IV.A. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to (1) identify the social, economic and environmental consequences of the feasible alternatives for consideration in selecting the preferred alternative; (2) identify feasible avoidance or mitigation measures; (3) satisfy the applicable social, economic and environmental (SEE) laws; and (4) identify all permits and approvals needed for each feasible alternative. Two feasible alternatives are considered; the Double Left Turn Diamond Interchange (DLTD) and the Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI). Unless otherwise noted separately in subsequent sections of this chapter, the social, economic and environmental considerations for each alternative may be considered primarily the same. Additionally, the project involves two distinct locations; referred to as the Project Location Site (Exit 6) and the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site. Refer to Appendix W for a location map and conceptual compensatory plan of the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site.

IV.A.1. State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQR)

The New York State Department of Transportation is the SEQR lead agency.

Based on the pre-Eminent Domain Procedure Law (EDPL) Hearing scope of the project and proposed project work, In accordance with 17 NYCRR, Part 15, “Procedures for Implementation of State Environmental Quality Review Act”, the Department has determined that this [the] project is a SEQR Non-Type II Action in accordance with 17 NYCRR, Part 15, “Procedures for Implementation of State Environmental Quality Review Act”. The project is being progressed as Non-Type II because it does not meet prerequisite criteria in 17 NYCRR, Part 15.14(d) as it has the potential to acquire two occupied commercial businesses. As a result of the EDPL Hearing and public comments received, the Department has revised the proposed work so as to not require the acquisition of the two occupied commercial buildings. The project now proposes a building cut-off in lieu of one of the complete commercial building acquisitions and the second previously proposed occupied commercial building acquisition has been removed from the project. Although the prerequisite criteria in 17 NYCRR, Part 15.14(d) has been removed from the project, the SEQR environmental processing has still be completed as a Non-Type II Action. A SEQR Determination of No Significant Effect (DONSE) has been prepared for the project and is included in Appendix N.

IV.A.2. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is the NEPA lead agency.

In accordance with 23 CFR 771.117d and the NEPA checklist, the Department has determined that this project is a NEPA Categorical Exclusion with Documentation. This
type of Action requires individual concurrence and approval by FHWA. The reason supplemental documentation is required is due to question numbers 7, 9, 11, 15, 21 and 22 i, ii, iii iv, v having been answered “yes” in the project NEPA checklist. FHWA has confirmed that the project meets the conditions and criteria for a NEPA Class II, Categorical Exclusion with documentation. The NEPA checklist, along with references to supplemental documentation and the Categorical Exclusion concurrence can be found in Appendix N.

IV.B. SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

IV.B.1. Social Consequences

IV.B.1.a. Affected Population

No socially sensitive populations or areas have been identified within or near the project area.

IV.B.1.b. Local Planning

The objectives of the project are consistent with the Town of Colonie’s Comprehensive Plan and the Town of Colonie’s NY 7 / NY 2 Corridor Transportation and Land Use Study – December 2005. The majority of recommendations in the NY 7 / NY 2 Corridor Transportation and Land Use Study have been incorporated into the proposed project. Those items recommended in the study that have not been included in the project are:

- The creation of a north-south local road underpass on the west side of the Exit 6 interchange project.
- A raised median west of Latham Circle.

Justification for exclusion of these recommended action plan items are included in Section III.C.2.q. of this report.

IV.B.1.c. Community Cohesion

The proposed project will not affect community cohesion. It will not change any neighborhood’s property values, perceived quality of life, or isolate any sections.

Both feasible alternatives require a partial building cut-off of the commercial building located at 585 Troy-Schenectady Road. The decision to progress a building cut-off in lieu of a complete building removal and business displacement is a direct result of comments received from the Eminent Domain Procedure Law Hearing for the project. Further documentation of this decision is included in Chapter VII of this report. The proposed building cut-off is not anticipated to affect community cohesion. The displacement of one business and the acquisition of one commercial property will be required to accommodate the proposed improvements along Route 7 / Route 2. The displaced business is a doctor’s office located at 585 Troy Schenectady Road (Route 2) on the corner of the Route 2 / Erin road.
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Street intersection. The commercial property that will be acquired is a Subway store located at 679 Troy Schenectady Road (Route 7), on the corner of the Route 7 / Forts Ferry Road intersection. The acquisition of these properties is not anticipated to affect community cohesion.

IV.B.1.d. Changes in Travel Patterns or Accessibility

Permanent travel patterns are not expected to change as a result of this project. This project is not expected to increase traffic congestion.

The project includes construction of a raised median on Route 7 between Rensselaer Avenue and Wade Road. Access to properties along this section of Route 7 will be limited to right-in and right-out movements on Route 7. The properties along the north side of Route 7 in this area will have full access to and from Forts Ferry Road.

The project also includes construction of pedestrian accommodations on Route 7 / Route 2 throughout the project limits. The proposed sidewalks will connect the existing sidewalks located at either end of the project area on Route 7 / Route 2.

Temporary impacts to existing travel patterns are anticipated during construction. Traffic will be maintained on all of the project roadways and access to all properties adjacent to the project will be maintained throughout construction. In addition, work in front of businesses along Route 7 / Route 2 will be limited to non-business or low business time periods, to the maximum extent practical.

IV.B.1.e. Impacts on School Districts, Recreation Areas, Places of Religious Worship or Businesses

Places of business along Route 7 / Route 2 include office and retail space, restaurants, a gas station, hotels, and a doctor’s office. The proposed project includes the displacement of one business and the acquisition of one commercial property to accommodate the proposed improvements along Route 7 / Route 2. The displaced business is a doctor’s office located at 585 Troy Schenectady Road (Route 2) on the corner of the Route 2 / Erin Street intersection. The commercial property that will be acquired is a Subway store located at 679 Troy Schenectady Road (Route 7), on the corner of the Route 7 / Forts Ferry Road intersection. These acquisitions are necessary to accommodate widening along Route 7 / Route 2.

Both feasible alternatives require a partial building cut-off of the commercial building located at 585 Troy-Schenectady Road. The decision to progress a building cut-off in lieu of a complete building removal and business displacement is a direct result of comments received from the Eminent Domain Procedure Law Hearing for the project. Further documentation of this decision is included in Chapter VII of this report. The building cut-
off is not anticipated to affect the doctor’s office in the commercial building and was the choice of the property / building owner.

The project includes pedestrian accommodations along both sides of Route 7 / Route 2. The installation of sidewalks, curb ramps, and crosswalks will improve pedestrian accessibility to the businesses located along the Route 7 / Route 2 corridor.

Temporary impacts to existing travel patterns are anticipated during construction. Traffic will be maintained on all of the project roadways and access to all properties adjacent to the project will be maintained throughout construction. In addition, work in front of businesses along Route 7 / Route 2 will be limited to non-business or low business time periods, to the maximum extent practical.

The project will not impact any school districts, recreation areas, or places of religious worship.

IV.B.1.f. Impacts on Police, Fire Protection and Ambulance Access

The proposed project will not adversely affect any emergency services. Access for emergency vehicles will be maintained during construction.

IV.B.1.g. Impacts on Highway Safety, Traffic Safety and Overall Public Safety and Health

The following improvements are proposed:

- Vertical Clearance: The proposed bridge will provide a minimum of 5.05 m of vertical clearance over I-87, eliminating the safety issues associated with tractor trailers striking the existing bridge girders.
- Accidents: Conflicts from left-turning vehicles on Route 7 between Wade Road and Rensselaer Avenue will be eliminated with the installation of a raised median.
- Clear Zone: A minimum clear zone of 3.6 m measured from the front face of curb will be maintained on Route 7 / Route 2. The proposed clear zone on I-87 is 9.0 m. The 60 km/hr, 40 km/hr, and 15 km/hr design speed ramps and turning roadway segments will have a minimum clear zone ranging from 4.6 m to 5.2 m depending on the roadside features.
- Guide Railing: Guide railing will be installed to current standards and warrants.
- Traffic Signals: The project will interconnect the signals at the Route 7 / Wade Road, Exit 6 interchange, and Route 2 / Erin Street (Latham Farms) intersections.
- Signs: Existing signs will be replaced.
- Sidewalks: Pedestrian accommodations will be provided on Route 7 / Route 2.
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IV.B.1.h. General Social Groups Benefited or Harmed

This project will not have any special harm to any social group. Land use within the project area is expected to remain the same.

IV.B.1.h.(1) Effects on Elderly & Disabled Persons
This project includes pedestrian accommodations along Route 7 / Route 2 (see Section III.C.2.n.). These accommodations will be designed in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) and Chapter 18 of the NYSDOT HDM.

IV.B.1.h.(2) Effects on Low Income, Minority and Ethnic Groups
This project will not have a disproportionately high and adverse health and environmental effect on minority or low-income populations.

IV.B.2. Economic Consequences

IV.B.2.a Impacts on Regional and Local Economies

This project will not have any significant impacts to local development, tax revenues, public expenditures, employment opportunities, retail sales, or property values of the project area.

The improvements proposed under this project are consistent with the Town of Colonie’s Comprehensive Plan and the Town of Colonie’s NY 7 / NY 2 Corridor Transportation and Land Use Study – December 2005. The Corridor Study proposes an alternate future for the corridor which will improve the transportation, economic, mobility, and environmental aspects on and around Route 7 / Route 2. The proposed project implements many of the recommendations of the Study and will help the corridor evolve towards the alternate future recommended.

Temporary impacts to existing travel patterns are anticipated during construction. Traffic will be maintained on all of the project roadways and access to all properties adjacent to the project will be maintained throughout construction. In addition, work in front of businesses along Route 7 / Route 2 will be limited to non-business or low business time periods, to the maximum extent practical.

IV.B.2.b. Impacts on Existing Highway Related Businesses

There are several existing highway-related businesses located within the project limits. The proposed bridge replacements project is not anticipated to have any permanent impact to the existing highway-related businesses.
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Temporary impacts to existing travel patterns are anticipated during construction. Traffic will be maintained on all of the project roadways and access to all properties adjacent to the project will be maintained throughout construction. In addition, work in front of businesses along Route 7 / Route 2 will be limited to non-business or low business time periods, to the maximum extent practical.

IV.B.2.c. Impacts on Established Business Districts

Route 7 is an established business district within the Town of Colonie. The predominant uses along Route 7 include retail commercial, business/office developments, hotels, and restaurants. The proposed raised median on Route 7 will affect access to properties on Route 7 between Forts Ferry Road and Wade Road by eliminating left turns to and from these properties. The inclusion of the raised median at this location is consistent with the recommended actions proposed under the Town of Colonie’s NY 7 / NY 2 Corridor Transportation and Land Use Study – December 2005.

Both feasible alternatives require a partial building cut-off of the commercial building located at 585 Troy-Schenectady Road. The decision to progress a building cut-off in lieu of a complete building removal and business displacement is a direct result of comments received from the Eminent Domain Procedure Law Hearing for the project. Further documentation of this decision is included in Chapter VII of this report. In addition, the displacement of one business and the acquisition of one commercial property are necessary to accommodate the proposed improvements along Route 7 / Route 2. The displaced business is a doctor’s office located at 585 Troy-Schenectady Road (Route 2) on the corner of the Route 2 / Erin Street intersection. The commercial property that will be acquired is a Subway store located at 679 Troy-Schenectady Road (Route 7), on the corner of the Route 7 / Forts Ferry Road intersection. It is not anticipated that the proposed bridge replacement will have an overall negative impact to the viability of the Route 7 / Route 2 area.

Temporary impacts to existing travel patterns are anticipated during construction. Traffic will be maintained on all of the project roadways and access to all properties adjacent to the project will be maintained throughout construction. In addition, work in front of businesses along Route 7 / Route 2 will be limited to non-business or low business time periods, to the maximum extent practical.

IV.B.2.d. Relocation Impacts

The proposed project will not result in any relocation impacts. Both feasible alternatives require a partial building cut-off of the commercial building located at 585 Troy-Schenectady Road. The decision to progress a building cut-off in lieu of a complete building removal and business displacement is a direct result of comments received from the Eminent Domain Procedure Law Hearing for the project. Further documentation of this decision is included in Chapter VII of this report. The extension of the right turn lane on Route 2 westbound for the I-87 northbound entrance ramp will require the displacement of

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the doctor’s office located at 585 Troy Schenectady Road on the northwest corner of the Route 2 / Erin Street intersection.

The construction of a raised median on Route 7 and the reconstruction of the Route 7 / Forts Ferry Road intersection to improve safety and traffic movements along Forts Ferry Road and Route 7 will require the acquisition of the Subway store located at 679 Troy Schenectady Road on the northwest corner of the Route 7 / Forts Ferry Road intersection. The existing parking area and all access drives on Route 7 and Forts Ferry Road would be removed to improve traffic control along Forts Ferry Road and Route 7.

Conceptual Stage Relocation Plans are included in Appendix O.

IV.B.3. Environmental Consequences

IV.B.3.a. Surface Waters / Wetlands

IV.B.3.a.(1) Surface Waters

Project Location Site
Runoff in the area of the I-87 Exit 6 bridge and along the I-87 corridor between Exit 5 and Exit 6 is directed to two sub watershed streams that are within the Mohawk River watershed. Runoff north of the bridge generally flows northward to the Delphus Kill. The Delphus Kill flows northerly to the Mohawk River. Runoff south of the bridge generally flows to three tributaries of the Shaker Creek which cross under I-87 at approximately 0.65 km, 1.1 km and 1.3 km south of the bridge. These streams flow northwesterly to Shaker Creek, which then flows into the Mohawk River. Both the Delphus Kill and Shaker Creek tributaries within the project are first order streams.

Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site
Runoff in the area of the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site is directed to an unnamed tributary of the Mohawk River. The tributary generally flows northeasterly crossing under Interstate 890 to the Mohawk River.

(a) Corps of Engineers Permit (Section 404)
The Department has determined that the proposed activities at the Project Location Site and the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site meet the terms and conditions and will be progressed under US Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) Nationwide Permit (NWP) #23 (Approved Categorical Exclusion). This type of permit requires concurrence from FHWA. Concurrence, that the project meets the criteria for the NWP #23, will be requested from the Federal Highway Administration District Engineer at the same time as Design Approval.

(b) Water Quality Certificate (WQC)-Section 401
It has been determined that the proposed activities at the Project Location Site and the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site will require an Individual WQC
pursuant to Article 15, NYCRR 608, Protection of Waters as the project will utilize a NWP# 23 permit and the cumulative impacts at both sites exceed 1/10 of an acre of wetlands. Additionally, the Individual WQC will address the minor stream impacts proposed to relocate sections of an unnamed tributary to the Shaker Creek at the Project Location Site and the proposed removal of built up sediments from the unnamed stream at the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site. The Department will obtain the permit prior to commencement of project activities and will adhere to any conditions or requirements. Further coordination will be required with the NYSDEC during the final design to determine the nature and extent of potential surface water quality impacts posed by the project during and after construction.

Appropriate erosion and sediment control plans will be developed during the design phase for the project. These will include temporary and/or permanent erosion and sedimentation control measures.

(c) Protection of Bed and Banks of Streams
Project Location Site
Based upon a review of the NYS DEC GIS database and as verified by a site visit, three unnamed tributaries to Shaker Creek are present within the project limits. These unnamed tributaries cross I-87 at the project area approximately 0.65 km and 1.3 km south of the Exit 6 bridge. These streams have a Class and Standard of “C”. The Shaker Creek also has a Class and Standard of “C”. Shaker Creek is outside of the project area. Approximately 0.5 km north of the Exit 6 bridge, a tributary to the Delphus Kill begins. The Delphus Kill and this tributary also have a Class and Standard of “C”. The best usage for Class and Standard of “C” waters is fishing. Water quality is suitable for fish propagation and survival. The water quality shall be suitable for primary and secondary contact recreation, although other factors may limit the use for these purposes. There are no seasonal work restrictions for Class and Standard of “C” waters.

The Delphus kill crosses under I-87 through a cross culvert. The inlet and outlet of this cross culvert and the downstream channel have become eroded. The highway embankment and the stream channel at the outlet will require repair and placement of stone erosion protection to prevent further erosion. The stream channel will be armored with stone to prevent erosion. Additionally, the three cross culverts between Exit 5 and Exit 6 carrying the three unnamed tributaries will be extended approximately 3.6 m each side of the roadway to accommodate the proposed auxiliary lanes. Stone erosion protection will be installed at the inlets and outlets of these culverts to prevent erosion.

Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site
Based on a review of the NYSDEC GIS database and as verified by a site visit, there is one stream at the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site. This stream crosses I-890 approximately 30 m west of the westbound Thruway on ramp. This unnamed
stream, which flows into the Mohawk River approximately 170 m from I-890 has a Class and Standard of “C”. The Mohawk has a Class and Standard of “A”. At the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site the stream channel will be cleaned of any built up sediments and enhanced with tree and shrub plantings.

IV.B.3.a.(2) Wetlands
(a) State Regulated Wetlands

NYSDEC FRESHWATER WETLANDS

Project Location Site
Based on a review of DEC Regulatory Freshwater Wetlands maps for Albany County, Niskayuna and Albany quadrangles (2002), and as verified on site, there is a DEC-regulated freshwater wetland (identified in Appendix Q as Wetland #3) within the project limits. This wetland is located within the Mohawk River Watershed. The boundary of this wetland was delineated by NYSDOT staff in August, 2004. This wetland is mostly wooded. However, near the roadway, at the culvert crossing, the wetland is populated by an area of emergent vegetation (primarily consisting of phragmites) surrounding an open marsh with permanent standing water.

Impacts have been minimized by the use of 1 on 2 embankment side slopes opposed to flatter standard side slopes of 1 on 4. For impacts that cannot be avoided, compensatory wetland mitigation will be provided. Impacts to the wetland’s 30.5 m (100 ft) buffer cannot be avoided since the roadway is within the buffer boundary. This work will result in approximately 0.03 hectares (0.07 acres) of impacts for embankment stabilization at a culvert crossing. This project will qualify for NYSDEC Article 24 General Permit 06-02 – Minor Fills for proposed work in the state-regulated wetland or regulated adjacent area (100 ft). This permit will be obtained during detailed design.

Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site
Based on a review of DEC Regulatory Freshwater Wetlands maps for the Schenectady quadrangle (2002), and as verified on site, there are no DEC-regulated freshwater wetlands within the limits of the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site.

(b) Federal Jurisdiction Wetlands

Project Location Site
There are several small federal jurisdictional wetlands within the project limits. These wetlands are located within the Mohawk River Watershed. These wetlands are along I-87 in the median as well as alongside the roadway. The wetlands exist partially due to a high water table within the area, and generally occur around watercourses crossing I-87 or in areas draining the roadways. In many locations the wetlands are dominated by phragmites (Phragmites communis). These are often emergent wetlands located along several watercourse floodplains or they are mowed.
areas with a high water table. There is no competition from trees in these locations, which has been ideal for the establishment of phragmites. Within the Exit 6 interchange medians there are ACOE jurisdictional wetlands populated primarily by phragmites. These areas are periodically mowed to prevent the growth of larger shrub and tree species. These wetlands have been delineated and are shown on the plans in Appendix Q.

The wetlands are being taken into consideration in the design of the project and impacts are being either avoided or minimized by the use of 1 on 2 embankment slopes opposed to flatter standard side slopes of 1 on 4. Impacts to some federal jurisdictional areas, primarily within the Exit 6 medians, cannot be avoided. Refer to Appendix Q for a comparison of the Alternatives considered and effects comparison of side slopes. Proposed Design Alternatives for the new interchange will need to utilize portions of the medians containing the wetlands. Project designers have found that it is not possible to adequately provide a safe and functioning interchange while avoiding these wetland areas. As a result, compensatory mitigation is being required by the ACOE for the wetland areas impacted. At this time there are approximately 1.12 ha (2.78 acres) of permanent wetland impacts and 0.41 ha (1.01 acres) of temporary wetland impacts within the project limits from either feasible alternative.

Further information on the locations, types, and amounts of wetland impacts and the proposed compensatory mitigation for the impacts are included in the programmatic wetland finding documentation in Appendix R and wetland location and impact plans and impact tables located in Appendix Q.

The NYSDOT has looked at sites for Compensatory Mitigation within the right of way and determined they were not suitable due to inadequate hydrology, prevalence of invasive species, impacts due to tree removal or they required excessive excavation. Additionally, it is difficult for the NYSDOT to commit to keeping any created wetland areas in the I-87 corridor in perpetuity due to the likelihood of future expansion along this heavily traveled roadway. Several other sites off of the NYSDOT right of way were also investigated for mitigation potential. These sites also all became unfeasible for a variety of reasons. Refer to Appendix W for the Potential Wetland Mitigation Areas investigated.

Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site
Federal jurisdictional wetlands exist at the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site which is located adjacent to Exit 1 of I-890 in the Town of Rotterdam approximately 22 km (13.5 miles) away from the project site. These wetlands are within the Mohawk River Watershed. See location map in Appendix W. The majority of the site is vegetated with a dense layer of herbaceous plants. Several small stands of trees are growing along the existing stream and in the north western portion of the site. The site also consists of several low quality emergent wetlands.
These wetlands are dominated with Purple Loosestrife (Lythrum salicaria). Other invasive plants that are present within the compensation site are Black Locust (Robinia pseudoacacia) and Common Reed (Phragmites australis). These wetlands are considered low value wetlands because of the past construction disturbance and that they contain invasive plant species that compete with native plants. The Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site will be constructed by excavating and creating a minimum of 1.23 hectares (3.03 acres) new wetlands. In addition, 0.19 hectares (0.46 acres) of existing ACOE Wetlands located at the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site will be temporarily impacted through the creating of the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site and ultimately enhanced through the removal of invasive species. The impacts at this site and resulting enhancements of the existing wetlands at the Compensation Site will result in higher quality wetlands by the removal of Purple Loosestrife and the establishment of new plantings. The functions and values of the impacted wetlands can be replaced at this site with additional potential functions of better wildlife habitat and educational benefits (due to the adjacent multi-use trail). Refer to Appendix W for the Conceptual Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Plan.

The Department has determined that the proposed project meets the conditions and thresholds provided in ACOE Nationwide Permit 23 – Approved Categorical Exclusions. This type of permit requires concurrence from FHWA. Concurrence, that the project meets the criteria for the NWP #23, will be requested from the Federal Highway Administration District Engineer at the same time as Design Approval.

(c.) Tidal Wetlands
There are no tidal wetlands within the Project Location Site or the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site.

(d) Executive Order 11990
Project Location Site
A Programmatic Executive Order (EO) 11990 applies to this project based on its classification as a Categorical Exclusion with Documentation under 23CFR 771.117 and its qualification for United States Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 Nationwide Permits. This project satisfies the requirements of EO 11990. There are no practicable alternatives to construction in the wetlands. The proposed action includes all practicable measures to minimize harm to the wetlands. No further approval from FHWA is required.

The programmatic wetland finding documentation has been prepared and is included in Appendix R. Additional supporting information (wetland location and impact plans and impact tables) is located in Appendix Q.
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Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site
An Executive Order (EO) 11990 Wetlands finding is not applicable to the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site.

IV.B.3.a.(3) Coastal Zone
(a) Coastal Zone Management
The proposed Project Location Site and the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site are not located in a Coastal Zone Management area according to the Coastal Zone Area Map dated September, 2003. Therefore, a consistency determination is not required.

(b) Waterfront Revitalization and Coastal Resources Act
The proposed Project Location Site and the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site are not located in a Local Waterfront Revitalization area. No further action is required.

(c) Coastal Erosion Hazard
The proposed Project Location Site and the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site are not located in or near a Coastal Erosion Hazard Area. There are no Coastal Erosion Hazard Areas in Region 1. No further action is required.

(d) Coastal Barrier Resources Act
There are no coastal barriers in Region 1. Compliance with the Coastal Barrier Resources Act is not required.

(e) Scenic Area of Statewide Significance (SASS)
The proposed Project Location Site and the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site are not located in a SASS as defined by the NYSDOS Division of Coastal Resources and Waterfront Revitalization pursuant to section 913 of the Executive Law and Parts 600 and 602 of 19 NYCRR.

(f) Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitats
The proposed Project Location Site and the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site are not located in a Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitats. No further action is required.

IV.B.3.a.(4) Navigable Waters
(a) Army Corps of Engineers’ (ACOE) Permit (Section 10)
Project Location Site
The proposed Project Location Site does not involve activity in or over an ACOE defined navigable water of the United States, nor does it involve any activity which would affect a navigable water body in such a manner as to impact the navigable capacity of the water body. An ACOE Section 10 Permit is not required.
Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site
The Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site involves an unnamed stream that empties into the Mohawk River, however this activity does not involve any activity which would affect the Mohawk in such a manner as to impact the navigable capacity of it. An ACOE Section 10 Permit is not required.

(b) Coast Guard Permit (Section 9)
Project Location Site
There are no navigable waters within or adjacent to the proposed project site pursuant to Section 9 of the Rivers and Harbors Act. A Coast Guard permit is not required.

Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site
The Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site involves an unnamed stream that empties into the Mohawk River, however, this activity does not involve any activity which would affect the Mohawk in such a manner as to impact the navigable capacity of it. A Coast Guard Section 9 Permit is not required.

IV.B.3.a.(5) Wild, Scenic, and Recreational Rivers
(a) National Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers (Federal)
The proposed Project Location Site and the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site do not involve a National Wild, Scenic or Recreational River as shown by the Nationwide Rivers Inventory List of National Wild and Scenic Rivers. No further review is required.

(b) Wild, Scenic and Recreational Rivers (State)
There are no NYSDEC Designated, Study or Inventory State Wild, Scenic or Recreational Rivers within or adjacent to the proposed Project Location Site or the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site. No further review is required.

IV.B.3.a.(6) Flood Plains
(a) National Flood Insurance
The Project Location Site is not located within a designated floodplain.

The Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site is located within the 100 year Mohawk River Floodway. The Department has determined the creation of a Compensatory Wetland Mitigation site within this floodway will not increase the flood hazard, decrease the floodway area, and is a compatible development within the floodway. The creation of the Compensatory Site will have no effect on National Flood Insurance areas.

(b) Executive Order 11988
The Project Location Site is not located within a designated floodplain.
The Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site is located within the 100 year Mohawk River Floodway. The Department has determined the creation of a Compensatory Wetland Mitigation site within this floodway will not increase the flood hazard, decrease the floodway area, and is a compatible development within the floodway. No further processing is required.

(c) NYS Flood Insurance
The Project Location Site is not located within a designated floodplain.

The Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site is located within the 100 year Mohawk River Floodway. The Department has determined the creation of a Compensatory Wetland Mitigation site within this floodway will not increase the flood hazard, decrease the floodway area, and is a compatible development within the floodway. The creation of the Compensatory Site will have no effect on NYS Flood Insurance areas.

IV.B.3.b. Water Source Quality

IV.B.3.b.(1) Ground Water

Project Location Site
NYSDEC/ USGS aquifer maps have been reviewed and it has been determined that the proposed project is located in an identified Primary Water Supply or Principal Aquifer Area. Impacts to the aquifer are not anticipated and measures will be taken to prevent any construction related impacts that may occur. Project activities will comply with the applicable standards in 6 NYCRR Part 703.

There are no municipal drinking water wells or reservoirs within or near the project area according to the NYS Atlas of Community Water System Sources, dated 1982, issued by the NYS Department of Health.

Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site
NYSDEC/ USGS aquifer maps have been reviewed and it has been determined that the proposed project is located in an identified Primary Water Supply or Principal Aquifer Area. Impacts to the aquifer are not anticipated and measures will be taken to prevent any construction related impacts that may occur. Project activities will comply with the applicable standards in 6 NYCRR Part 703.

The Schenectady County Intermunicipal Water Board and Friends of the Aquifer have been contacted and agreed with NYSDOT’s assessment the mitigation site will not have an affect on the aquifer. Refer to correspondence in Appendix P.

Municipal wells for the Town of Glenville, the City of Schenectady and Town of Rotterdam are located at 2.0 km, 2.9 km, and 2.5 km, respectively, from the...
Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site. The proposed work at this site will have no effect upon these wells.

IV.B.3.b.(2) Point Sources
The proposed Project Location Site and the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site do not involve a discharge of pollutants (including dredged material, solid waste, chemicals and sand) via a point source. No further consideration is necessary.

IV.B.3.b.(3) Storm Water Discharge
The proposed Project Location Site and the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site involve over one acre of earthwork disturbance. A State Pollutant Elimination Discharge System (SPDES) General Permit, GP-02-01, for storm water discharges from construction activity will be required. A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be developed that will incorporate erosion and sediment control plans as well as water quality and quantity controls.

IV.B.3.b.(4) Reservoirs Supplying Water to NYC
The proposed Project Location Site and the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site do not lie within a reservoir supplying water to NYC. No further consideration is necessary.

IV.B.3.b.(5) Sole Source Aquifers
Project Location Site
According to EPA designated Sole Source Aquifer Areas Federal Register Notices, Maps and Fact Sheets, the proposed project is located within the Sole Source Aquifer Boundary of the Schenectady-Niskayuna Aquifer.

This project does not require a Federal Sole Source Aquifer Section 1424(e) review by FHWA and EPA pursuant to Executive Order 12372 because it does not include:
- Construction of additional through traffic lanes, interchanges or rotaries on existing roadways;
- Construction of a two or more lane highway on new alignment;
- Construction of rest areas with on-site sewage disposal facilities; or,
- Other projects which, in the opinion of the FHWA, may have an effect on the water quality of the aquifer to the extent that the goal outlined above (protection of Sole Source Aquifer drinking water supplies) would not be achieved.

If the project work is not one of the four categories listed above, no federal review and/or approval, or preparation of a Groundwater Assessment is required pursuant to Section 1424(e) of the Safe Drinking Water Act.

This project is designed in a manner that will prevent the introduction of any contaminants into the Sole Source Aquifer that may create a public health hazard, or otherwise contaminate the aquifer to a level which would require additional treatment.
facilities by an existing or planned public water system in order to meet the National Interim Primary Drinking Water Regulations as stated in the MOU between FHWA Region I and EPA Region II. This will be accomplished by the use of SPDES II water quality practices throughout the project as well as NYSDOT standard procedures for erosion and sediment control during the construction phase of the project.

Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site
According to EPA designated Sole Source Aquifer Areas Federal Register Notices, Maps and Fact Sheets, the proposed project is located within the Sole Source Aquifer Boundary of the Schenectady-Niskayuna Aquifer. Coordination with EPA and preparation of a Groundwater Assessment is not required since the project scope consists of work that does not require a Federal Sole Source Aquifer Section 1424(e) review by FHWA and USEPA pursuant to Executive Order 12372.

Impacts to the aquifer are not anticipated and measures will be taken to prevent any construction related impacts that may occur. Project activities will comply with the applicable standards in 6 NYCRR Part 703.

The Schenectady County Intermunicipal Water Board and The Friends of the Aquifer Organization have been contacted and have agreed with NYSDOT’s assessment that the mitigation site will not have an affect on the aquifer. Refer to correspondence in Appendix P.

IV.B.3.c. General Ecology and Wildlife

IV.B.3.c.(1) Critical Environmental Areas
Project Location Site
According to information obtained from the NYSDEC, the proposed project does not involve work in or near a Critical Environmental Area (CEA).

Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site
The Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site is located within the designated Town of Rotterdam Critical Environmental Area (CEA). The Department has determined that the project does not significantly, adversely affect the CEA. No further investigation of the CEA is required.

IV.B.3.c.(2) Fish and Wildlife
There are no known unique or unusual fish and wildlife usage or concerns at or near the Project Location Site or the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site.

IV.B.3.c.(3) Forest Preserve Lands
The proposed Project Location Site and the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site are not located within the NYSDEC jurisdictional boundaries of either the Adirondack Park or the Catskill Forest Preserve.
IV.B.3.c.(4) Endangered or Threatened Species
(a) Endangered or Threatened Species (Federal)
Project Location Site
According to the Department’s GIS information database, there are no federally-protected, threatened, or endangered species located in or near (within ½ mile) the proposed Project Location Site.

One federally endangered species, the Indiana bat (Myotis sodalis), has the potential to roost in the cavities or under the bark of larger trees within the project area. While there will be trees larger than 125 mm (5 inch) diameter at breast height (DBH), it is unlikely that this will adversely affect the bat. At this time it is unknown how many trees over 125 mm (5 inch) DBH will be removed. However, most of the wooded areas where trees will be removed are composed primarily of secondary growth trees that are smaller. Additionally the nearest known Indiana bat hibernaculum (area of winter hibernation) is approximately 21.7 km (13.5 miles) away. At this distance, it is unlikely the bats will be roosting within the project limits during the warmer months. Refer to Appendix P for USF&W correspondence.

Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site
According to the Department’s GIS information database, there are no federally-protected, threatened, or endangered species located in or near (within ½ mile) the proposed Project Location Site.

One federally endangered species, the Indiana bat (Myotis sodalis), has the potential to roost in the cavities or under the bark of larger trees within the project area. There are no trees over 125 mm (5 inch) DBH that will be removed at the mitigation site. Additionally, the nearest known Indiana bat hibernaculum (area of winter hibernation) is approximately 24.14 km (15 miles) away. At this distance, it is unlikely the bats will be roosting within the mitigation area limits during the warmer months. Refer to Appendix P for USF&W concurrence.

(b) Endangered or Threatened Species (State)
Project Location Site
According to the Department’s GIS information database, there are no state-protected, threatened, or endangered species located in or near the proposed Project Location Site. NYSDEC Natural Heritage Program was contacted for information on endangered species. They responded that there are no known occurrences of rare or state-listed animals or plants, significant natural communities, or other significant habitats, on or in the immediate vicinity of the project site. The NYSDEC response is included in the Appendix P.
Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site
The NY Natural Heritage database of threatened and endangered species was screened for the above referenced project. The database showed one extant plant record, Side-oats Grama (Bouteloua curtipendula var. curtipendula) and two historical plant records, Northern Wild Comfrey (Cynoglossum virginianum var. virginianum) and Carey’s Smartweed (Persicaria careyi). A field visit by DOT environmental staff on November 22, 2006 found that no suitable habitat (rocky open slopes) existed on the project site for Side-oats Grama or for Northern Wild Comfrey (upland woods). No plants were found during a field survey for Carey’s Smartweed whose habitat is moist, open to semi-open areas, often in sandy soil: swamps, thickets, riverbeds, sand prairies, and disturbed areas such as fields, meadows, clearings, recent barns, and cultivated ground. A record of this field survey is included in Appendix P.

IV.B.3.(5) Wildlife and Waterfowl Refuges
The proposed Project Location Site and the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site do not involve work in or adjacent to a wildlife or waterfowl refuge. No further consideration is required.

IV.B.3.d. Historical and Cultural Resources

IV.B.3.d.(1) National Historic Preservation Act (Section 106 Process)
Project Location Site
There are no historic properties eligible for, or listed on the National Register of Historic Places within the Project Location Site’s area of potential effect. Three cultural resources surveys were completed under two different PIN numbers. The surveys were completed in April 2005 (PIN 1306.50), September 2005 (PIN 1721.78), and October 2005 (PIN 1306.50). The surveys did not find any structures within the project limits that were eligible to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The surveys also indicate that the project area has been significantly disturbed, and that the project is unlikely to disturb areas that contain archeological resources.

The Department has determined that this project will have no effect on historic properties. FHWA has concurred with this determination. The memorandums indicating FHWA concurrence have been placed in Appendix P. This concludes the Section 106 Process.

Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site
There are no historic properties eligible for, or listed on the National Register of Historic Places within the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site’s area of potential effect. A cultural resource survey was completed in September 2006 (PIN 1306.50). The survey did not find any structures or archeological resources eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
The Department determined that this undertaking will have no effect on historic properties. FHWA has concurred with this determination. The memorandum indicating FHWA concurrence has been placed in Appendix P. This concludes the Section 106 Process.

IV.B.3.d.(2) Section 4(f)

Project Location Site
The CRS has found that there are no properties on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places or properties over 50 years old that may be eligible within the project’s area of potential effect. A Section 4(f) evaluation for historical resources is not required.

The CRS also found that the project area has been significantly disturbed in the past and that this project will not be likely to disturb areas that contain archaeological resources. A Section 4(f) evaluation will not be required for archaeological resources.

Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site
The cultural resource survey has found that there are no properties on or eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places, or properties over 50 years old that may be eligible within the compensatory wetland mitigation site’s area of potential effect. A Section 4(f) evaluation for historical resources is not required.

In addition, an archaeological survey was conducted to determine the presence of such resources. No such resources were found in the project vicinity. A Section 4(f) evaluation will not be required for archaeological resources.

IV.B.3.d.(3) Section 110 of the National Historic Preservation Act
The proposed Project Location Site and the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site do not involve federally owned, jurisdictional or controlled property that is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places. This section does not apply.

IV.B.3.d.(4) American Antiquities Act of 1906
The proposed Project Location Site and the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site are not within Federal or Native-American-owned property. American Antiquities Act does not apply. No further investigation is required.

IV.B.3.d.(5) Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979
The Department has followed the Section 106 Process of the National Historic Preservation Act (36 CFR 800). This ensures compliance with this Act.

IV.B.3.d.(6) American Indian Religious Freedom Act
The Department has followed the Section 106 Process of the National Historic Preservation Act (36 CFR 800). This has ensured compliance with this Act. In
addition, places or artifacts of religious importance to Native Americans were not found within the project impact area.

IV.B.3.d.(7) NYS Historic Preservation Act of 1980 (Section 14.09)
Because the project is a federally funded action, the Department has followed the Section 106 Process of the National Historic Preservation Act. This has ensured compliance with the NYSHPA Section 14.09 process.

IV.B.3.d.(8) NYS Historic Bridges
There are no bridges over 50 years old or listed on the Historic Bridge Inventory located within the Project Location Site or within the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site’s area of potential effect.

IV.B.3.d.(9) NYS Historic Canal Bridges
The Historic Bridge Inventory has no listing of any historic canal bridges within the Project Location Site’s area of potential effect or within the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site’s area of potential effect.

IV.B.3.e. Visual Resources

Project Location
The main project area type is urban commercial. The primary land use is commercial on rolling terrain. The primary visual elements of the project include the Route 7 / Route 2 highway corridor (including adjacent structures), the Route 7 bridge and associated highway and bridge features, the I-87 corridor, the two major highway signalized intersections at Wade Road and Utica Avenue / Erin Street (Latham Farms), and the vegetation within and adjacent to Route 7 / Route 2.

Views of I-87, Route 7 bridge, Latham Farms, and Latham Center are dominant within the eastern and central portions of the project. The intersection of Route 7 and Wade Road is the dominant view at the westernmost portion of the project corridor. West of the interchange, the visual corridor is generally contained by commercial development and undeveloped woodland along the southern side of Route 7. East of the interchange, commercial development on the north side and residential development on the south side of Route 7 / Route 2 contain the corridor views. The residential properties on the side streets are visible from the corridor, but they do not abut the Route 7 / Route 2 right of way. The vegetation present is typical of a suburban commercial development. Recently planted street trees and shrubs exist in front of and within the developed properties.

The I-87 corridor consists of three 3.6 m wide travel lanes with two varying width shoulders. A grass median separates the south bound and north bound lanes. The Exit 6 ramps have an existing lane width varying between 3.6 m and 4.2 m with varying width shoulders. Natural vegetation is growing along I-87. An open drainage system carries highway runoff to one of the streams within the project limits.
The project location, physical characteristics of the corridor, and the scale and type of the development has an affect on the number of people that will view the project corridor. The main viewer groups related to this project are:

- Highway Users of Route 7 / Route 2 and I-87 (commuters, tourists, pedestrians, and bicyclists)
- Residents adjacent to the corridor
- Employees / Patrons of the various businesses within the corridor

The views within the Route 7 / Route 2 corridor are limited, due to vegetation, topography, and commercial and residential development. The views become more expansive at the interchange when looking north and south along the Northway. Large stands of common reed (Phragmites australis) are growing along I-87, in the existing ditches and on the embankments of the structure. The majority of the invasive plant species will be removed during the construction of the project.

The proposed reconstruction of the Route 7 bridge and the adjacent Route 7 / Route 2 corridor will limit views to and from the roadway corridor. People who live, work, or travel through the corridor will experience clear, short range views of the project.

The existing diamond interchange will be reconstructed to a different interchange design that is slightly wider and higher in profile. The existing bridge does not include sidewalks or shoulders. The existing seven lane bridge will be replaced with a bridge that supports a Double Left Turn Diamond Interchange or a Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI). The proposed horizontal alignment of Route 7 / Route 2, I-87, and Exit 6 ramps would generally follow the existing highway alignment. The horizontal alignment of the Exit 6 ramps would vary for each alternative. The proposed vertical alignment of Route 7 / Route 2 and the Exit 6 ramps would be raised above the existing ramps to provide additional vertical clearance underneath the new bridge. The proposed vertical alignment of the Northway would follow the existing highway.

The existing bridge is a prominent focal point from the I-87. The views along I-87 are limited by the surrounding natural vegetation and commercial development. Guide rail and steeper side slopes (1:2) than the standards (1:4) were utilized to minimize the impacts to the existing wetlands and vegetation. Views of the structure from the commercial businesses are at an oblique angle and are partially and/or wholly obstructed by vegetation. The visual significance of the bridge is diminished when viewed at a distance, at an obscure angle, and when obstructed by an object.

The existing three span bridge, with 3 piers, will be replaced with a two-span, one pier, steel girder structure. The proposed typical section would generally consist of two 3.6 m travel lanes, two 3.6 m left turn lanes, a 1.8 m shoulder, and a 1.7 m sidewalk in each direction. Dependant upon the alternative, a 3.6 m raised median could be provided. Other
proposed bridge features being considered are: a decorative concrete parapet with ornamental fencing mounted to the top of the parapet, concrete pylons with a recessed architectural pattern, Mechanically Stabilized Earth (MSE) Retaining Walls, colored and with an architectural finish, and decorative lights (only the structure). The proposed bridge features reflect the surrounding contemporary commercial land use development.

The approaches to the new bridge will require widening and partial reconstruction of the Route 7 / Route 2 corridor from approximately Wade Road to the west, to Utica Avenue / Erin Street (Latham Farms). Sidewalks will be constructed throughout the project limits on both sides of Route 7 / Route 2. A raised median will be constructed west of the interchange to Wade Road. The raised median could be landscaped with trees and shrubs and/or turf. The snow storage areas and possibly a 0.6m (2 ft) area around the perimeter of the raised median will be of a decorative hardscape material. Several small retaining walls will be utilized to save some existing street trees in front of Super 8 Motel, and to minimize the impacts to the existing businesses.

This project will not result in a significant visual change to the aesthetics of the project area. However, all of the viewer groups will notice the visual differences between the existing corridor features and the newly introduced roadway features, such as, sidewalks, a raised median (possibly landscaped), the decorative bridge features, and the different interchange design. No new negative views or vistas would be introduced as a result of this project. Where applicable, vegetation removed from developed properties will be replaced. Any additional plantings will be utilized to enhance the aesthetics of the highway corridor. This project will be designed to complement and enhance the vision and goals of the communities involved by incorporating modern design techniques that create a safer environment for both the highway user and pedestrian.

This project will not have a significant negative effect on any visual resources.

Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site
The site consists mostly of herbaceous vegetation, small stand of trees, and an unnamed tributary to the Mohawk River. The site also consists of several low quality emergent wetlands. These wetlands are dominated with Purple Loosestrife (Lythrum salicaria). The Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site will be constructed by excavating approximately 13,355 m² (3.3 acres), of which 1868 m² (0.46 acres) is low quality ACOE wetlands. The improvements to this parcel of land will result in a higher quality wetland by removing the invasive plant species and through the introduction of new woody vegetation. The proposed improvements to the site will also have a positive visual impact on the area for the highway users.

This project will not have a significant negative effect on any visual resources.
IV.B.3.f. Natural Landmarks

There are no identified natural landmarks within the Project Location Site or the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site that are currently included on the National Registry of Natural Landmarks.

IV.B.3.g. Parks and Recreational Facilities

IV.B.3.g.(1) Section 4(f)
There are no publicly owned parks or recreational facilities protected under Section 4(f) of the USDOT Act in or adjacent to the Project Location Site or the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site. No further action is required under this section.

IV.B.3.g.(2) Section 6(f)
The Project Location Site or the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site do not impact parkland that has been partially or fully federally funded through the Land and Water Conservation Act. In addition, no property will be acquired or developed with Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, 6(f), funds for this project. No further consideration under Section 6(f) is required.

IV.B.3.g.(3) State Parks and Preserves
Neither the Project Location Site nor the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site lie within a State Park or Preserve. No further action is required under this section.

IV.B.3.g.(4) Section 1010
Neither the Project Location Site nor the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site involve the use of land from a park in which Urban Park and Recovery Program funds have been applied. No further processing under Section 1010 is required.

IV.B.3.g.(5) Heritage Areas
Neither the proposed Project Location Site nor the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site will impact areas identified as Heritage Areas.

IV.B.3.h. Farmland Protection

IV.B.3.h.(1) Farmland (Federal)
Neither the proposed Project Location Site nor the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site will convert any prime or unique farmland, or farmland of state or local importance, as defined by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, to a nonagricultural use.
IV.B.3.h.(2) Farmland (State)
Based on a general site reconnaissance and review of available documentation, neither the Project Location Site nor the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site are located in or adjacent to an Agricultural District.

IV.B.3.i. Air, Noise and Energy

IV.B.3.i.(1) Clean Air Act (CAA)
The Project Location Site and the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site are located in Albany and Schenectady Counties respectively. These counties are considered ozone marginal non-attainment areas. The project is designated as an exempt project and comes from the Transportation Plan and the 2005-2010 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Capital District Urban Area. This TIP has been found to conform by the Capital District Transportation Committee and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The project’s design scope and concept have not changed since the TIP amendment determination was made.

IV.B.3.i.(2) Air Quality Analysis
Carbon Monoxide (CO) Analysis
An air quality analysis for CO is not required since neither the Project Location Site nor the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site propose to increase traffic volumes, reduce source-receptor distances by 10% or more, or change other existing conditions to such a degree as to jeopardize attainment of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. A project-level conformity determination is not required. See Appendix S for the Air Quality Analysis screening prepared for the Project Site Location.

Particulate Matter (PM) Analysis
This Project Location Site and the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site were determined to be a SEQR Non Type II Action and is classified as a NEPA Class II Categorical Exclusion. The project actions do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on PM emissions. It can therefore be concluded that the project will have no significant adverse impact on ambient PM levels.

IV.B.3.i.(3) Lead Standards
FHWA has advised that micro scale lead analyses for highway projects is not needed or warranted. Lead emissions have substantially been reduced from previous levels due to the reduction of lead in gasoline. Future lead emissions will be reduced and eventually eliminated as a result of regulation and legislation, including the prohibition of the manufacture, sale, or introduction into commerce of any engine requiring leaded gasoline after model year 1992 and the requirement for reformulated gasoline to contain no heavy metals (such as lead).
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IV.B.3.i.(4) Noise
The Project Location Site and the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site will be developed in conformance with 23 CFR 772 and do not require a traffic noise analysis. The proposed project will not significantly change either the horizontal or vertical alignment or increase the number of through-traffic lanes in the corridor. The acceleration/deceleration lanes between the Exit 5 and Exit 6 bridges will be extended to consist of a continuous acceleration/deceleration lane on both sides of I-87. This lane is less than 2.4 km (1.5 miles) long, and is being provided for operational efficiency. It therefore qualifies as a Type II project as defined by 23 CFR 772.5 and guidance from FHWA.

There are two types of projects: Type I: Those involving new highway construction or major reconstruction projects on new alignment for which noise abatement is mandatory and Type II: Retrofit projects where noise abatement is discretionary. NYSDOT policy is that Type II projects will not be considered without separate funds from the Legislature. For additional details regarding areas where noise abatement would be beneficial in the I-87 corridor refer to NYSDOT’s, Region One Interstate Noise Barrier Planning Study, dated May 2001.

A slight increase in noise levels may exist during the construction of the project. The contract specifications will require that the contractor’s equipment strictly adhere to federal noise regulations.

IV.B.3.i.(5) Energy Assessment
The proposed project is classified as a categorical exclusion with documentation and will not require an energy analysis since, by definition; it will not significantly impact energy utilization. Additionally, the project is not expected to:
- Increase or decrease vehicle miles traveled;
- Generate additional vehicle trips;
- Significantly affect land use development patterns;
- Result in a shift in travel patterns; or
- Significantly increase or decrease vehicle operating speeds.

IV.B.3.j. Contaminated Materials Assessment

IV.B.3.j.(1) Asbestos Assessment
Project Location Site
An asbestos assessment survey was performed for the bridge removal by Shumaker Engineering. It was found that the bridge contains asbestos containing material (ACM). The ACM consists of non-friable sheet packing located at the top of the abutment back wall between the bridge seat and the bridge deck on both abutments.
The paint on the bridge has also been tested for ACM and determined to be non-ACM. This information can be found in the Asbestos Assessment Survey dated July 2005.

The removal and disposal of ACM will be performed in accordance with all applicable federal and state regulations.

The structure which will require the building cut-off The two structures which will be acquired and razed as part of the proposed project will be inspected to determine whether asbestos-containing materials (ACM’s) are present in the structures. Coordination with the affected property owners will be made to schedule on site inspections. Based on the age of the structures, it is assumed that the buildings contain ACM’s in pipe insulation, floor tiles, plaster and roof material and will require in depth inspection and remediation.

Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site
A phase I asbestos survey was performed as part of the Hazardous Waste survey for The Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site. No evidence of asbestos containing materials was found. The checklist is in Appendix U.

IV.B.3.j.(2) Hazardous Waste

Project Location Site
A Hazardous Waste Assessment (Phase I Assessment) was completed for the proposed Project Location Site. A copy of the Site Inspection checklist can be found in Appendix U. The project site contains little or no potential for hazardous wastes. Although petroleum contaminated material was found at 579-679 Troy Schenectady Road, levels are below hazardous thresholds as indicated in a report prepared by Precision Environmental Services, Inc, titled Interim Remedial Measures Report of Findings, February 2004. A detailed investigation is not required.

Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site
A Hazardous Waste Assessment (Phase I Assessment) was completed for the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site. A copy of the Site Inspection checklist can be found in Appendix U. The project site contains little or no potential for hazardous wastes or contaminated material. A detailed investigation is not required.

IV.B.3.j.(3) Hazardous Spills

Project Location Site
The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Lists of Hazardous Spills indicated that a spill at a former gas station at 579 Troy Schenectady Road was cleaned only to the utility lines bordering the roadway, therefore, petroleum contaminated soil (non-hazardous) may be encountered at excavation depths of 1.8 m (6 ft) or below in this vicinity during proposed project activities. NYSDOT’s Contaminated Soil Standard Specification will be added to the contract if excavation is anticipated in this area.
Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site
The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Lists of Hazardous Spills indicated there were no spills at the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site.

IV.B.3.j.(4) Storage Tanks
According to the NYSDEC’s list of storage tanks, and as verified by a site visit, there are no storage tanks within the proposed Project Location Site area or the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site.

IV.B.3.k. Construction Impacts

Project Location Site
The anticipated construction impacts from the proposed project include minor noise, air and traffic disruptions during construction operations. There are no long-term impacts to the environment anticipated as a result of the activities proposed during construction.

Several short-term impacts may be caused by the construction activities for this project. These impacts may include traffic delays due to lane and ramp closures, dust and noise from earthwork and construction equipment, and water quality impacts due to runoff from the construction areas. These impacts will be minimized through a variety of measures included in the contract documents. The use of temporary and long term lane closures will be needed during the construction of the new Route 7 bridge, the widening of Route 7 / Route 2 and the construction of auxiliary lanes along I-87. These lane closures may result in delays to the traveling public.

The NYSDOT has investigated various staged options for the construction of the proposed bridge. The two stage bridge construction alternative allowing a single through lane and a single left turn lane in each direction at the interchange has been determined to be the preferred method of bridge construction. This alternative reduces the construction time, minimizes costs, and minimizes potential effects to adjacent residents, businesses, and the traveling public utilizing the interchange. Under this alternative, some existing traffic will likely utilize other adjacent roadways to avoid the potential congestion resulting from the reduction of travel lanes.

To minimize effects to businesses, construction work adjacent to businesses would be conducted during hours of low or no operation if possible. Access to existing businesses would be maintained for the duration of construction. Traffic delays will be minimized through the development of detailed Maintenance and Protection of Traffic Plans. These plans would require coordination with adjacent property and business owners to minimize the potential effects of the construction. They will also specify restrictions on the time and length of lane closures, and require that two lanes of thru traffic be maintained during peak periods and during non-construction hours. Dust control measures as well as requirements
for mufflers on all equipment exhaust systems will be included in the construction specifications.

The project proposes to install a raised median on sections of Route 7 / Route 2. These raised medians would control access by preventing left-turns to and from Route 7 / Route 2 between Wade Road and Rensselaer Avenue. The existing splitter island on Wade Road North will be extended in an effort to improve the traffic movements at the intersection with Route 7.

The displacement of two businesses and the acquisition of one commercial property would be required by the proposed alternatives. One displaced business is the doctor’s office located at 585 Troy Schenectady Road on the corner of the Route 2 / Erin Street intersection. The commercial property that would be acquired is a Subway store located at 679 Troy Schenectady Road, on the corner of the Route 7 / Forts Ferry Road intersection. The Subway would be the second business displaced. Subway’s existing parking area, and all access drives from Route 7 and Forts Ferry Road would be removed to improve traffic control along Forts Ferry Road and Route 7.

The project would reconfigure and consolidate access to and from Route 7 at the existing Mobil station. The two existing driveways allow all movements to and from Route 7 at this location. The project would limit direct access between Mobil and Route 7 to right-in and right-out movements, eliminating two left turn locations on Route 7. A new driveway for Mobil would be constructed on Rensselaer Avenue. Access between Mobil and Rensselaer Avenue would not be limited and left-turn movements to Route 7 would be accommodated at the Rensselaer Avenue intersection.

Pedestrian accommodations would be maintained over the existing structure or on portions of the proposed bridge to allow pedestrian passage over I-87 during construction. Pedestrians and bicyclists are prohibited from traveling on I-87. Bicyclists will utilize the travel lanes on Route 7 / Route 2 and over the existing and proposed structure during construction.

Water quality impacts will be minimized through the development of Soil Erosion and Water Pollution Control Plans and Details, and a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan.

The construction activities will be designed to minimize effects on businesses and residences in the project area. Access to all commercial and residential driveways will be maintained at all times throughout construction.

Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site
The anticipated construction impacts from the proposed project include minor noise, air and traffic disruptions during construction operations. There are no long-term impacts to the environment anticipated as a result of the proposed construction activities.
Several short-term impacts may be caused by the construction activities for this project. These impacts may include traffic delays due to lane closures, dust and noise from earthwork and construction equipment, and water quality impacts due to runoff from the construction areas. These impacts will be minimized through a variety of measures included in the contract documents.

Water quality impacts will be minimized through the development of Soil Erosion and Water Pollution Control Plans and Details, and a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan.

The construction activities for this project will not have any effect on businesses and residences because there are no businesses or residences within the project area.

IV.B.3.k.(1) Borrow Areas
Project Location Site
It is anticipated that additional fill from outside the project limits will be required to accomplish the proposed work. The source of the additional fill will be dependent on the Contractor.

Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site
It is anticipated that the construction of the Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site will not require any material from borrow areas or borrow pits.

IV.B.3.k.(2) Spoil Areas
Project Location Site
It is anticipated that spoil areas will be primarily areas requiring fill material (i.e. embankments) during construction with the exception of those areas requiring structural fill. The areas of spoils will be limited in extent as possible.

Compensatory Wetland Mitigation Site
It is anticipated that spoil areas will be primarily areas requiring fill material (i.e. embankments) during construction with the exception of those areas requiring structural fill. The areas of spoils will be limited in extent as possible.

IV.B.3.l. Anticipated Permits, Approvals, and Coordination

- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Section 404 Nationwide Permit #23- Approved Categorical Exclusions.
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Section 401/ NYSDEC Title 5 Water Quality Certifications
- NYSDEC State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) General Permit
- New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, Article 24- Freshwater Wetlands Permit (GP 06-02)
- Coordination with NYSDEC pursuant to the “NYSDEC/NYS DOT Memorandum of Understanding Regarding ECL Article 15 & 24”
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- Coordination with Federal Highway Administration
- Town of Colonie, Work on non-state owned highways and potential maintenance and protection of traffic including signed detours.

IV.B.4. Indirect / Secondary and Cumulative Impacts

The secondary effects and cumulative impacts expected for this project are summarized in the following paragraphs. Pursuant to the definitions in Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ) Regulation 1508, “effects” include secondary (indirect) effects “which are caused by the action and are later in time or farther removed in the distance, but are still reasonably foreseeable. Indirect effects may include growth inducing effects and other effects related to inducing changes in the pattern of land use, population density or growth rate, and related effects on air and water and on the natural systems, including ecosystems.” For this project, secondary effects are those which may occur as a result of construction of the proposed Exit 6 Interchange and associated improvements along the I-87 and Route 7 / Route 2 corridors.

The CEQ further states that cumulative impacts are identified as “the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.”

IV.B.4.a. Indirect / Secondary Impacts
Secondary effects can be further considered as those actions that would not or could not occur except for implementation of the project. The following list outlines the reasonably foreseeable secondary effects which may result by the construction of the Exit 6 Interchange and surrounding corridors:

- Improved access management and safer ingress/egress to existing businesses and residences access points.
- Improved pedestrian and bicyclist accommodations along the Route 7 / Route 2 corridor.
- Improved roadway aesthetics through enhanced landscaping and construction of a raised median.
- Improved capacity / traffic control along the Route 7 / Route 2 and Interstate 87 corridor.

Refer to Chapter III.C.2.q of this report for additional details regarding the Route 7 / Route 2 corridor and the NY 7 / NY 2 Corridor Transportation and Land Use Study prepared for the Town of Colonie, dated December 2005 (Available from the Town of Colonie’s webpage, www.colonie.org).
IV.B.4.b. Cumulative Impacts

By definition, cumulative impact scenarios evaluate the impacts of past, present and reasonably foreseeable future developments by any agency, public or private. For the Exit 6 Interchange project, it can be inferred that the “past” scenario is represented by the existing conditions, including the reconstruction of I-87 Exit 5 which is scheduled for completion in December, 2007. Projects already or anticipated to be approved by the Town of Colonie and/or NYSDOT representing “present and foreseeable development” are as follows:

- “Site Layout Plan”, 650 Troy-Schenectady Road, dated 1/26/07. This plan proposes to build a retail/commercial development on the south side of Route 7. The site encompasses 0.74 hectares (1.83 acres) and will be built beyond the highway ROW. As such, this development is under the control of the municipality and to be processed following SEQR.

- “Zoning Verification Map”, Proposed Albany RV Retail Center, #48 & 49 Rensselaer Avenue dated 9/18/06. Map shows proposal to develop parcel for Albany RV office space and inventory.

- NYSDOT project PIN 1721.89, “I87: Western Avenue - Saratoga County Line, P1, Anticipated construction 2011, Scope to be determined. Currently projected to include pavement reconstruction/rehabilitation.

- NYSDOT project “Exit 3: Airport Interchange”, Anticipated letting beyond 2013, Scope unknown. No further discussion will be included in this document regarding this project, as scope and funding are uncertain.

Refer to map incorporated at the end of this section.

The following are identified as planned redevelopments for the area in Section II.C.1.w of this report:

- Redevelopment of the existing Medical/Dental property located at 694 Troy Schenectady Road
- Redevelopment of 760 Troy Schenectady Road (George’s Market)

No plans are available for these potential redevelopments, and due to this, the potential cumulative impacts from these potential projects cannot be ascertained or discussed. These two potential redevelopments will not be included in the discussions in this section.

Additionally, the Town of Colonie’s, NY 7 / NY 2 Corridor Transportation and Land Use Study - December 2005, provides recommendations for updating the following:
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- Airport area GEIS
- Zoning amendments
- Long term transit improvement plan

Recommendations are based upon and consistent with the vision of study area established by the Town and accepted by local residents. (Reference: CDTC’s New Vision, available at from their webpage at www.cdtcmpo.org).

The Exit 6 Interchange construction project combined with other present and future developments in the project area could have the potential to produce physical or environmental impacts in excess of those identified for this project alone. Although all existing and future developments must follow the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) prior to their approval, the potential for cumulative impacts should be considered.

The final scopes for the foreseeable development projects are currently unknown. All reasonably anticipated effects have been taken under consideration in the discussion of potential cumulative impacts that follows.

General Ecology and Endangered Species
The potential cumulative effect of the three identified projects on vegetation and wildlife is unlikely to be significant as the Route 7 / Route 2 corridor is currently heavily developed and the Interstate right of way has been previously disturbed and is maintained as a highway corridor. While the future NYSDOT PIN 1721.89 - I87: Western Avenue – Saratoga County project scope is not fully developed at this time, based on the current projected scope of the project, there is not expected to be permanent impact to vegetation or existing wildlife habitats. As is the case with all NYSDOT projects, detailed landscaping and erosion and sediment control plans are required and this could also be a requirement of future commercial proposals for municipality review prior to site plan approval.

NYSDOT has identified several endangered or potentially endangered plant species within the limits of the future NYSDOT PIN 1721.89 - I87: Western Avenue - Saratoga County highway project. These species have been identified utilizing the Department’s GIS information database along with NY Natural Heritage database. The scope of this project has not been determined, and the affect of this project on endangered species cannot be ascertained until the scope of work is resolved. More detailed screenings will be conducted in accordance with NYSDOT policies after the scope of the project has been established.

Farmland
Future development other than the developments identified along the Route 7 / Route 2 corridor has the potential to result in the conversion of lands currently utilized for agricultural uses. A review by the Town under the SEQR process would need to be
conducted. Refer to the *NY 7 / NY 2 Corridor Transportation and Land Use Study* - December 2005 for further details.

Construction of the Exit 6 Interchange will not result in the conversion of any prime or unique Agricultural Districts or prime or unique farmland, or farmland of state or local importance as defined by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. It can reasonably be interpreted the future NYSDOT PIN 1721.89 - I87: Western Avenue - Saratoga County project will also not result in any impacts to farmlands based upon a preliminary screening.

**Waterbodies and Wetlands**

Present and future development in the project area may impact Army Corps of Engineers wetlands, in addition to the impacts identified for this project. If wetlands within the study areas were filled as a result of development and not replaced, it is expected that there would be a cumulative negative impact on water quality.

It is anticipated that cumulative negative impacts on water quality would be minimized or avoided since replacement of functionally comparable wetland is often required by the Army Corps of Engineers. Wetlands created as a result of a federally issued wetland permit would replace natural wetlands and continue to serve as sinks for sediments and nutrients in the watershed. During field investigations for the Exit 6 interchange the primary loss of wetlands was to low quality emergent and shrub scrub wetlands dominated by phragmites. Several mitigation sites were explored, and areas within the I-87 corridor are typically not ideal locations due to controlling the movement of invasive species from areas beyond DOT right of way or control. Thus, it is anticipated offsite areas may be necessary for future projects as is the case with compensatory mitigation for the Exit 6 project.

Potential impacts related to stormwater management and water quality would be mitigated through the NYSDEC SPDES stormwater management requirements. Each present and future development would be required to design and implement appropriate permanent stormwater management systems to address impacts to water quality in accordance with State and local standards. Requiring that post-development rates do not exceed pre-development rates would ensure protection of any watercourses which maybe effected. Thus, it does not appear there would be a cumulative effect on water quality.

**Traffic, Air and Noise**

Actual traffic projections for the project were discussed in Chapters III and include future development consistent with existing zoning. Construction of the proposed Exit 6 Interchange or the NYSDOT PIN 1721.89 - I87: Western Avenue - Saratoga County Line would not affect projected future traffic volumes along Route 7 / Route 2, I-87, or the Exit 6 area. The development of 650 Troy Schenectady Road and Proposed Albany RV Retail Center parcels can be expected to increase traffic volumes slightly, however,
the volume projections related to the Exit 6 interchange project include potential development. Linking of signals along Route 7 / Route 2 installation of loop detectors to provide real time vehicle queuing information to signal controllers will allow optimization of traffic flow.

Additional future development in addition to those listed within the project area may have the potential to increase traffic noise levels due to the increase in traffic volumes and an evaluation of the maximum noise level increase would need to be evaluated. Noise level changes of less than 3dBA are not detectable by the human ear. It is not expected the cumulative impacts would exceed 66dBA identified as the threshold for noise abatement as a result of development alone, but if they should mitigation measures such as the construction of noise walls, could be explored by the developer in coordination with the town.

The Exit 6 highway project and the NYSDOT PIN 1721.89 - I87: Western Avenue - Saratoga County Line are classified as Type 2 projects with regard to noise. The current projected scope of PIN 1721.89 is a pavement rehabilitation project and is currently not intended to increase capacity or add additional lanes to I-87.

There are two types of projects: Type 1: Those involving new highway construction or major reconstruction projects on new alignment for which noise abatement is mandatory and Type 2: Retrofit projects where noise abatement is discretionary. NYSDOT policy is that Type 2 projects will not be considered without separate funds from the Legislature. For additional details regarding areas where noise abatement would be beneficial in the I-87 corridor refer to NYSDOT’s, Region One Interstate Noise Barrier Planning Study, dated May 2001.

Future development in the project area other than those listed may have the potential to result in air quality impacts due to increases in traffic volumes. For the Exit 6 project an analysis threshold screening was performed and revealed the intersections along Route 7 and I-87 corridor do not require additional detailed microscale air quality analysis. The study included projected traffic volumes, thus it can be inferred along the Route 7 / Route 2 corridor there will be minor if any cumulative impacts associated with air quality. A future screening for the I87: Western Avenue - Saratoga County, project will be performed in accordance with DOT policy and effects on air quality will be documented.

Historic Resources
The Exit 6 Interchange will have no impact on cultural resources thus there would be no cumulative impacts. It is anticipated there would be no cumulative impacts associated PIN 1721.89 - I87: Western Avenue - Saratoga County, project, however a future screening would need to be completed.
Any future development of the land along the Route 7 / Route 2 corridor would require review through the SEQRA during site plan/subdivision review process.