Introduction

At the time of the attacks on the World Trade Center, the reconstruction of Route 9A as a heavily landscaped boulevard with a continuous bikeway and accompanying walkway was almost complete. The devastating attacks of September 11th and subsequent recovery and clean-up activity caused serious damage to Route 9A. The roadway in the vicinity of the World Trade Center, including the two northbound lanes located within the slurry wall, was destroyed.

"...We must anticipate and accommodate the changes brought about by September 11th...the creation of a memorial that will attract at least 5 million visitors a year...a new World Trade Center site with tens of thousands of workers...and a revitalized Lower Manhattan with new cultural institutions attracting millions more... The Lower Manhattan transportation plan I'm proposing today has four pillars: to create a new grand point of arrival in Lower Manhattan, akin to midtown's Grand Central Station; to rationalize and improve Lower Manhattan's tangled web of subway lines; to provide a respectful setting for a memorial and to create a grand promenade along West Street..."

Governor George Pataki
April 24, 2003
Background Route 9A

Located along the waterfront between 59th Street and Battery Place in Manhattan, Route 9A (West Side Highway / West Street) is a multi-modal six to eight-lane urban arterial highway, with a continuous Class I bikeway and accompanying walkway. A Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Reconstruction of Route 9A from Battery Place to 59th Street was published in 1994; at the time of the attacks on the World Trade Center, the project was approximately 95% complete.

LMDC Transportation Strategies

The destructive effects of September 11, 2001, have necessitated the restoration of and served as a catalyst for the renewal of Lower Manhattan’s transportation system. As Lower Manhattan rebuilds, it is critical not only to restore the transportation functionality lost due to the disaster, but also to anticipate and accommodate the range of changes that September 11th has triggered. These changes include the creation of a glorious and fitting September 11th memorial, the transformation of the World Trade Center site, and the broader revitalization of Lower Manhattan.

Issued April 24, 2003, by the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, Metropolitan Transportation Authority, Port Authority of NY & NJ, New York State Department of Transportation and City of New York, the Lower Manhattan Transportation Strategies report sets forth strategies for the revitalization of the Lower Manhattan transportation network. All work proposed by NYSDOT is consistent with and builds upon these strategies.

Post 9/11 - Background

A six-lane temporary road opened on March 29, 2002, marking the interim restoration of a vital artery through Lower Manhattan and permitting the opening of the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel. This was an important first step toward restoring the transportation network of Lower Manhattan. However, this temporary six-lane road was not designed to accommodate current and future transportation needs. The temporary pedestrian bridge at Rector Street and a planned temporary pedestrian bridge at Vesey Street are not adequate to address current and future pedestrian needs. This Route 9A Project replaces the roadway to its pre-9/11 vehicular capacity, improves pedestrian access and provides a continuous bikeway and walkway.
Role of Route 9A

Prior to 9/11, Route 9A in the vicinity of the World Trade Center site served 170,000 people per day walking, biking and riding in vehicles. In the busiest hour, Route 9A served twice as many pedestrians as vehicles. Each weekday morning, approximately 260 commuter buses, carrying 14,000 people came from the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel HOV lane onto Route 9A. Once the World Trade Center site is redeveloped and the Memorial is built, pedestrian traffic is expected to increase.

Goals

The goals of the Route 9A Project/Lower Manhattan Redevelopment are to:

• Permanently restore the functionality of Route 9A,
• Improve pedestrian movements along and across Route 9A,
• Provide for an appropriate and respectful setting for the Memorial,
• Enhance green areas and open space,
• Support economic recovery and development,
• Ensure community involvement and public participation in an open process,
• Coordinate with other major transportation and development projects,
• Avoid or minimize environmental and construction impacts to the community,
• Provide a safe, timely and cost effective solution.
The At-Grade Alternative would restore eight lanes, four northbound and four southbound, in front of the World Trade Center site, as approved in the 1994 Environmental Impact Statement. The restoration would require the original alignment adjacent to the World Trade Center to shift slightly to the west to avoid the now exposed slurry wall. The At-Grade Alternative would provide turning lanes at Liberty and Vesey Streets. A narrow planted median would provide pedestrian refuge areas between the north and southbound traffic lanes. The At-Grade Alternative would cost $175 million, and once selected would take one year to design and one and a half years to build. This will be considered the No-Build Alternative.

The Short Bypass Alternative encompassing the segment between Albany and Chambers streets would restore eight lanes in front of the World Trade Center site by depressing four lanes and providing four lanes at grade. Through traffic would travel below grade and local traffic would remain on the surface. The bypass would drop below street grade just north of Albany Street and rise up to street level just south of Murray Street. By depressing half of the eight traffic lanes, the Short Bypass Alternative would feature a wide planted median, enhanced green space and public space at the World Trade Center site and the World Financial Center. The sidewalk adjacent to the World Trade Center site would be
approximately 30 feet wide to accommodate north-south pedestrian traffic as well as visitors viewing the Memorial. The Short Bypass Alternative would cost $860 million, and once selected would take two years to design and two and a half to three years to build. Using design-build procurement, the schedule could be compressed.

Promenade

With either the At-Grade Alternative or the Short Bypass Alternative, a landscaped promenade could be included between Albany Street and Battery Place. This would improve pedestrian movement and increase greenspace. The promenade design grew out of the overwhelming support for improving the pedestrian experience and improving the quality of life.

On the west side of Route 9A adjacent to Battery Park City, play areas and lawns would be rebuilt to create exemplary spaces for the local community and for visitors. A new one-acre triangle park would be created just north of Battery Place, forming a green connection between Route 9A, the Hudson River Park and historic Battery Park. At Battery Place, the entrance to the Battery Park Underpass would be extended and decked over to the north, improving pedestrian crossings at the southern tip of Route 9A.

From Battery Place to Albany Street, the eastern sidewalk of Route 9A would be widened from its existing eight-to-ten-foot dimension to up to 40 feet wide. This would improve the pedestrian environment, create a strong north-south connection and encourage the development of street-level activities such as cafes, art galleries and shops. Decorative pavers, planters, light poles and street furniture would enhance pedestrian areas. In many locations, double or triple rows of trees would be planted. The Promenade would cost $140 million, take about one year to design and one and a half years to build.
Traffic

With the **Short Bypass Alternative**, approximately 25 percent of the vehicular traffic on Route 9A will use the at-grade lanes, while 75 percent would use the below-grade bypass. Separating through and local traffic will significantly minimize traffic and noise at the World Trade Center site and allow for a favorable environment for pedestrians and visitors to the Memorial. This design would help to strengthen the relationship between Battery Park City and the World Trade Center site.

Pedestrian Bridges

In the area between Liberty and Vesey Streets adjacent to the World Trade Center site, the **Short Bypass Alternative** is not expected to require the construction of bridges to accommodate pedestrian crossings. Determination of whether pedestrian bridges are needed with the **At-Grade Alternative** would require further study. NYSDOT, as part of the ongoing engineering studies, will evaluate each intersection and area to determine the adequacy of pedestrian facilities in the areas south and north of the World Trade Center site. In all areas where deficiencies are identified, consideration will be given to pedestrian bridges.
Utility Complexity

In addressing the project goals, the alternatives must also consider maintaining the continuity of below-grade utilities. Route 9A is one of the busiest and most complex utility corridors in the entire city. It houses a 78-inch combined interceptor sewer that serves as sanitary system for the west side of Lower Manhattan; major storm sewers and outfalls; a 48-inch water main and hundreds of telephone and fiber optic cables; and high-voltage electrical lines. The PATH tunnels to New Jersey, water cooling lines, ventilation chambers and other utilities also lie underneath Route 9A. Each of these is vital for the residents and businesses in Lower Manhattan as well as the operation of PATH to New Jersey.

Construction Mitigation

A comprehensive strategy will be developed to minimize the effects of construction on the local community. As part of these strategies, NYSDOT will:

• Coordinate with New York City & State agencies for other downtown construction activities,

• Utilize green construction practices, avoid pollution, minimize dust,

• Minimize noise and facilitate noise monitors throughout construction site,

• Keep construction sites clean and safe, consider the need for pedestrian access during construction,

• Consult with local residents and businesses throughout construction.
Public Involvement

The New York State Department of Transportation is undertaking an extensive public outreach program. We will continue to work closely with the community to address important issues. In addition, NYSDOT will meet regularly with officials, circulate information on the project and invite comments throughout the design and construction process.

How to Contact Us

Please send comments to or request information from:

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