

# **Southeastern Orange County Traffic and Land Use Study**

## **Description of Early Action and Priority Projects Earmarking Transportation Funds To Enhance Public Safety and Mobility**

Orange County Department of Planning

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As part of the Southeastern Orange County Traffic and Land Use Study, the Orange County Department of Planning is soliciting support from the Honorable Sue Kelly, Member of Congress, toward earmarking transportation funds as part of the Transportation Equity Act – 3 (TEA-3). The Study is guided by input from the Study’s Project Advisory Group (PAG), which is comprised of County Legislators, Town Supervisors, and Village Mayors representing the Towns of Monroe, Woodbury, and Blooming Grove, and the Villages of Monroe, Harriman, and Kiryas Joel. The PAG also includes representatives from the New York State Department of Transportation, New York State Thruway Authority, Metro-North, the Monroe-Woodbury Central School District, and the Newburgh-Orange County Transportation Council. Together the members of the PAG have identified the following four projects as having a clear and immediate benefit to the communities in Southeastern Orange County. The first project on the list is the most aggressive and costly project to complete, but it addresses the regional issues facing the residents and businesses in the area and consensus has been reached by the PAG that this should be the first priority for securing federal TEA-3 funds.

Should this priority project become too large to fall under the umbrella of an ear-marked TEA-3 initiative, the PAG has identified three smaller secondary projects, which are located throughout the project study area and address more local congestion, mobility, and safety issues. These secondary projects have been identified by the community leaders in the PAG as existing deficiencies in the transportation system that requires immediate attention.

As part of the Traffic and Land Use Study, the Project Team will progress the planning of all four of these projects and is exploring traditional and innovative methods to fund these very important and needed projects in this growing community.

The following descriptions are the Priority and Secondary Projects planned to enhance mobility and safety in the Towns of Woodbury, Monroe and Blooming Grove.

### **Priority Project**

**Route 32/6/17 Interchange with the New York State Thruway and Access to County Route 105** – Improvements to the existing Route 32/6/17 interchange would be developed to minimize or eliminate the recurrent congestion on Route 32 caused by regional traffic exiting and entering the Thruway at the Harriman interchange. Design alternatives would focus on creating a direct link to the Thruway from the Woodbury Commons and other retail developments in the area and/or the creation of access ramps to and from Route 17 designed to improve traffic flow and operations on Route 32. Access to the County Route 105 corridor would be provided through either a direct connection from the mainline of Route 17 or a new collector-distributor roadway system that would parallel the existing alignment. The collector-distributor roadways would also act as a service road for local traffic with origins and destinations within the Villages of Monroe, Harriman, Central Valley, Kiryas Joel and throughout the Towns of Monroe, Blooming Grove,

and Woodbury. In addition, the new interchange to County Route 105 would serve as an emergency access route to westbound Route 17 that would be consistent with evacuation plan for the Indian Point facility in Westchester County.

**Secondary Projects:**

1. **Route 32 Corridor** - This project involves a series of improvements to key intersections and highway segments along Route 32 between the Route 17/6/NYS Thruway interchange and the Hamlet of Highland Mills. These improvements are designed to increase operational efficiency and enhance safety and would include new signal timing and phasing, additional left turning lanes, access management improvements, landscaping and streetscape enhancements, and traffic calming techniques to better channel traffic and promote pedestrian safety. Adjustments to speed limits and changes to lane striping that match the character and needs of adjacent land uses will also be implemented.
2. **Route 17M Corridor** – This arterial roadway is an important connector, linking centers of commerce and employment in both Monroe and Harriman with the residential neighborhoods that are located along the connecting local roads. As such, it presently experiences high traffic volumes and congestion, and a high rate of accidents. Signal timing adjustments, better delineation of crosswalks and other traffic calming improvements are proposed to better channel traffic, enhance pedestrian safety and increase operating efficiency at the more heavily congested areas, within the Villages of Monroe and Harriman, like the Lake Street intersection in Monroe. Access management and safety improvements will also be investigated and initiated, where possible, to minimize conflicts generated by the multiple curb cuts in the commercial portions of the corridor.
3. **Route 208 Corridor** – This corridor links Monroe with Blooming Grove, the Village of Washingtonville, and the municipalities north of the project study area. These areas are experiencing an increasing amount of development and utilize Route 208 to access the regional roadway links and commercial centers located in the southeastern portion of Orange County. In addition, a significant amount of development is occurring along the length of Route 208 itself, which has exacerbated the existing accident and safety problems found along this corridor, particularly at the intersection with Clove Road in Blooming Grove. As part of this project, intersection and access management improvements would be installed to address existing safety issues by limiting the number of curb cuts and conflicting turning movements on the stretch of Route 208 between Blooming Grove and Monroe. As part of this project Clove Road would be realigned to intersect Route 208 at a more conventional 90 degree angle, which would improve sight distances and the safety of the turning movements.