I-87 MULTIMODAL CORRIDOR STUDY FACT SHEET # 1

www.i87multimodalstudy.org

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STUDY PURPOSE

The I-87/Autoroute 15 corridor provides a direct international connection between the largest metropolitan area in the United States (New York City) and the second largest metropolitan area in Canada (Montreal) through the La-Colle/Champlain border crossing. The corridor, through its connections to crossing highways and to other modes, serves a broad area that includes the Mid-Atlantic states, New England and Eastern Canada representing a total population of approximately 80 million people.

Growth in trade and tourism has placed increased demands on this vital corridor. Between 1996 and 1999, truck traffic at the US—Canada border crossing increased 40%. In 1999, the I-87/Champlain border crossing handled over 800,000 trucks carrying $14 billion worth of goods, making it the fifth busiest US—Canada border crossing. In addition, nearby rail border crossings carried nearly $2 billion value of freight in 2000. The growth in traffic during this period and new security concerns have led to slower processing of vehicles at the border, resulting in extended delays which have presented problems for continued economic growth and security.

In order to address this growth and realize the potential of the corridor and region, a comprehensive study has been initiated by the New York State Department of Transportation (NYS DOT) to identify and assess initiatives and opportunities to improve transportation services for all users of the corridor. The I-87 Multimodal Corridor Study (“the Study”) will integrate with the findings of the recently completed “New York in the New World Economy” report. This NYS DOT-sponsored report prepared by the University Transportation Research Center, examines the impact that urbanization, economic activity, geography, and transportation constraints have had on the I-87 corridor. The report discusses transportation issues and opportunities, and examines connections the corridor provides, both locally and globally. The Study will analyze recommended transportation initiatives and rank them in terms of their ability to enable New York State to respond to changing economic forces and trends.

STUDY AREA

The I-87 Multimodal Corridor Study area extends along I-87 from the Tappan Zee Bridge to Montreal, a distance of over 300 miles. It includes important east-west connectors and other modal corridors (e.g., passenger rail, rail freight, marine, and air).

Primary and secondary study areas have been established for this vast corridor. The primary study area extends from the vicinity of Thruway Exit 21A to the Champlain border crossing, and includes highways (I-87, Routes 9 and 22 and east-west connectors) and non-highway modes (rail lines, airports and marine ports) ranging between those points. The secondary study area focuses on I-87 from Exit 9 to 21A, and Autoroute 15 to Montreal.
The Study is divided into two phases. The first involves an inventory of existing transportation system conditions, integration of the findings from the “New York in the New World Economy” report, and identification of key corridor issues and emerging opportunities. The second phase will involve the prioritization of initiatives based on global economic potential, feasibility, and the ability to meet the goals and objectives. Project scoping will also be performed during this second phase to develop a list of improvements that will facilitate the implementation of initiatives.

Goals and Objectives have been developed at the outset of this study to guide the development and assessment of corridor initiatives. Performance measures are being developed to objectively measure the extent to which each proposed initiative satisfies these goals and objectives. This helps analyze the strengths and weaknesses of each initiative and identify the most appropriate ones to recommend for further analysis.

Public outreach will be a very important element of the study and will be approached on two levels. A Study Advisory Group (SAG) comprised of State, Quebec and local agencies, U.S. and Canadian inspection agencies, representatives from various modal groups and local chambers of commerce and economic development agencies and other key groups was formed. The SAG will meet with the consultant and the Department of Transportation throughout the course of the study to comment on the focus of the study, assist in obtaining information and suggest transportation improvements in the corridor. The general public will be able to follow the study and offer comments through the interactive website.

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