

**I-295 REHABILITATION PROJECT
CAMDEN AND GLOUCESTER COUNTIES, NJ
LOCAL OFFICIALS BRIEFING – NO. 1**

Meeting Report

Date: Monday, June 12, 2006
Time: 3 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Location: Borough of Lawnside Municipal Building
4 North Douglas Avenue
Lawnside, NJ 08045

<u>Attendees</u>	<u>Address / Representing</u>	<u>Phone/Email</u>
Jeff Stomel	Senator Menendez	856-757-5353
Robert Kelly	Camden County Department of Public Works	856-566-2970 rkelly@camdencounty.com
Tim Gasparovic	Borough of Haddonfield Police Department	t.gasparovic@haddonfield-nj.gov
Gregory Sullivan	Bellmawr Township (Remington & Vernick)	609-298-6017
Mark Bryant	Mayor, Borough of Lawnside	856-573-6204
John Cunningham	Borough of Lawnside	856-573-6204
Robert Davies	NJDOT, DPPD	609-530-2744
Patricia Feliciano	NJDOT, Office of Community Relations	609-530-2110
Robert DiCroce	McCormick Taylor	856-793-0800
John Eric Henson	McCormick Taylor	856-793-0800
John Mullen	McCormick Taylor	215-592-4200

Purpose of Meeting

The purpose of the briefing was to provide Local Officials information on proposed improvements for I-295 from Route 45 (Exit 24) in Gloucester County to Haddonfield-Berlin Road (Exit 32) in Camden County. Topics of discussion included transportation and infrastructure issues, changing traffic and truck patterns, traffic safety and upcoming public outreach initiatives.

Agenda

- I. Introductions
 - Project Area
 - Purpose and Need
- II. Engineering Overview
 - Pavement Restoration
 - Construction Staging Plan (Overall)
 - Construction Staging Design (Detail)
 - Project Status
- III. Public Outreach Program
 - Local Officials Briefings
 - Public Information Centers

- Mailing List
- Community Groups / Stakeholders
- Media Relations
 - Gloucester County Times
 - Courier-Post
 - Philadelphia Inquirer (South Jersey edition)
 - Township newsletters and websites
 - PATCO communications
 - NJDOT Direct-Connect Website and NJDOT Commuter website

IV. Next Steps & Future Coordination

Meeting Displays

- Project Area map
- Pavement Restoration plans
- Construction Staging Plan (Overall)
- Construction Staging Design (Detail)

Meeting Handouts

- Project Fact Sheet
- Project Area Map

Summary of Discussion

Patricia Feliciano opened the meeting by thanking everyone for attending, and then asked everyone to introduce themselves. She then asked Rob DiCroce to provide an overview of the project.

Mr. DiCroce stated the New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) is evaluating improvements for an eight-mile stretch of I-295 in Gloucester and Camden counties, New Jersey. The study area extends from Route 45 (Exit 24) in Gloucester County to Haddonfield-Berlin Road (Exit 32) in Camden County.

Mr. DiCroce indicated the I-295 corridor pavement has deteriorated to the extent that it creates potential safety hazards and warrants rehabilitation or reconstruction. Repairs will consist of rehabilitation of the pavement surface through milling and overlay.

Mr. DiCroce also stated Preliminary Design began in December 2005. Final Design is expected to be completed approximately 18 months to two years thereafter. Construction would follow immediately, dependent upon available funding, with an estimated two-year duration.

Mark Bryant inquired about the separate interchange project at I-295 and NJ Route 42. Gregory Sullivan explained the interchange project includes two main improvements: first, to provide the missing moves from northbound I-295 to southbound Route 42, and from northbound Route 42 to southbound I-295; and second, overall reconstruction and rehabilitation of the existing interchange.

Bob Davies stated that the separate interchange reconstruction project will be a major undertaking, and is a few years away from starting. In the interim, he explained, NJDOT would like to initiate the I-295 rehabilitation effort as soon as possible.

Mr. DiCroce stated the construction staging would maintain three lanes in each direction at all times (including peak hours) to ensure the best overall traffic flow during construction. Mr. Davies stated the two bridges included in the rehabilitation project would be completely re-decked. He also stated that NJDOT expects the overall construction effort would take two construction seasons, beginning in spring of 2008 and ending in fall of 2009. The mill and overlay of I-295 extending a mile north and a mile south of the Route 42 interchange would begin later this year.

Mr. DiCroce stated other improvements will focus on pavement rehabilitation/reconstruction and structure repairs, as well as improvements to guide rail, medians and shoulders and drainage.

Mayor Bryant inquired if the portion of I-295 in the Borough of Lawnside would include median barriers and guide rails as part of the construction effort. Mr. Davies replied that these traffic control devices would be included as an overall safety measure.

Mr. DiCroce stated the design team is currently preparing pavement design plans, and does not anticipate making improvements to the local street network along the corridor. Mayor Bryant replied that NJDOT should evaluate the pavement at the Copley Road ramp entrance onto I-295 in Barrington, as well as rutted pavement on the southbound side I-295.

John Eric Henson stated that improvements will include overpass structure decks will be reconstructed at two locations, and substandard elements will be improved. He stated that overhead variable message signs and pole mounted closed circuit cameras will be installed at various locations along the corridor. There is no anticipated impact outside the existing right-of-way.

Mr. Henson described the construction staging effort that would include lane shifts designed to increase the work area and decreased overall construction time. Mr. Henson explained that the staging would maintain three travel lanes in each direction at all times. Staging would include two-lane work-zones, with 11-foot lanes for local traffic, as well as a center express lane for motorists.

Mr. Davies stated that in order to achieve three-lanes in each direction, traffic will have to utilize existing outside shoulders as travel lanes. As a consequence of this, conflicts may arise for traffic entering and exiting the highway since there would not be acceleration or deceleration lanes during construction.

Mr. Henson stated that ramp construction would occur during off-hours as much as possible to limit local detours. Mr. Sullivan suggested sending a letter to each of the affected communities regarding potential detours. Mr. Henson replied that coordination between municipal officials, the county and the state would occur leading up to and during any ramp closures. Mr Davies stated the goal is to limit traffic impacts through overnight repairs and repaving, having the newly-reconstructed ramps reopen during the day.

Mayor Bryant inquired if the express lane would include a movable or fixed median barrier. Mr. Henson stated the barrier would be fixed and permanent. The express lane would begin and end at either end of the project corridor, with additional access provided only at the Route 42 interchange. Mr. Davies stated that the Department will include effective signing along the roadway to alert motorists who wish to travel on the express lane.

Bob Kelly inquired if the entire project would be mill and overlay. Mr. Henson stated that the project team is currently performing pavement testing, and the results will be compiled soon.

John Mullen stated that as part of the design process, NJDOT will be holding meetings with elected officials, business and community groups, and local residents in order to provide information on the proposed improvements and solicit feedback. Public Information Centers will be held to provide opportunities to join in the study process and discuss transportation problems. He stated the PICs are tentatively scheduled to be held in December 2006/January 2007.

Mr. Mullen also stated that the same outreach activities would occur during Final Design to ensure the public is informed of the scope and schedule of the project. He solicited the attendees for other outreach ideas, including other media outlets not currently included in the current program. Mayor Bryant suggested meeting with the Camden County and Gloucester County mayor's associations.

Action Items

- Coordinate with municipal officials regarding potential detours that would occur during ramp closures.
- Set up outreach meetings with mayor's association during the next stage of the project.

The meeting ended at 4:30 p.m.

Report prepared by:
McCormick Taylor, Inc.

John F. Mullen, AICP