of these somehow. Urge local communities to spearhead efforts.
Comment - Canton-Potsdam - with higher traffic (and many feeder roads) and same cross-section as other sections with less traffic, of course there is an issue in this location.

Comment - Can you put the powerpoint on the project website? MM – we will look into this and should be able to post it.

Comment: When are the passing lanes intended to be started? Al Ricalton stated that design and/or construction is anticipated to begin in 2011.

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**Location/Date** -- **Lowville - 12/01/08**

| Number of attendees | Approximately 10 |
| Presentation | Mike Morehouse & Jim Levy, WSA |
| NYSDOT Representatives | Carey Babyak, Scott Docteur, Michael Flick, Al Ricalton |
| SAG Representatives | None |
| News Media | Watertown Daily Times, News10Now Television |

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Meeting Comments, Questions and Statements Follow:

**Comment** - BI discussed the need for NCTS & NTE.

**Comment** - MM Discussed Can-Am study and how the NTE fits within the Can-Am corridor area.

**Comment** - MM discussed how the NCTS accounted for development of a major east-west corridor. NTE data drew from potential growth estimates only within the Rt. 11 corridor.
8.5 Study Advisory Group Meeting Notes

NORTHERN TIER EXPRESSWAY
ROUTE 11 CORRIDOR STUDY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #4
Canton, New York
October 20, 2008

Agenda: See Attachment.
Attendance: See attached sign-in list.

Presentation:
The meeting was opened by Jim Levy from Wilbur Smith Associates (WSA). Jim welcomed committee members and thanked them for coming to the meeting. Jim gave a brief summary of where the Study stands right now and introduced the Study Final Report.

Mike Morehouse then gave a Power Point Presentation which explained what was contained in the Final Report. Mr. Levy then went through the recommendations contained in the report and Mr. Morehouse spoke briefly about financing the recommended projects.

Note: The questions, answers and comments resulting from this presentation are as follows:

**Comment:** Scott Docteur (NYSDOT) – There is $6.0M available in a Federal transportation appropriation bill to fund further NTE planning and environmental studies. A change in the wording of this appropriation needs to be made to allow the money to be used for the design and construction of an actual NTE project. Additionally, there is another $6.0M, blocked out in the Region 7 (NYSDOT) Capital Construction Program, for NTE improvements. Scott noted the total $12.0M could be used to construct projects such as passing lanes along the corridor.

**Comment:** Karen St. Hilaire, St. Lawrence County Administrator – Discussed a recent conversation she had with Senator Charles Schumer concerning the reauthorization of the Federal Transportation Act – scheduled for 2009. The Senator told her that now is the time to get prepared for project recommendations which the State would like to see included in the New Transportation Act.

**Comment:** Scott D. – Noted that the NTE was one of eight major projects included in the NYSDOT plan for highway transportation in New York State.

**Comment:** Bob Juravich, Executive Director, DANC – We are talking about two separate things here. One is the $12.0M currently available. The other is recommendations for the reallocated transportation act.

**Question:** Kathy Mullany, St. Lawrence County – What do we have to do to get the language changed in order to use the $6.0M for work on the NTE?

**Answer:** Scott D. – We need to get sign-off on new language by Congressman McHugh and Senator Hilary Clinton. The new language would be written so as to allow the funding to be used for design and construction of NTE projects.

**Comment:** Bob J. – There appears to be consensus, among Committee members, NYSDOT and DANC that the language in the appropriations bill should be changed to allow other uses for the $6.0M and also for the use of the combined $12.0M for mutually agreed upon NTE projects.

**Question:** Jim Feeley, Franklin County Manager – Can changes still be made in the Final Study Report?

**Answer:** Jim L. – Yes, changes can still be made in the report, which is actually still in draft form. Jim also detailed a tentative schedule for the rest of the Study.

**Comment:** Mike M. – Noted that a good deal of money is already being spent on the Fort Drum end of the corridor (i.e. The Fort Drum Connector project) and therefore recommended that the $12.0M be spent in other areas of the corridor.

**Comment:** Dave Werner, Franklin County – Suggested that some of the $12.0M be spent on traffic signals, turning lanes and roundabouts in the corridor villages and hamlets.

**Comment:** Mike M. – We have to use caution when trying to move traffic through villages – “a little congestion is not necessarily bad thing.” You need a balance between too much congestion and moving traffic so efficiently that travelers cannot get to see what is available to make them want to stop in the villages.

**Comment:** Bob J. – You also have to look at the corridor from a political viewpoint. What can best be done with the available funding, is the question that has to be answered. We can best spend the money building passing lanes at critical points along the corridor.

**Note:** after further discussion, it was decided (and Dave W. agreed) that using the funding to construct passing lanes was the best approach.

**Comment:** Dave W. – Suggested that the improvements he was recommending should be incorporated into the normal NYSDOT Capital Improvement Program.

**Comment:** Kathy M. – Canton, and probably other villages along the corridor, have many pedestrian problems. Improvements are needed.

**Comment:** Mike M. – Look at the Community Enhancement section of the report. We can do things, besides lane widening, to improve traffic flow in villages and hamlets.

**Comment:** Dave W. – “Stop and go” traffic is a problem. Keeping traffic flowing, even if at low speeds, is important. Mike M. agreed.

**Question:** Russ Wilcox, Jefferson County – How much can $12.0M accomplish as far as passing lane construction is concerned?

**Answer:** Mike M. -- $12 can’t build all of the passing lanes that are recommended in the Final Report (see table 6-18 for a complete listing of recommended passing lanes), but it would allow NYSDOT to build a few high priority passing lanes now, and work on getting funding for the remaining ones to be built later. Passing lanes can solve traffic flow problems as well as improving safety at a relatively low cost. Passing lanes would work to provide good benefits.

**Comment:** Dave W. – The Canton – Potsdam section of the corridor would be a good place to start.

**Comment:** Kathy M. – Suggested the following sections of Route 11 be considered first for planning lanes (see table 6-18):
- Section 8 – Canton - Potsdam
- Section 14 – Brushton - North Bangor
- Section 15 – North Bangor - Malone

**Note:** The total capital costs to build passing lanes for these three sections is estimated to cost a total of $9.3m. There also would be engineering and ROW costs involved and these items would likely absorb the remaining $2.7M.
Comment: Scott D. – Cautioned that the NYSDOT would have to go through the normal public involvement process before these projects could be built.

Note: The Study Advisory Group (SAG), at this point, recommended that a project, to construct passing lanes in the areas (mentioned above), be put forward and that this project be funded with the $12.0M that is now available.

Comment: Russ W. – Suggested that this decision by the SAG, and the project itself, be included in the Final Report. This was agreed to by Scott D. Bob J. suggested that this statement be placed in section 7 of the report.

Comment: Karen S. – Would like to include this project in the Economic Development Plan to be presented to her Legislative Board.

Comment: Al Ricalton – Suggested that public meetings could also provide a means of putting this project forward.

Comment: Kathy M. – SAG members, from St. Lawrence County, could also help with effort in that county.

Question: Dave W. – What is the NTE going to look like? We need PP Presentations customized just for Franklin County, St. Lawrence, etc.

Question: Jim F. – Also, what will be presented at the public meetings?

Comment: Bob J. – The presentations should be customized for each county.

Answer: Jim L. – Envisions a short presentation at each public meeting with board displays customized for the county where the meeting is being held. But, material for the whole corridor would also be available at each meeting.

Comment: Kathy M. – It would be important to summarize the Study at each public meeting. Show how Study recommendations came about. Mention that in the previous completed North Country Transportation Study (NCTS), economic development was the priority focus point, but this was not the case in the NTE Study. There is a connection, however, between improved transportation in the Route 11 Corridor and economic development and this needs to be pointed out.

Comment: Mike M. – There is more in this Study than just the development of a Northern Tier Expressway. There are recommendations that would improve transportation and quality of life along the corridor if improvements are done in incremental steps. This could happen long before an actual expressway becomes a reality.

Comment: Kathy M. – We should keep pushing for an expressway, but we can progress to that end by taking a series of smaller steps.

Comment: Bob J. – At the same time, we have to be careful that the headlines do not say “NTE Not Justified” We have to be positive in our approach – we are building smaller projects which will eventually lead to a NTE.

Comment: Kathy M. – The recommendations in the Final Report are sound.

Comment: Bob J. – We have to come up with a timetable for the Study recommendations.

Comment: Karen S. – Based on her discussion with Senator Schumer, concerning Federal Transportation Act Reauthorization, we should have our priority project(s) recommendations to the NYSDOT by February 2009.

Karen suggested:
1) Get recommendations to NYSDOT.
2) Work with Federal Representatives to gain their support for recommendations.

Comment: Mike M. – Stated that there will be a lot of competition for funding of NTE projects.

Comment: Bob J. – We have to have solid agreement on projects to recommend.

Comment: Kathy S. – Recommended a project to build all the passing lanes listed in the Final Report.

Comment: Bruce Irwin. – We should be in a position to take advantage of the possibility of Infrastructure Funding (to create jobs in this financial crisis time) becomes available.

Comment: Bob J. – We should recommend something that progresses the NTE concept. A good strategy would be to push for funding to construct all the passing lanes.

Comment: Dave W. – Should we recommend a project which demonstrates the 4-lane NTE concept – Canton to Potsdam for example?

Comment: Bob J. – We should have another SAG meeting. Everyone agreed.

Comment: Karen S. – Will make contact with Senator Schumer’s office to discuss SAG recommendations.

Comment: Jim L. – We should produce a “5-page” paper on how we will proceed with Study recommendations, particularly the passing lanes.

Comment: Kathy M. – Likes the idea of a “White Paper” which would put forth the SAG position.

Comment: Russ W. – Suggested a change in the Final Report to show Border Crossings and their links to NTE and the State Transportation System in general.

Comment: Bob J. – We should set date for the next SAG meeting.

Note: After a brief discussion, it was agreed to hold a meeting on Tuesday, November 18 @ 10:00AM in Canton.

Comment: Jim L. – Proposed that public meeting be held in late November.

Note: Later, after discussions with NYSDOT, holding public meetings the first week in December would be more practical.

Comment: Bob J. – We need to talk to our political leaders and to the new media about SAG plans.

Comment: Jim F. – Would like to get a copy of PP Presentation, customized for use by County Administrators, to use for presentations to their County Board of Legislators.

Comment: Kathy M. – Should also include summary (“White Paper”) of how we propose to proceed and how we propose to spend the $12.0M.
Comment: Al R. - The Tech Memos from this study will be given to the NYSDOT Regional Design Group. This group should be guided by these memos in their decision-making process as they develop individual projects.

Note: Scott D. gave an explanation of Canton Main Street project development process and what the issues are that NYSDOT has to consider and deal with.

Question: Dave W. - Aren't some of the recommended improvements contradictory to the full expressway concept?

Answer: Mike M. - As Bob Juravich mentioned, a full range of improvements are being recommended. Some advance the expressway concept, others may not, but all would make travel in the Route 11 Corridor more efficient and safer.

Question: Sam T. - Route 11B would be better for the economic development of Canton Main Street project issues have to be resolved on a project by project basis during the actual design process of a project. All projects recommended in the study may not be able to be implemented for a variety of reasons (for example, the inability to obtain Right of Way or funding). Note: Mike further explained how traffic volumes increase once you get into villages and how the implementation of recommended improvements would help not only to alleviate current problems, but also to advance the expressway concept.

Question: Kathy M. - How do recommendations for Canton get integrated into the New York Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) plan for Canton?

Answer: Mike M. - Tech Memo #3 is a concept document. It would be used by NYSDOT in the planning and programming of future work. Existing NYSDOT projects, such as the Main Street project, now under consideration in Canton, should be considered as recommended in the study report, but specific project issues have to be resolved on a project by project basis during the actual design process of a project. All projects recommended in the study may not be able to be implemented for a variety of reasons (for example, the inability to obtain Right of Way or funding). Note: Mike further explained how traffic volumes increase once you get into villages and how the implementation of recommended improvements would help not only to alleviate current problems, but also to advance the expressway concept.

Answer: Mike M. - The study makes recommendations and NYSDOT Regional Office decides what actually can get done based on funding and other restraints.

Comment: Al R. - I can pull the traffic counts from NYSDOT files, but I'm pretty certain that they will show that Route 11 traffic growth is higher than Route 11B growth.

Note #1: Al R. did a follow up analysis of Route 11 vs. Route 11B traffic growth. This analysis does, in fact, show a growth in traffic on Route 11 and a slight negative growth for Route 11B traffic (see enclosed chart and graph).

Note #2: Bruce I. did a follow up analysis of the Route 11 vs. Route 11B issue (see enclosed discussion paper). Based on this analysis and telephone calls to several committee members,
this study working group made the decision to not further study Route 11B.

**Question:** Michelle L. - Is there going to be any consideration given to community enhancement or other projects on spurs, particularly in Lewis County?

**Answer:** Mike M. - Although spurs are important as connectors to the Route 11 Corridor, project recommendations have not been made in Tech Memo #3. Spurs have not been studied in detail due to a lack of funding to do the required analysis work. It has been recognized, however, that the spur connections to Route 11 are important, particularly since they provide access from Route 11 to commercial markets both in New York State and Canada. Spurs could be studied in more detail in future studies from which specific project recommendations would come. (Note: this does not imply that NYSDOT will not be making improvements on the spurs under its regular Capital Construction Program.)

**Question and Comment:** Dave W. - There are many problems on Route 11, particularly in villages—median stripes, crosswalk maintenance, utility pole adjustments/relocation, traffic signalization timing, entrance doors to and from Route 11 and traffic signal coordination.

**Answer:** Mike M. - The study has tried to look at the worst of these situations and make project recommendations to deal with them. Realistically, however, NYSDOT has to deal with them by programming projects to make improvements and correct problems. Hopefully, the study will provide a guide to NYSDOT for selecting future improvement projects.

**Comment:** Sam T. - There is a serious traffic situation in Ellenburg at the intersection on Route 11 and Route 190. Without a traffic signal, and when school is in session, the number of vehicles and turning movements in this area makes for a dangerous situation. Trying to make a left turn onto Route 11 from Route 190 is very difficult.

**Answer:** Mike M. - This situation should be covered under the safety section of Tech Memo #3.

**Note:** Mike M. then picked up with a discussion of widening projects. He also suggested that village by-passes may be necessary to make some of the improvements possible and/or feasible.

**Question:** Jim F. - Refer to Table 15. Will Final Study Report provide ample information and rationale for moving forward by NYSDOT and talking with Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) about building by-passes?

**Answer:** Mike M. - Yes, but not entirely. We have some justification, but additional rationale needs to be documented. One of the problems we encountered is that there is little justification criteria for by-passes from a purely traffic volume standpoint. Unlike safety or access management improvements where there are known criteria, with by-passes we will have to consider/gather all the support information we can to help ensure that the final report provides as much documentation possible to move forward to discussions with FHWA. Bypasses can simply not be justified on traffic volumes.

**Question:** Dave W. - Will by-passes be built with Jersey Barrier type lane separation or grassy center-median separation?

**Answer:** Bruce I. - This would be a NYSDOT design decision, but it doesn't seem likely that Jersey Barriers would be used on new construction of this type. However, the more Right Of Way is needed, the more expensive a project becomes. Environmental constraints also must be considered.

**Comment:** Russ W. - Refer to page 98. The report needs a map which shows a larger Northeastern Region. You also need to make mention of the connection between Route 11 and Route 401 and Route 416 in Canada. You may want to show the relationship of Routes I-81 and I-87 and the NYS Thruway with the Route 11 corridor. Also, showing the major economic centers and large metropolitan areas could be useful.

**Comment:** Mike M. - We will look into developing a larger Northeast Region map.

**Comment:** Michelle L. - Refer to page 9. Tech Memo #3 reads: Spur (improved north south linkages) between: Watertown and Lowville, etc. This should be rewritten to read: Route 11, east of the city of Watertown, and Lowville.

**Comment:** Mike M. - WSA will review and edit report as needed. Also, we will include an "order of magnitude cost estimate for all spurs."

**Question/comment:** Kathy M. - Can a broader geographic region be discussed in the final report?

**Comment:** Karen S. and Kathy M. - The Capital Corridor (Ottawa to Washington, D.C.) and the Can-Am Highway concept need to be mentioned. Also, put the NTE project in the context of how it would fit into these two larger geographic region/multi-national studies (show that the NTE project is in the middle of these two and thus is of importance to the Northeastern Region, not just the North Country of NYS.

**Question:** Russ W. - There is an Ottawa-Washington study. Do you know anything about that?

**Answer:** Mike M. - We don't have any information about that study, but will look into it.

**Comment:** Karen S. - The routes under consideration in that study should be considered. The two studies are related.

**Comment:** Mike M. - The projects recommended in Tech Memo #3 carry with them significant costs and, for the most part, are unfunded. WSA will discuss possible ways to fund projects in the final study report.

**Comment:** Bob J. - There is some available funding for some level of improvement or additional study in the Federal Transportation Act.

**NYSDOT Update:** Al R. - The funding mentioned by Bob Juravich will be used for Route 11 safety improvements. There is about $6M available. The Route 11/Fort Drum $4.0M Access Management Project is going forward.

**Comment:** Scott D. - The Fort Drum Connector (I81 to Fort Drum North gate) is progressing. The Environmental Impact Statement is nearing completion. Design of the project is underway and is geared toward having the project ready for construction in early 2009. The project is about four miles long and will cost about $65 million to construct. This will be a four-lane limited access highway with an overall cost (design, row acquisition and construction) of about $90 million.

**Next Committee Meeting:** At the SAC, it was suggested that the next Committee meeting would be held in January. After the meeting however, NYSDOT Main Office requested a meeting with the Study Working Group (NYSDOT Regional Office, DANC and Study Consultant). They have requested this meeting for late January. If that's the case, the next SAC meeting will probably occur in February.
Clarification of NYSDOT UPDATE: Concerning available funding – NYSDOT has placed a project on its Capital Program in the amount of $6M. The funds for that project are not the funds that came from SAFETEA-LU. Bob Juravich was right when he stated that the SAC and Congressman McHugh need to be involved in the decision as to how these funds will be used. At this point in time, the wording is such that the funds can’t be used for project construction – the language in the law needs to be changed to allow funds to be used for construction purposes.

The plan for the $6M – Safety Project that NYSDOT is funding with NHS funds is to take care of as many of the safety issue identified by WSA in the Study as possible. NYSDOT will be treating this project as any other Capital Construction project. NYSDOT will welcome SAC comments and suggestions regarding priorities for this project.