



# **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ACTION PLAN**

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Route 280, Route 21 Interchange Improvements  
City of Newark, Essex County, New Jersey

**New Jersey Department of Transportation  
Route 280, Route 21 Interchange Improvements Project  
City of Newark, Essex County, New Jersey**

## **Public Involvement Action Plan (PIAP)**

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## A. Purpose

The purpose of the Public Involvement effort for the Route I-280, Route 21 Interchange Improvements Project is to have an informed and involved public who has access to the design options and is a collaborative part of the transportation development process. The Public Involvement Action Plan (PIAP) seeks to provide ample opportunity for public comment regarding the identification and development of proposed improvements. The intention of this document is to establish a public involvement guideline that is dynamic in nature to keep the public involved and maintain broad-based support for the project by the local neighborhood community and regional stakeholders.

## B. Project Description

Route I-280 is a heavily traveled and vital east-west interstate freeway in northern New Jersey. This critical interstate connects Morris County to the west with New York City to the east and traverses downtown Newark just north of the City's Central Business District. NJ Route 21 (McCarter Highway) is an important north-south state highway in northern New Jersey, which parallels the Passaic River and connects the City of Newark's Central Business District and Newark Airport to the south with Bergen County to the north. The Route I-280, Route 21 Interchange, located just west of the William A. Stickel Memorial Bridge over the Passaic River, has been identified in need of major improvements.

This project will rehabilitate and replace six (6) existing ramp or mainline structures within the interchange. These six structures, over sixty years old, were determined through NJDOT efforts including bridge inspection and maintenance records to be Structurally Deficient and/or Functionally Obsolete. In order to correct these long-standing concerns, the structures and approach roadways and ramps will be rehabilitated or reconstructed to address these structural issues, as well as, improve existing geometric deficiencies; improve safety and operational concerns of the interchange and add three missing interchange movements. In addition to the structural and geometric considerations, the existing corridor has other infrastructure elements that are non-functioning, deteriorated or beyond routine maintenance. These elements include parapets and railings, lighting, signing, median barriers and structural drainage elements. Through this improvement effort, these and other infrastructure elements will be brought up to current design standards and specifications.

### Existing Conditions

Route I-280 is an elevated four-lane divided highway in the project area, with a posted 50 mph speed limit. On the eastbound Route 280 roadway there is an exit ramp for southbound NJ Route 21 diverging from Route 280 on the bridge over Broad Street. Just to the east of this location are three entrance ramps that are spaced within 350 feet of each other. The first ramp, from Broad Street has no acceleration lane, while the second and the third ramps, from Route 21 southbound and northbound are immediately adjacent to each other with an acceleration lane that extends to the Stickel Bridge and becomes the third through lane of the highway. These two adjacent ramps are regulated by stop signs and the former entrance ramp is yield controlled.

On the westbound Route 280 roadway, just west of the Stickel Bridge, there is an exit-only lane that leads to two exits (to northbound Route 21 and southbound Route 21/Broad Street respectively) in extremely close proximity. Another exit is located just west of Broad Street, which leads to State Street where traffic may proceed to Martin Luther King Boulevard or Broad Street. The two loop ramps (Ramps 'A' and 'B') located between NJ Route 21 and Passaic River consist of structures that are structurally deficient and



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functionally obsolete with geometry that does not meet the current AASHTO standards for interstate highways.

#### Proposed Improvements

The proposed improvements consist of a reconstruction of the entire system of ramps connecting Route 280 with Route 21 and Broad Street. The existing nested loop ramps underneath the approach to the Stickel Bridge will be replaced by a jughandle ramp on Route 21. This jughandle will allow Route 21 northbound motorists to access ramps from Route 21 southbound to Route 280 eastbound and westbound. Route 280 westbound traffic wishing to access both directions of Route 21, will use a new loop ramp that diverges from Route 280 over Route 21 and ends at a signalized intersection with Route 21.

Route 280 eastbound traffic will use the existing exit ramp to Route 21 southbound to access both directions of Route 21 at a reconfigured traffic signal. To accommodate a new acceleration lane for the ramp from Route 21 southbound to Route 280 westbound, the alignment of Route 280 will be shifted slightly to the south to avoid impacts to the historic Plume House. Space to the south has been made available by proposing structures within the NJDOT ROW over Broad Street. The outside parapet locations of the Route 280 over Broad Street bridges will remain. The existing viaduct over Route 21 and several ramps will be replaced by fill and retaining walls with a bridge over the ramp to Route 280 eastbound and Route 21. The western approach to the Stickel Bridge will be rehabilitated. A new bridge will be constructed to carry the new Route 280 westbound exit ramp over the entrance ramps to Route 280 eastbound and westbound. Finally, the Route 280 Bridge over Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s deck and superstructure will be replaced.

The operation and safety of Route 280 will be improved by the provision of outside shoulders, the reduction of westbound exits from three to one and the reduction of eastbound entrances from three to one. The new configuration will remove all but local traffic from Grant Street, creating a safer and quieter environment near the Apostle's House and surrounding community. Additional parking spaces will be included as part of the design along Grant Street and along State Street.

### **C. Identified Project Purpose and Need**

#### **Project Purpose**

The purpose of the Route 280, Route 21 Interchange Improvements Project is to alleviate the acutely poor condition and geometric concerns associated with six (6) existing ramp and mainline structures in the vicinity of the Route 280 interchange with McCarter Highway in the City of Newark. The proposed improvements will modify the existing interchange to provide all interchange movements between Route 280 and Route 21 as well as replace or rehabilitate structurally deficient bridges carrying Route 280 over Route 21, Broad Street and Martin Luther King, Jr. (MLK) Boulevard.

#### **Project Needs**

The primary Project Need associated with this project relates to correcting the deficiencies associated with six (6) structures of this interchange. These structures, nearly sixty years old, were determined through NJDOT efforts, including bridge inspection and maintenance records, to be Structurally Deficient and/or Functionally Obsolete. Several emergency repairs have been required over the past several years.



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Given the need for immediate and long term improvement to these structures, it has been recognized that the proper replacement or rehabilitation efforts can address other long-standing concerns within this interchange in a manner that meets current operational and geometric needs as well as infrastructure condition. These include:

*Correction of Functional Obsolescence and Geometric Deficiencies:* Numerous substandard features currently exist on the six main structures and their roadway approaches along Route 280 and connecting ramps. These deficiencies include lack of right and median shoulders, lack of acceleration and deceleration lanes at ramps, inadequate sight distance, improper superelevation, and closely spaced ramp terminals.

*Improve Safety in the Project Corridor:* The above geometric deficiencies, coupled with very high traffic volumes for a facility of this type (over 80,000 vehicles per day, with high truck percentages) contribute to crash rates that are considerably higher than the statewide average for interstate highways. Even accounting for those averages specific to freeways with antiquated geometrics (i.e. 4 lanes with barrier median and lack of shoulders), the crash history along Route 280 within this corridor exceeds statewide averages. Several one-tenth mile locations within this section of the Route 280 corridor have been listed within the NJDOT's Safety Management System (SMS).

*Complete Missing Interchange Movements between an Interstate Highway and a Principal Arterial:* The interchange of Route 280 and Route 21 was originally designed over 70 years ago as part of the "Newark Bypass." At that time, it was intended to only serve traffic crossing the Stickel Bridge. The current configuration lacks important interchange movements from Route 21 northbound to Route 280 westbound and from Route 280 eastbound to Route 21 northbound. As a result, hundreds of vehicles during each weekday peak hour and thousands of vehicles during a given day, are routed through local and residential streets both west of the interchange in Newark and east into Harrison business and residential areas by way of the Bridge Street Bridge and Harrison Avenue to access Route 280. By modifying the existing interchange ramps and replacing the seriously deteriorated and underutilized Structure 0731-157 with at-grade connectivity to a new connection to westbound Route 280, the missing interchange movements can be provided at this location.

*Optimize Existing Route 280 Throughout Without Adding Through Lane Capacity:* Operational constraints along Route 280, including multiple poorly designed entry and exit ramps, abrupt lane drops and the circuitous access through Harrison, create operational inefficiencies that lessen the ability of the highway to serve traffic volumes at levels typically associated with four-lane freeways. These inefficiencies contribute to corridor congestion that spills over into adjacent neighborhoods. By correcting these features, Route 280 operations will maximize the traffic serving capabilities of the current four-lane freeway corridor.

*Improve Corridor Infrastructure Condition and Reliability:* In addition to the structural and geometric considerations described above, the existing corridor has other infrastructure elements that are non-functioning, deteriorated or beyond routine maintenance. These elements include parapets and railings, lighting, signing, median barriers, and structural drainage elements. Through these efforts it is expected that these and other infrastructure elements will be brought up to current design standards and specifications, and state of good repair.



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### D. Important Factors

Given the importance of this project in the State of New Jersey, a number of additional factors are important considerations for the success of the project including, but not limited to:

- Coordinating with project stakeholders.
- Coordinating with SHPO.
- Complicated Maintenance and Protection of Traffic Scheme.
- Construction impacts to the existing access and heavy traffic volumes will have to be minimized.
- Meeting NJDEP Stormwater Management Regulations.
- Coordinating and expediting utility relocations.
- Minimize right of way and access impacts.
- Continued facilitation of small group meetings with key project neighborhood stakeholder groups: Apostle's House; The Leaguers Head Start Program, 8th Avenue Historic Association, and House of Prayer/Plume House.

### E. Public Involvement Process Overview

Public involvement will be an on-going process throughout the project. Though the Public Involvement Action Plan (PIAP) is organized by project phases, it will be implemented in such a manner that the public sees one seamless process. The PIAP is organized by project phase to allow its integration with the engineering and regulatory compliance processes to facilitate the scheduling of contingent activities.

The public involvement steps to be implemented for the current phase of design are presented in the Public Involvement Process Section and a schedule of the activities is provided in a matrix following below.

#### Background

**Concept Development.** The project originated in November 2000 as the *Concept Development Study of the William A. Stickel Memorial Bridge* (2002) by the Parsons Transportation Group (PTG). The study examined many alternatives for replacing or rehabilitating the Stickel Bridge and improving approach sections and interchanges of Route 280 on either side. The Concept Development (CD) study included an alternatives analysis component having thirty distinct alternative concepts. Subsequent to the CD, the structural improvements required for the rehabilitation of the Stickel Bridge were split from the roadway improvements and were advanced to the design development and construction stages. The rehabilitation of the Stickel Bridge was completed in 2008.

During CD, the NJDOT developed a Project Stakeholder List for the project in January 2001. The listing sought to identify all agency representatives with an interest in the advancement of this project. A Public Information Center was held for key stakeholders on March 1, 2001 for the Stickel Bridge Project.

**Feasibility Assessment.** A Feasibility Assessment (FA) report was prepared for the Interstate Route 280 Nesbitt Street to Harrison Avenue (MP 13.8 to 15.2) project by PTG in 2005. During the 2005 FA effort, several meetings were held with local government agencies and the community. On January 29, 2003, a meeting with the City of Newark was held. During the meeting, it was concluded that outreach to the community associations in the extended project area, including the Eighth Avenue Block Association, Pavilion Towers, Seventh Avenue residents and the new residences along the west side of Martin Luther King Boulevard should be engaged. Subsequently, a community outreach meeting was held on May 19,



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2003 with representatives from Colonial Concrete, Apostle's House, Newark Preservation and Landmarks Committee, Eighth Avenue Block Association, and several local residents. Main suggestions from the community included improved park, community amenities, reduced highway impacts/visual and/or noise screening, and maintaining local access among Eighth Avenue, Spring Street, and Grant Street.

Since the 2005 FA, the proposed improvements have been revised based on community input and new developments in the area such as the completion of the Newark Light Rail (NLR) and the Route 21 TSM 6 project. During the FA Addendum effort, an extensive community outreach effort was conducted for the project, which included direct mailings to residents and businesses, follow-up phone calls, meeting announcements through distribution networks, and project area canvassing and literature drops. The following meetings were held in order to solicit feedback on the project from the community:

- 12/20/2008 – Key Stakeholders One-on-One Interviews
- 6/18/2009 – Public Information Center held at House of Prayer
- 9/9/2009 – Preconstruction at Newark Regional Business Partnership Meeting
- 12/10/2009 – Consulting/Interested Parties Meeting at House of Prayer
- 12/17/2009 – New Jersey Historic Sites Council Presentation by NJDOT
- 1/21/2010 – Newark Preservation Landmarks Commission
- 3/11/2010 – Public Information Center at House of Prayer
- 4/10/2010 – Key Stakeholder Groups Meeting with 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue Homeowners Association  
(10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., 71/2 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Nakia White residence)
- 4/13/2010 – Key Stakeholder Groups Meeting with staff of the Apostles' House  
(2:00 p.m. – 3:15 p.m., 24 Grant Street)
- 4/13/2010 – Key Stakeholder Groups Meeting with The Leaguers Early Learning Academy  
(3:30 p.m. – 4:15 p.m., 22 Grant Street)
- 4/13/2010 – Key Stakeholder Groups Meeting with House of Prayer Episcopal Church  
(5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., 407 Broad Street at State Street)
- 5/13/2010 – Public Information Center held at House of Prayer

Throughout the public involvement process, the principles of environmental justice, community preservation, and context sensitive solutions were communicated and incorporated. The principles employed to reach these objectives were:

- Clear and honest communication with the public.
- Recommendations stemming from dialogue with the public.
- An inclusive platform to foster public confidence and support.
- A research-supported message of environmental and social benefit.

The Preferred Alternative selected during the 2005 FA effort was refined as part of the April 2011 Addendum to adequately address the comments from the community.

**Interim Preliminary Design.** The Interim Preliminary Design Phase is currently advancing the refined Preferred Alternative. The issues identified through community input and public involvement has been and will continue to be taken into consideration during the design process. Additionally, coordination with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) will be required to ensure that the stipulations of the



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Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) executed between the Federal Highway Administration, SHPO, and NJDOT are satisfied.

The remaining project phases are as listed below:

- Final Design
- Construction

**Final Design.** During Final Design, the federally approved Preliminary Design will be advanced, taking into consideration the input obtained through the public involvement effort to date and to provide an improvement solution that satisfies the needs of the City of Newark, Essex County and local communities as well as those of the other project stakeholders (regional communities, agencies, and general public).

It is important to note that the community involvement process will be continual as issues arise for discussion, recommendation and resolution. Phone calls, emails, conference calls and meetings will be conducted as directed by NJDOT Project Management and in coordination with NJDOT Office of Community & Constituent Relations.

**Construction.** Notifying the public about traffic patterns and potential delays will be important during Construction of the identified solution. Providing this information in a timely manner will facilitate the formation of positive public perception towards both the project and NJDOT. The PIAP will be updated during the Construction phase to include new stakeholders, meetings and tools to be implemented to enhance communication for the traveling public to address traffic staging and mitigation plans.

### F. Public Involvement (PI) Process - Design Phase Steps

#### **Step 1. Conduct Initial Strategy Meeting and CI Project Team Progress/Status Meetings**

Schedule an initial Community Involvement Meeting with the key Project Team members including NJDOT and Baker Project Managers (Tom Sohn and Mike Sidani/Luis Barragan, respectively), NJDOT E-Team Specialist (David Mudge), NJDOT Community & Constituent Relations Regional Manager (Meredith Hammond), NJDOT Landscape Architect (Brenda Hammer), Community Involvement Facilitators (Martine Culbertson and Wanda Webster Stansbury), and other Baker support staff as needed. The purpose of this initial meeting is to review project status and schedule, the Field Site Visit and Stakeholder Meetings conducted on November 30, 2011, the draft PIAP, other stakeholder and agency meetings held, and discuss next steps for the community involvement and public outreach for the project.

At the initial and future Community Involvement (CI) Project Team Progress/Status Meetings (*via conference call or on-site monthly/quarterly*), the Public Involvement strategy and steps will be an agenda item for discussion with the project team members.

An overall strategy for the development and presentation of information to key Local Officials and County representatives will be reviewed and steps to coordinate the future stakeholder meetings and public information center (PIC) meeting efforts will be discussed. The agenda items may include a brief project status update, the proposed public participation strategy, an opportunity to identify and discuss community issues, potential stakeholders, logistics & meeting formats, action items and the project schedule.





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## **Step 2. Review Stakeholders, Local Officials & Agencies, and Update Contact/Mailing Lists**

Based upon the review of key stakeholders from Step 1, an updated list of potential stakeholders with contact information will be distributed to the Project Team. Representation from the communities and agencies is at the discretion of the Project Managers and will be maintained by the Community Involvement Facilitators. It is necessary to review stakeholders to understand the issues represented by each stakeholder prior to meeting and to determine if any interests have changed, or identify any new issues from the local or regional communities. This is to ensure community balance, environmental justice and to manage the number of stakeholders in a diverse urban setting, for effective discussion and collaborative problem-solving and consensus-building during this phase of the project.

To maintain on-going communication, the lists will be updated in coordination with NJDOT, the Project Team, and discussion with local officials from the City of Newark and Essex County. The Local Officials & County List includes local and state officials as well as County engineers, planners, and legislative officials. The Community Stakeholders List includes representation from key neighborhood groups, civic organizations, businesses, hospitals, schools, historic and other cultural organizations, residential complexes and residents within the project area. A separate Federal and State Agencies List includes stakeholders from transportation, regulatory and permitting agencies.

Stakeholders may be added throughout the project process as pertinent individuals become evident or removed if no longer involved in the project. The current Contact Lists are maintained electronically and available upon request. They include representation from the following:

### **Governmental Agencies**

- Federal Highway Administration
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U. S. Coast Guard
- NJDOT, OCCR, BLAES, SMEs, CPM-Traffic Eng, TSM-Traffic Ops North
- NJDEP, Division of Land Use Regulation
- NJDEP, State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)
- NJDEP, Central Bureau of Water Compliance & Enforcement
- NJ Transit

### **County and Municipal Officials and Organizations**

- City of Newark Officials, Engineer, Police, Fire, OEM, Parks and School Board Officials
- Essex County Officials, Engineer, Police, Fire, OEM, and Parks
- Legislative Representatives, State Senate and Assembly
- Adjacent Town of Harrison and Borough of East Newark Engineers, Police, Fire and OEM
- Hudson County Officials, Engineer, Police, Fire and OEM

### **City of Newark Local Organizations and Neighborhood Community Stakeholders**

- Civic and non-profit organizations, religious entities and houses of worship
- Business chambers of commerce, bus companies, schools, hospitals and historic associations
- Interested groups in the area, such as cycling organization, neighborhood and condo associations
- Private residential and commercial property owners
- Pedestrian, cyclists, transit, buses, paratransit and taxis services



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The Project Stakeholders List has been divided into four Stakeholders Contact Lists due to the extensive and diverse amount of stakeholders in the City of Newark as an urban area and regional transportation link. Each contact list contains the name, job title, organization, address, telephone, fax, email, and columns can be added to track meeting attendance and comments received. The lists have subsections as follows:

Stakeholder Contact Lists	Sections	Content
(1) RT280-21-Community Stakeholders List	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizations</li> <li>• Schools</li> <li>• Hospitals</li> <li>• Businesses</li> <li>• Residential Complexes</li> <li>• Residents, Property Owners</li> </ul>	Civic, cultural, social service and religious organizations, schools, hospitals, businesses, residential complexes, individual residents and property owners ( <i>within project area-access letters</i> )
(2) RT280-21-Local Officials & County List	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• City of Newark</li> <li>• Essex County</li> <li>• Town of Harrison</li> <li>• Borough of East Newark</li> <li>• State Legislative Officials</li> </ul>	Mayor, Council, Administrator, Clerk, Engineer, Planner, Police, Fire and OEM, Senate and Assembly ( <i>Districts 27, 28, 29 &amp; 32</i> )
(3) RT280-21-Agencies List	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation Agencies</li> <li>• Regulatory/Permitting Agencies</li> <li>• Utilities</li> </ul>	NJ Transit, NJ Turnpike Authority, TRANSCOM, NJDEP, Land Use, SHPO, and utility companies
(4) RT280-21-Project Team List	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project Team</li> <li>• NJDOT Support</li> <li>• Baker Staff</li> <li>• Consultant Support Staff</li> </ul>	Project Managers, Task Leaders, NJDOT, Baker, and consultant support staff



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## **Step 3. Conduct Issues Assessment & Tracking - Comment Forms and Surveys**

The issues assessment is an essential step and public involvement strategy, which provides the means to identify and acknowledge issues relevant to all affected parties. The assessment is critical to developing and maintaining a successful public outreach program for this phase of the project. Issues identification prior to meetings allows for more effective planning. Meeting format and agenda can be tailored appropriately to accomplish the goals of the public outreach meetings and the overall project effort.

A Comment Information Form has been developed and will be distributed at the stakeholder meetings. A Project Letter with Survey will be distributed to the local and regional community stakeholders to provide project information and develop key contacts for future stakeholder meetings. This is an effective means to determine the level of involvement and interest the regional stakeholders may have for future project information exchanges. The surveys (issues assessments) may be performed through a written or electronic survey or also conducted as courtesy telephone calls depending on the responses received. A summary report or matrix of issues will be provided (based upon the type of survey/assessment) for the project team to review at project status meetings.

Community Neighborhood Stakeholder Issues. Based upon the initial Field Visit and Community Stakeholder Meetings held on November 30, 2011, a number of issues were raised which require coordination and on-going dialogue. These issues may become agenda items at a follow-up meeting. The community issues raised are follows:

- Potential physical impact to properties during construction (vibration, salt splashes).
- Any changes in access to properties due to design or during construction (vehicular, pedestrian).
- City of Newark citizen involvement in the project, business and job opportunities during construction.
- Training programs for Mentor Protégé and Apprenticeship Initiatives, Local Workforce Project and Training Job Bank.
- Lighting concerns: darkness even in daytime under Route 280, street lighting no longer operational, and 8th Street incomplete (conduits, but no light poles or installation).
- Landscape architecture with-in project limits - streetscape elements, benches, trees, landscaping and potential wall mural to be designed with local neighborhood and Newark artists.
- Parking issues in neighborhood - inadequate parking along Grant Street.
- Any changes from the existing traffic signal or signage with-in the project area.
- Potential environmental impacts to neighborhood properties during construction (noise, dust, air quality, traffic patterns, economics, aesthetics).
- Interest in seeing 3-D model or artist renderings of proposed improvements.
- Concern that improvements are consistent with what the communities had envisioned.
- Consideration for a uniform appearance to 8th Avenue, Spring Street and Grant Street, with aesthetic considerations as identified in the MOA.
- Utility issues (electrical lines) along 8th Avenue, historic neighborhood.



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## **Step 4. Develop Project Information Materials**

At the CI Project Team Progress/Status meetings, a Project Portfolio will be developed for handout materials, which will be distributed to key stakeholders and project team members. Documentation will be updated to maintain clear and consistent project information and to assist members with communication to their constituents. The project logo, letterhead and other public information materials will be designed and revised as needed with NJDOT Project Manager's approval such as project team name tags, sign-in sheets, handouts (agenda and lists), meeting reports and display boards.

The meeting materials are designed to clearly define the project and the purpose of stakeholders' role in the public involvement process for this phase of the project. The Portfolio materials may include such items as: a list of Project Team members, Community and Agency Stakeholders List, project information sheet, project area map and renderings as needed to inform and update community stakeholders and local officials. The Project Portfolio serves as an effective communication tool within the team and for stakeholders to use with their constituents in disseminating project information.

## **Step 5. Conduct Local Officials Meeting/Briefing(s)**

At the initial Community Involvement Project Team Progress Meeting No. 1, the step to conduct a Local Officials Meeting or Briefing with key entities from the City of Newark was discussed. Meredith Hammond, NJDOT OCCR spoke with Jack Nata, Engineer for City of Newark, regarding the need to provide such a meeting. It was determined that a Local Officials Meeting/Briefing is not required at this time and to proceed with community stakeholder meetings and coordination with the public.

## **Step 6. Facilitate Community Stakeholders Outreach Meetings**

Community Stakeholders Outreach Meetings will be scheduled to exchange project information and community interests when needed to reconcile the various community interests represented in the project area and to provide NJDOT with input into the process of formulating recommendations for transportation improvements. It is anticipated that Community Stakeholder Outreach Meetings will be held in May 2012, July 2012 and October 2012.

The Community Stakeholders Outreach meetings will vary in size and attendees depending on the goals and objectives for each meeting. They may include only local neighborhood representatives or local municipal government representatives such as planning and engineering, traffic safety, and OEM. Other meetings may be in form of a community workshop. Other stakeholders and their involvement will depend upon the survey taken and issues generated, such as the civic organizations, businesses, hospitals, schools, EMS providers, regulatory agencies, and adjacent community representatives. Federal and State agencies involved in the transportation process may attend meetings and will be provided meeting minutes.

During the initial and follow-up Community Stakeholders Outreach meetings, the facilitator will monitor the communication to ensure balanced participation and clear understanding of information by all participants and observers during the meetings. The facilitator will record issues and provide meeting summaries. The agenda and meeting report will be distributed as determined by the Project Team. A Project Portfolio of information will be provided for each member of the Community Neighborhood Stakeholders and Project Team in order to maintain clear, concise, and consistent information within the local community and to report such information accurately to their constituents.



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## **Step 7. Facilitate Public Information Center Meeting(s)**

Public Information Center (PIC) meetings will be held at the appropriate time in the schedule, when Final Design improvements or enhancements have been developed, comments on the design are needed to advance the project and at the appropriate time to allow for general public comments and community support. The PIC meetings may be held at a time to maximize participation by attendees, which may be afternoons and evenings with the date and time agreed by NJDOT and in coordination with local officials.

The PIC meetings will be conducted to present the updated project information and obtain input on the context sensitive design elements for the interchange improvements. The PIC meeting will provide a means to present or discuss project information with the general public, local officials, community entities, and business representatives in an open house format with specific stations or areas of information. An area will be established to present engineering data, traffic analysis, environmental and cultural resource efforts (based upon MOA), on-going public involvement accomplishments to date, and in addition an area for people to provide written comments and feedback on the proposed design improvement options and traffic management plans.

## **Step 8. Facilitate Special Purpose Meeting(s) and Agency Coordination**

Special purpose meetings, small group stakeholder meetings, E-team coordination meetings, or community workshops may be scheduled and facilitated should certain issues require additional effort outside the noted stakeholders outreach or PIC meetings noted in other steps. For example, the potential wall mural design and streetscape elements would be issues to discuss with the Neighborhood Stakeholder Group, where traffic safety and OEM issues may be discussed with a Traffic Mitigation Stakeholder Group. These special purpose stakeholder group meetings will be conducted and coordinated with NJDOT, agencies, and other members of the Project Team. At these meetings, the Community Involvement Facilitators will assist the Project Team with meeting scheduling, logistics, and provide open dialogue and collaborative problem-solving with active participation of all parties involved to build consensus. The results of these special purpose meetings will be recorded and information shared with Project Team members and community stakeholders to maintain effective communication and broad based support for the project.

These special purpose meetings will be facilitated and materials developed as needed, in coordination with NJDOT OCCR. Phone and email coordination may be conducted in order to provide further clarification or insight. The information obtained at these meetings will be recorded and a report summary generated for distribution to the project team.



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### G. Schedule of Public Involvement Initiatives

STEP	DATE	PURPOSE
1. Conduct Initial Strategy Meeting and CI Project Team Progress/Status Meetings	CI Progress Mtg. No. 1 – April 3, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present approach and updates.</li> <li>• Discuss PI strategies.</li> <li>• Obtain input on stakeholders and support status.</li> </ul>
	CI Progress Mtg. No. 2 – April 18, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review project status &amp; schedule.</li> <li>• Discuss community stakeholder issues and steps to address.</li> </ul>
	CI Progress Mtg. No. 3 – June 4, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prep for neighborhood stakeholders meetings, community workshop or PIC meetings.</li> </ul>
	CI Progress Mtg. No. 4 – July 11, 2012	
	CI Progress Mtg. No. 5 – September 11, 2012	
	CI Progress Mtg. No. 6 – October 16, 2012	
	CI Progress Mtg. No. 7 – December 20, 2012	
	CI Coordination Meeting - February 6, 2013	
	CI Progress Mtg. No. 8 – May 23, 2013	
	CI Progress Mtg. No. 9 – August 1, 2013	
CI Progress Mtg. No. 10 – October 17, 2013		
2. Review Stakeholders, Local Officials, and Agencies and Update Stakeholder Contact Lists	November 2011 and on-going 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify prior and new stakeholders.</li> <li>• Review local officials, agencies.</li> <li>• Develop and maintain contact information for community stakeholders, local officials, and agencies.</li> </ul>
3. Conduct Issues Assessment, & Tracking – Comment Forms and Surveys	Nov - Dec 2011 and on-going 2012 - 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify issues/interests.</li> <li>• Interview/assess stakeholders.</li> <li>• Develop summary list or matrix.</li> </ul>



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STEP	DATE	PURPOSE
4. Develop Project Information and Meeting Materials	Nov - Dec 2011 and on-going 2012- 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create and update contact lists.</li> <li>• Develop comment form.</li> <li>• Draft meeting handouts &amp; minutes.</li> </ul>
5. Conduct Local Officials Meeting/Briefing(s)	<p>On-going Coordination via Jack Nata, City of Newark Engineering Department</p> <p>Town of Harrison and Hudson County Local Officials Meeting – August 22, 2012</p> <p>Essex County Briefing - <i>declined</i></p> <p>Town of Harrison and Hudson County Traffic Staging Meeting – October 25, 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present project status and schedule.</li> <li>• Identify issues and concerns.</li> <li>• Discuss stakeholder and public outreach.</li> </ul>
6. Facilitate Community Stakeholders Outreach Meetings	Neighborhood Stakeholders Mtg No. 1 – November 30, 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce project and team.</li> <li>• Present project status and schedule.</li> <li>• Discuss MOA &amp; community issues</li> </ul>
	Neighborhood Stakeholders Mtg. No. 2 May 2, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide next steps - workshop</li> <li>• Present landscape/streetscapes options.</li> <li>• Obtain input for design refinements.</li> <li>• Discuss community issues.</li> </ul>
	Community Project Workshop - July 19, 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present refined streetscape and landscape information; design progress, and E-team coordination on historic and environmental items.</li> </ul>
7. Facilitate Public Information Center Meeting(s)	<p>Public Information Center Meeting – December 6, 2012</p> <p>Public Information Center Meeting – November 14, 2013</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Present project information.</li> <li>• Present project history, current status, context sensitive design improvements.</li> <li>• Obtain public comments.</li> </ul>



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STEP	DATE	PURPOSE
8. Facilitate Special Purpose Meeting(s)	Plume House Meeting – February 14, 2013  Streetscape/Landscape Meeting – August 15, 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Present design progress.</li><li>• Discuss specific design development / community issues.</li><li>• Provide input and make recommendations for consideration on design elements.</li></ul>

\* Note: Project Team Status Meetings as conference calls or on-site are to be held as appropriate and prior to local officials briefings, community stakeholder outreach meetings and public information center (PIC) meetings.





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## H. Public Involvement (PI) Process - Design Phase Efforts to Date

- 1) A Community Involvement kick-off meeting held with sub-consultants at Baker's office in Hamilton, NJ to review past community involvement efforts and discuss proposed PI strategy to reach out to key community stakeholders in understanding prior commitments and next steps for project.
- 2) A field site visit and meetings with key neighborhood community stakeholders involved in earlier phases of the project were held to introduce the new project team, present project status, identify community issues and obtain information on potential stakeholders to be included in this phase of the project.
- 3) Contact/ mailing list of community and agency stakeholders have been developed. Due to extensive number of stakeholders, the contact list has been divided into four lists (see the Project Stakeholders List section).
- 4) Project team meetings were held to discuss and coordinate the Environmental compliance requirements. Met with the NJDOT and SHPO to develop the steps needed to meet the MOA stipulations.
- 5) Meetings were held with certain local officials and the City of Newark Engineering in individual meetings to discuss the project status, identify issues and obtain clarity on certain design aspects for PD such as lighting, right-of-way, access and traffic staging.
- 6) A Draft PIAP was developed in preparation for Community Involvement Progress/Status Meeting No. 1. The PIAP document will be circulated to the project team and a revised Draft once approved, will be on file at NJDOT Office of Community and Constituent Relations.

The following meetings have been conducted to date as part of the on-going public involvement efforts under the Design phase:

- Community Involvement Baker Kick-Off Meeting, Hamilton, NJ - November 14, 2011
- Field Site Visit and Community Stakeholder Meetings, Newark, NJ – November 30, 2011
- E-Team Kick-Off Meeting with NJDOT, Trenton, NJ - November 29, 2011
- Field Site Visit with NJDOT Office of Landscape Architecture, Newark, NJ – Dec. 19, 2011
- City of Newark Engineering Department Meeting, Newark, NJ - January 25, 2012
- E-Team Meeting with SHPO, Trenton, NJ - February 9, 2012
- Community Involvement Progress/Status Meeting No.1, NJDOT, Trenton, NJ - April 3, 2012

## I. Public Involvement Deliverables

*Project Fact Sheets.* A project Fact Sheet or Project Information Handout will be prepared and distributed to local officials at the initial local officials meeting, community stakeholder group outreach meetings, and to the general public at Public Information Centers. Fact Sheets or Project Information Sheets may include project status and schedule, and other information such as brief project history, project issues, project location map, project purpose and needs statement, and proposed concepts as appropriate and approved by the NJDOT Project Manager and NJDOT Office of Community & Constituent Relations (OCCR). The Project Information/Fact Sheet will be updated as the project progresses to reflect the most up-to-date project information available. Information contained in the Project Fact Sheet can be adapted to fashion a project email notice, a PIC meeting notice handout, or web site posting.



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*Project Portfolios.* Project Portfolios will be developed and utilized to provide clear and consistent hard copy materials to Project Team members, government agency representatives and key community neighborhood stakeholders and representatives from the City of Newark, Essex County and to adjacent local municipalities and Hudson County. The materials include contact information lists, regional map, map of project study area, project schedule, project fact sheet, meeting agendas and reports.

*Display Boards.* Display boards will be utilized to convey the proposed improvements to the public. Project display boards will include a project aerial, project deficiency display, traffic and key intersection information, traffic staging details, and a display of the final design configuration with renderings of design enhancement such as lighting, pedestrian access, and neighborhood enhancements.

*Comment Forms.* A Community Stakeholders Contact Information Form was created to obtain input from the key stakeholders in re-connecting with the key neighborhood representatives from the CD phase. The Contact Information Form and the standard NJDOT Comment Form will be made available for small group stakeholder meetings, the Public Information Center meetings, and at the Local Officials Briefings so on-going public comment and input will be accepted through the Design phase of the project and carry forward to the Construction phase.

*Project Web Site.* A project specific website may be developed during the design phase under the NJDOT NJcommuter.com website under the top menu section titled "In The Works". The site may include sections on the project overview, purpose and need statement, FAQs (*Frequently Asked Questions*), community outreach efforts, maps, photos, and helpful links. It will be maintained and updated as needed to remain current. Once the project moves from the Final Design phase to Construction phase, the site will be linked under the main menu titled "Construction Updates.". All information to be posted on the website will be reviewed and approved by the NJDOT Project Manager and NJDOT Office of Communications.