

# **APPENDIX F**

## **NOTICE OF PLANNED ACTION CORRESPONDENCE**



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
P.O. Box 600  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0600

CHRISTINE TODD WHITMAN  
*Governor*

JAMES WEINSTEIN  
*Commissioner*

May 23, 2000

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Re: University Heights Connector  
1<sup>st</sup> Street between Sussex Avenue and West Market Street  
City of Newark, Essex County  
Fed. Proj. No. MGS-7633(101)

Dear Sir or Madam:

The New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration have determined that environmental studies leading to an Environmental Assessment are required for the referenced project.

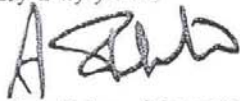
In accordance with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act, NJDOT hereby initiates an early coordination process to assist in the identification of reasonable alternatives and the evaluation of the social, economic, and environmental impacts of the proposed action and measures to mitigate adverse impacts which may result from this project.

Please review this Notice of Planned Action and the attached information and address any questions or comments to the person named below within 30 days. Your response will help assure early and continuous consideration of your agency's concerns during the development of the environmental studies for this project.

Re: University Heights Connector  
1<sup>st</sup> Street between Sussex Avenue and West Market Street  
City of Newark, Essex County  
Fed. Proj. No. MGS-7633(101)  
May 23, 2000

All responses may be directed to Steven H. Hochman, Environmental Team Leader in the Division of Project Management. If you have any questions, please call Audrey L. Anderson, Environmental Coordinator at 609-530-5361.

Very truly yours,



Andras Fekete, Manager  
Bureau of Environmental Services

Enclosures

cc: Manu Patel

Steven H. Hochman

Audrey L. Anderson

**NOTE: Attention: Section 106 Consulting Parties – Documentation of consultation establishing the Area of Potential Effect (APE) enclosed.**



SHT

Christine Todd Whitman  
Governor

State of New Jersey  
Department of Environmental Protection  
Office of Program Coordination  
PO Box 418  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0418  
Phone 609-292-2662  
Fax 609-292-4608  
E-mail: [lschmidt@dep.state.nj.us](mailto:lschmidt@dep.state.nj.us)

Robert C. Shinn, Jr.  
Commissioner

June 7, 2000

Mr. Andras Fekete, Manager  
Bureau of Environmental Services  
New Jersey Department of Transportation  
PO Box 600  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0600

RE: University Heights Connector  
Newark, Essex County

Dear Mr. Fekete:

The Office of Program Coordination of the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection has completed its review of the Notice of Planned Action for the proposed University Heights Connector (1<sup>st</sup> Street between Sussex Avenue and West Market Street), Newark, Essex County (Federal Project No. MGS-7633(101)). We note that the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) has already consulted with our Department's Historic Preservation Office regarding assessing potential adverse impacts to cultural resources. We encourage continued cooperative consultation.

Our Office is responsible for coordinating departmental review of documents prepared pursuant to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and New Jersey Executive Order No. 215 of 1989 (EO #215). Please send the Office of Program Coordination six copies of the completed EA to insure a coordinated, comprehensive, timely review. Thank you for the opportunity to be part of the scoping process.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Schmidt  
Director  
Office of Program Coordination

C: Steven H. Hochman, NJDOT  
Audrey L. Anderson, NJDOT

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UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION 2  
290 BROADWAY  
NEW YORK, NY 10007-1666

JUN 23 2000

Mr. Steven H. Hochman  
Environmental Team Leader  
Division of Project Management  
New Jersey Department of Transportation  
P.O. Box 600  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0060

Dear Mr. Hochman:

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the scoping notice for the University Connector Project, on First Street from Sussex Avenue to West Market Street, in the City of Newark, Essex County, New Jersey.

The proposed project involves the widening of First Street from Sussex Avenue to West Market Street to accommodate heavy traffic volumes. The widened First Street will consist of two 13-foot through lanes in each direction with a landscaped median island. At the intersection of Central Avenue, exclusive left turn lanes for the northbound and southbound movements will be provided and the existing traffic signal will be modified.

Based on our review of the information provided in the scoping notice, we recommend that the environmental documentation for the proposed project include the following information:

- A discussion of the purpose and need for the proposed action, including the justification that the project is intended to alleviate a "bottleneck" condition;
- An evaluation of alternatives to the proposed action, including reasonable alternatives not within the jurisdiction of the lead agency;
- A comprehensive evaluation of cumulative, indirect, and secondary impacts. The cumulative impacts analysis should consider the environmental impacts of the project as a whole, and if any, as one of a number of other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future projects and/or actions in the project area. With this in mind, the analysis should consider and evaluate impacts to air quality, surface and ground water quality, wetlands, historical/cultural resources, and endangered species. Please refer to the Council on Environmental Quality's January 1997 guidance, Considering Cumulative Effects Under the National Environmental Policy Act, which can be found at [www.whitehouse.gov/ceq/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/ceq/) if you require further guidance on the requirements of this analysis;

Internet Address (URL) • <http://www.epa.gov>

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- An evaluation of the potential direct impacts associated with the implementation of the proposed action. This should include impacts to wetlands, ground water, air and water quality, endangered species and floodplains. The analysis should also assess potential impacts to the man-made environment, such as cultural/historic resources, the right-of-way-acquisitions, and the action's potential effect on noise levels in the project area;
- A description of the terrestrial and aquatic environments to be impacted by the proposed action and alternatives;
- An Environmental Justice analysis, as required by Executive Order 12898, to determine if the proposed action would result in disproportionate adverse impacts to low-income or minority communities. Please refer to the Council on Environmental Quality's Guidance for Considering Environmental Justice Under the National Environmental Policy Act, which can be found at [www.whitehouse.gov/ceq](http://www.whitehouse.gov/ceq), if you require further guidance on the requirements of this analysis.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Should you have any questions concerning this letter, please contact Mark Westrate of my staff at (212) 637-3789.

Sincerely yours,

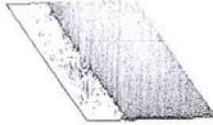


Grace Musumeci, Chief  
Environmental Review Section  
Strategic Planning and Multi-Media Programs Branch

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Christine Todd Whitman  
Governor

James Weinstein  
Board Chairman

Jeffrey A. Walsh  
Executive Director

June 16, 2000

Mr. Andras Fekete  
Manager, Bureau of Environmental Services  
New Jersey Department of Transportation  
P.O. Box 600  
Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0600

RE: University Heights Connector  
1<sup>st</sup> Street between Sussex Avenue and West Market Street  
City of Newark, Essex County  
Fed. Proj. No. MSG-7633(101)

Dear Mr. Fekete:

In response to your letter of May 26, 2000 regarding the above noted project, please be advised that NJ TRANSIT currently has no bus stops within the project area defined above. The closest bus service operates between the I-280 off ramp and Orange Street in the City of Newark.

Please be advised that there is much community interest presently in restoring bus service in this corridor. Accordingly, your work should make provision for the possibility of bus service in the future, particularly space for bus stops.

This improvement project has no impact on present or proposed NJ TRANSIT rail service.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,

Jack M. Kanarek  
Senior Director Project Development

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One Penn Plaza East, Newark NJ 07105-2246 (973) 491-7000