

## **SAG MEETING NOTES**

**APPENDIX A**  
**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**



# **PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN**





Executive Office of Transportation/  
Office of Transportation Planning  
I-495 Transportation Study

# Public Involvement Plan

October 11, 2006

---

## Public Involvement Goals

- To provide a structure and forums for interested and affected parties to provide input and comment on major issues, problems, and potential improvement strategies along the Interstate 495 Corridor.
- To educate agency representatives, legislators, stakeholders, and members of the public and media about issues, opportunities, goals, and alternatives affecting the Interstate 495 study area.
- To create general awareness of the study among highway or roadway users, the business community, residents, and municipal officials.
- To engage all key stakeholders in the study process and results and build agreement for implementation activities.

---

## Principles

- Create an environment in which decisions are based on an objective, transparent, and inclusive planning process that actively seeks input from a variety of stakeholders.
- The Working Group, Study Advisory Group (SAG), and the public will inform the Executive Office of Transportation (EOT) decision-making process. EOT and the Office of Transportation Planning will make decisions about alternatives, recommendations, and projects and studies listed in the Corridor Improvement Plan.
- Ensure open, honest, and clear communications.
- Facilitate two-way education.

---

## Study Participants

### *Working Group*

- Executive Office of Transportation
- Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG)
- Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC)
- Fay, Spofford & Thorndike (FST)

### *SAG*

- Congressmen John Tierney and Marty Meehan
- State Representatives from the
  - First, Second, Third, Fifth, Fourteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth, and Eighteenth Essex districts; and
  - the Second, Third, Fifth, Fourteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth, Eighteenth, Nineteenth, and Twenty-second Middlesex districts.
- State Senators from the
  - First Essex District;
  - First Middlesex District;
  - Second Essex and Middlesex Districts; and
  - Third Middlesex District.
- Chambers of Commerce from
  - Salisbury;
  - Greater Lowell;
  - Newburyport;
  - Merrimack Valley; and
  - Greater Haverhill.



- Cities of
  - Haverhill;
  - Lawrence;
  - Lowell; and
  - Methuen.
  
- Towns of
  - Amesbury;
  - Andover;
  - Billerica;
  - Chelmsford;
  - Merrimac;
  - North Andover;
  - Salisbury;
  - Tewksbury; and
  - Westford.
  
- Agencies and Organizations:
  - Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority;
  - Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority;
  - Lowell Regional Transit Authority;
  - Federal Highway Administration;
  - Merrimack Valley Transportation Management Association;
  - Merrimack Valley Economic Development Corporation; and
  - Alliance for Amesbury.



---

## Decision-making Process

EOT will be responsible for making all final study decisions with assistance and input from the Working Group and the SAG. Below is a summary of the roles and responsibilities of each study participant.

### *EOT*

- Review consultant's work
- Manage the project
- Propose recommendations and make final decisions

### *Working Group*

- Provide input to the study process
- Review and revise technical work
- Provide input on recommendations

### *SAG*

- Provide input to the study process
- Assist with alternatives development
- Provide input on the technical materials and alternatives

### *Consultant Team*

- Perform technical work
- Prepare technical material and presentation for SAG meetings
- Prepare technical material and presentation for Public Informational Meetings

---

## Public Information and Activities

All public involvement activities are derived from the basic need for open, two-way communication among EOT, the SAG, and the public.

### *Activities*



- Stakeholder interviews will be conducted with planners, engineers, and other municipal officials and Regional Planning Agency (RPA) representatives.
- SAG meetings. These meetings will take place on a regular basis to ensure that stakeholders have sufficient opportunities to review data and assumptions as well as study results.
- RPA briefings. The project team will conduct periodic briefings with the RPAs to keep them informed of upcoming activities and overall study progress.
- Public Informational Meetings will be held at key study milestones. Meetings will be widely advertised through newspaper advertisements, media releases, and paper and electronic notices.
- Communication with SAG members in between meetings and particularly those who are unable to attend meetings regularly but wish to be kept up-to-date.
- Provide SAG members and others with information and materials to update their constituencies.

### *Public Information*

- Media releases will be developed on topics such as introduction to the study, Web site roll-out, key facts from existing conditions analysis, alternatives; alternatives screening, recommendations, etc.
- Fact sheets. An interactive fact sheet will be developed for each of the 19 interchanges in the study area. Fact sheets will provide information about the interchange, local roadways, traffic volumes, alternatives evaluation, etc. Printed versions can be distributed as newspaper or newsletter insert via chambers of commerce, interest groups, and other groups. Electronic versions will be posted on the project Web site and can be disseminated via e-mail by SAG members who represent diverse constituencies. Other fact sheets about key topics, such as the connection between land use and development and transportation, may also be developed.

- Short articles on the status of the study will be developed for inclusion in existing newsletters produced by business associations, developers/property managers, and MassRIDES.
- Link the study Web site to SAG member Web sites such as municipalities, agencies and others as appropriate.

## Schedule of Activities

Task	
<input type="radio"/>	Task 1. Study Area, Goals and Objectives, and Evaluation Criteria
<input type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Task 2. Existing Conditions and Issues Evaluation
<input type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	Task 3. Alternatives Development
<input type="radio"/>	Task 4. Alternatives Analysis
<input type="radio"/> 	Task 5. Recommendations
<input type="radio"/> <input type="checkbox"/> 	Task 6. Corridor Improvement Plan and Final Report

SAG Meeting   
  Public Meeting   
  Report

### *Fall 2005*

Activities at the start-up of the study will have two objectives:

- informing the public and interested and affected groups that the study has begun and
- getting input on issues to determine perceptions and assumptions.

All materials will be posted on the study Web site.

- Prepare short article for inclusion in SAG members' existing publications, the *Boston Globe* NorthWest Weekly section, and other local community papers announcing the start of the study and the Web site.



- Meet with the SAG.
- Conduct Stakeholder interviews with planners, engineers, and other municipal officials and RPA representatives.
- Launch interactive Web site, send announcement, and link to media and other appropriate Web sites.

### *Fall 2006*

Activities in this period will focus on reporting on key findings from the Existing Conditions analysis. All materials will be posted on the study Web site.

- Meet with the SAG to review findings of Existing Conditions analysis and issues evaluation.
- Meet with the SAG in advance of the Public Informational Meetings to review and discuss meeting structure, agenda, publicity, and materials.
- Prepare media releases and meeting notices announcing the Public Informational Meetings. Provide SAG members with print and electronic versions of the meeting notice for dissemination to their constituents and posting in public places.
- Hold two Public Informational Meetings—one in each of the RPA districts—to present and review information about the study and the Existing Conditions findings.
- Provide mail-back comment forms at the Public Informational Meetings for asking for input on the study in general, public information and communications, and comments on the Existing Conditions analysis.
- Prepare summary of key input received at the meetings and post on the Web site.

### *Winter 2006*

Activities in this period will center on working with the Working Group to develop, screen, and prioritize alternatives for transit, TDM, ITS, and Interstate 495 mainline and ramps. All materials will be posted on the study Web site.

- Meet with the SAG to review alternatives and get input.
- Prepare summary materials on the alternatives for SAG members to use at meetings with their constituents to assist with explaining the alternatives for feedback.
- Prepare media releases for local media describing the alternatives. Provide text and graphics or visualizations to SAG members and other interested groups for inclusion



- on their Web sites. Highlight the study Web site as resource for more detailed information.
- Prepare media releases and meeting notices announcing Public Informational Meetings. Provide SAG members with print and electronic versions of the meeting notice for dissemination to their constituents and in public places. Provide media with text and graphics describing the alternatives.
  - Hold a widely advertised Public Informational Meeting in each RPA area to review the alternatives.
  - Provide mail-back comment forms at the Public Informational Meetings for asking for input on the study process and comments on the alternatives.

### *Winter 2006/2007*

Activities in this period will involve further definition of the benefits and impacts of the alternatives. All materials will be posted on the study Web site.

- Meet with the SAG to discuss the results of the evaluation of safety benefits, mobility enhancements, environmental impacts, air quality and noise impacts, community impacts and benefits, and planning-level cost estimates of evaluated alternatives.
- Prepare summary materials on four alternatives including matrix of benefits and impacts of the alternatives for SAG members to use at meetings with their constituents.
- Prepare media releases and meeting notices describing the four alternatives for the local media and *NorthWest Weekly*. Provide SAG members with print and electronic versions of the meeting notice for dissemination to their constituents and in public places.

### *Spring 2007*

Activities in this period will focus on reviewing the proposed recommended improvement packages. All materials will be posted on the study Web site.

- Meet with the SAG to review and discuss preliminary short- and long-range recommendations for highway and non-highway improvements.
- Draft list of projects to be included in the study Corridor Improvement Plan; post on the Web site and SAG members sites.

### *Summer 2007*

The draft final report and recommendations will be prepared for review.

- Meet with the SAG to review the draft final report and Corridor Improvement Plan.
- Prepare media releases and meeting notices describing the recommendations and announcing the final Public Informational Meeting. Contact key reporters to inform them and encourage attendance. Provide SAG members with print and electronic versions of the meeting notice for dissemination to their constituents and in public places.
- Hold a widely advertised Public Informational Meeting to review the recommendations.
- Prepare media releases/fact sheets announcing recommendations.

---

## Web Site - [www.495studyinfo.com](http://www.495studyinfo.com)

The study Web site will provide public access to all documents, plans, meeting notices, and summaries, and provide a place for members of the public to comment on documents or the study in general. All comments and suggestions will be read, catalogued, and distributed to the EOT project manager and to the Fay, Spofford & Thorndike team project manager. All comments will be acknowledged and all questions responded to as quickly as possible.

---

## Contact Information

### **EOT Project Manager:**

Ethan Britland  
Executive Office of Transportation  
Office of Transportation Planning  
10 Park Plaza  
Boston, MA 02116  
(617) 973-8236  
(617) 973-8035  
[Ethan.Britland@eot.state.ma.us](mailto:Ethan.Britland@eot.state.ma.us)



## SAG MEETING NOTES







# I-495 CORRIDOR TRANSPORTATION STUDY

## STUDY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING #1

**Thursday, July 28, 2005 at 10:00 AM**  
**Sanborn Hall, Quinn Public Safety Building**  
**90 Hampshire Street**  
**Methuen, MA**

### MEETING AGENDA

1. Introductions (Ethan Britland - Office of Transportation Planning)
2. Corridor Background and Study Purpose  
(Tony Komornick – Merrimack Valley Planning Commission)  
(Robert Flynn – Northern Middlesex Council of Governments)
3. Study Process (Ethan Britland - Office of Transportation Planning)
  - a) Goals, Evaluation Criteria, Public Participation
  - b) Problem Evaluation
  - c) Alternatives Development
  - d) Alternatives Analysis/Evaluation
  - e) Recommendations
3. Study Overview (Ed Hollingshead - Fay, Spofford and Thorndike)  
(Anne McKinnon – Howard/Stein-Hudson)
4. Roles and Responsibilities (Handout)
5. Discussion of Study Area, Goals, Evaluation Criteria, and Public Participation (Ed Hollingshead - Fay, Spofford and Thorndike)
6. Next Steps (Ethan Britland - Office of Transportation Planning)



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF TRANSPORTATION



MITT ROMNEY  
GOVERNOR

KERRY HEALEY  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

JOHN COGLIANO  
SECRETARY



## STUDY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING

**Tuesday, November 28, 2006**

**10:00 AM – 12:00 PM**

Tewksbury Public Library  
300 Chandler Street  
Tewksbury, MA 01876

### AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Review of Study Activities To-Date
3. Review of Task 2 To-Date: Existing Conditions Summary
4. Discussion of Future Conditions and Next Steps
5. Public Informational Meetings / Other Business

**Directions**

The Library is located on the corner of Main Street (Route 38) and Chandler Street.

**I-495 North and South:**

Take exit 38 off of I-495. This will bring you to Route 38. Take a left onto Route 38 (you will be driving south) and travel approximately 2.5 miles. After you pass through the center of Tewksbury, you will come to a set of lights with a Shell gas station on your left. Take a left onto Chandler Street. The library is located at 300 Chandler Street on your right hand side.

**I-93 Traveling South:**

Take exit 42 off of I-93. This is Dascomb Road. Dascomb Road turns into East Street almost immediately. Travel approximately 3 miles on East Street. You will see the Tewksbury Hospital campus (surrounded by a stone wall) on your left hand side. Look for a blinking light, this is Chandler Street. Take a left onto Chandler Street. The library is located at 300 Chandler Street on your left hand side.

**I-93 Traveling North:**

Take exit 42 off of I-93. This is Dascomb Road. Take a left onto Dascomb Road, which turns into East Street almost immediately. Travel approximately 3 miles on East Street. You will see the Tewksbury Hospital campus (surrounded by a stone wall) on your left hand side. Look for a blinking light, this is Chandler Street. Take a left onto Chandler Street. The library is located at 300 Chandler Street on your left hand side.



Executive Office of Transportation  
**I-495 Corridor Transportation Study**  
**Study Advisory Group Meeting**  
Tuesday, November 28, 2006  
Tewksbury Public Library, 10:00 a.m.

## Meeting Summary

---

### Attendees

**Curt Bellavance**, Director of Community Development, North Andover  
**Ethan Britland**, Executive Office of Transportation, Office of Transportation Planning (EOT)  
**Lincoln Daley**, North Andover  
**Ian Durrant**, MassRIDES  
**Dorothy Fennell**, Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates, Inc. (HSH)  
**Stan Franzein**, The Junction TMO  
**Bob Halpin**, Merrimack Valley Economic Development Corporation  
**Joanne Haracz**, DMJM + Harris  
**Justin Howard**, NMCOG  
**Anthony Komornick**, Merrimack Valley Planning Commission  
**Andrea Leary**, Merrimack Valley Transportation Management Association  
**Paul Materazzo**, Town of Andover, Planning Division  
**Anne McKinnon**, HSH  
**Paul Nelson**, EOT  
**Joe Onorato**, Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD)  
**Hardy Patel**, MHD-Highway Design  
**Steve Sadwick**, Town of Tewksbury  
**Beth Sousa**, Representative Micelli  
**Beverly Woods**, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG)

### Purpose of meeting

To introduce the Study Advisory Group on the status of the I-495 Corridor Transportation Study and to provide an overview of existing conditions in the study area.

### Summary

#### *Welcome and introductions*

Ethan Britland, project manager from the Executive Office of Transportation (EOT), welcomed the group to the second Study Advisory group (SAG) meeting and led introductions. He said that most materials and notices about the 495 study will be distributed by e-mail and through the project Web site, [www.495study.com](http://www.495study.com), but those requiring the information by mail should notify him (617-973-8236) or Paul Nelson at EOT (617-973-7479).

Ethan Britland reviewed the activities of the study team since the last SAG meeting in July 2005. The data collection efforts did not go well—hundreds of automatic traffic recorders on Interstate 495 ramps did not produce usable data, so the team shifted to manual turning movement counts to determine the number of vehicles exiting and entering at all of the interchanges along the 40-mile corridor. The issues with the data collection were the cause of the delay in overall study process.

Follow-up on requests from July 2005 SAG meeting.

- NHDOT representative was invited to participate in SAG.

- The MBTA has been requested to participate.
- The team is working to establish a strong Web site that will be a repository for all documents and information on the study.

### ***Existing Conditions, Task 2***

Ed Hollingshead from Fay, Spofford and Thorndike (FST), lead consultant for EOT, briefly reviewed the study process and participants. A Working Group consisting of EOT, representatives from the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG) and the Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC), and FST meet regularly to discuss and review the progress of the study. The SAG consists of 40 representatives including elected officials, city and town officials, business groups, MBTA, and others who meet to review key issues and recommendations and provide overall guidance. Ed Hollingshead described the study area: a 40-mile-long corridor that runs through 13 cities and towns. He reviewed the goal of the study—to improve safety and mobility in the corridor—and said this and more would be included in Task 1.

Ed Hollingshead described Task 2, Existing Conditions, and reviewed the characteristics of the corridor. For analysis purposes, the corridor was divided into western and eastern sections. He described the four main types of interchanges found in the study area and identified the key advantages and disadvantages. The majority of the interchanges in the study area are partial coverleafs and partial cloverleaf variants.

**Traffic volume:** Traffic volumes are growing at a greater rate in the western section and the overall percentage of trucks is high—between 15% and 22%. The average daily traffic in the western section is about 120,000 vehicles per day (vpd) and about 108,000 vpd in the eastern section. The directional distribution of traffic in the western section is fairly uniform (volumes eastbound and westbound are similar). This changes somewhat approaching I-93. In the eastern section, the traffic flow is predominantly to and from I-93.

**Level of service:** Ed Hollingshead reviewed the concept of level of service (LOS). Level of service measures the amount of delay and is measured at signalized intersections, merge/diverge points, weaves, and on the mainline. The analysis shows that at the on and off ramps, only five locations are at LOS F (failing) on a scale of A to F in the morning peak hour. Nineteen ramps have acceptable LOS in the morning peak hour, defined as LOS E or better. In the evening peak hour, eight ramps operate at LOS F and 16 operate at LOS E or better. One of the primary causes of the problems at the ramps is operations at the I-495/I-93 interchange that causes traffic to back up onto Interstate 495. In addition, at other locations, factors independent of Interstate 495, such as intersecting street traffic, influence operations and level of service on Interstate 495. At merge/diverge points, six operated at LOS F in the morning and evening peak hours and 18 operated at acceptable LOS, E or better. He mentioned several possible ways to slow deterioration of LOS, including extending merges at Rte.133 and extending the short acceleration lane on Rte. 213 in Methuen. He summarized the Interstate 495 mainline is not over capacity in either section, and the western section is growing at a faster rate than the eastern section.

**Crash History:** The study team reviewed crash data between 2002 and 2005. The two highest crash locations are the I-495/I-93 interchange and at the Interstate 495/Rte.125 interchange, Beverly Woods, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG), asked about the methodology used in the analysis—were crashes on the mainline and at interchanges counted? Ed Hollingshead said any crash that could be identified as within the interchange study area was included. Beverly Woods suggested consulting with Bonnie Polin at MassHighway who is doing research on lane departure crashes.

**Transit:** Joanne Haracz from DMJM + Harris described the existing transit in the study area. The Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority and the Lowell Regional Transit Authority currently operate systems that feature downtown hubs with little circumferential transit. MBTA commuter rail is well used: 45% of all boardings on the Lowell line occur at Lowell and 52% of all boardings on the Haverhill line occur at Haverhill. Two Transportation Management Associations serve the region: The Junction TMO and Merrimack Valley TMA.

**Land use:** Joanne Haracz said study area land use is primarily residential and forest:

- 35.4% residential
- 35.5% forest
- 2.4% commercial (located primarily in cities and on state highways close to Interstate 495)

- 4.5% industrial

**Buildout:** Joanne Haracz said the buildout analysis prepared by the Commonwealth estimated that 34,000 additional housing units and 141 million s.f. of commercial and industrial property could potentially be developed at full buildout. Housing is expected to be developed primarily in Haverhill, Lowell, Westford, and Andover. Industrial/commercial is expected to be concentrated in Lowell, Billerica, Westford, Andover, and Haverhill. The potential implication of housing and commercial growth on traffic was demonstrated using trip rates from the Institute of Transportation Engineers and illustrated potential new trips for the top five growth communities ranging from 206,000 new vehicle trips from new residential development to almost 1 million new trips from commercial development at full buildout.

Ed Hollingshead said the study team is working with the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) to develop the estimates of future traffic, year 2025 LOS, problems and issues and will meet with the SAG in late winter to review the results. The team will develop alternatives that will eventually lead to concept-level solutions. The existing conditions analysis and alternatives will be presented at two public meetings—one in each of the regional planning commission areas—in early spring. The study is expected to be completed in fall 2007.

### ***Questions and discussion***

Andrea Leary, Merrimack Valley TMA, said the information was presented very clearly and it is easy to understand. She said she will be able to provide this information to her constituents. She said more park-and-ride lots are needed on Interstate 495 to help commutes along the corridor. MassCommute recently did a survey of its members and others to find out about issues about park-and-ride, the results of which she will share with the team.

Paul Materazzo, Andover Director of Planning, referenced Rte. 28 access issues and asked when it would be appropriate to talk about other issues affecting the corridor. Ethan Britland responded, when FST begins looking at alternatives would be the most appropriate time, but initiating discussion sooner rather than later is always best. Tony Komornick, Merrimack Valley Planning Commission, noted that traffic volumes presented in the beginning of the PowerPoint are not consistent with those presented later on. Ed Hollingshead said he would correct this. Hardy Patel, MassHighway, said the projections should be made to 2030, not 2025. Beverly Woods concurred. Hardy Patel asked if the team was aware of a location study for Rte 125/Interstate 495 prepared by MassHighway. Yes. He noted that the 10-foot shoulder on Interstate 495 are on the outside and the 4-foot shoulders are inside.

Beverly Woods asked that that the corrected PowerPoint be posted to the [www.495study.com](http://www.495study.com) Web site.

### **Action Items**

- Review and correct PowerPoint as needed; post to 495study.com Web site
- Add SAG members web links to 495study.com



<sup>R</sup> **STUDY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING**

**Thursday, February 7, 2008**

**11:00 AM – 12:30 PM**

Merrimack Valley Planning Commission  
160 Main Street  
Haverhill, MA

**AGENDA**

1. Welcome and introductions
2. Study updates
3. Review of 2006 and No-Build (2030) Conditions
4. Review of Future (2030) Conditions with proposed improvements
5. Next Steps
6. Questions/discussion





Executive Office of Transportation and Public Works  
**I-495 Corridor Transportation Study**  
**Study Advisory Group Meeting**  
Thursday, February 7, 2008  
Merrimack Valley Planning Commission, 11:00 a.m.

## Meeting Summary

---

### Attendees

**Curt Bellavance**, Director of Community Development, North Andover  
**Ethan Britland**, Executive Office of Transportation and Public Works, Office of Planning (EOTPW)  
**Kelley Conway, P.E.**, Billerica Engineering  
**Joe Costanzo**, Merrimack Valley Regional Transit Authority  
**Lisa DeMeo, P.E.**, Lowell Engineer  
**Dennis DiZoglio**, Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC)  
**Ed Hollingshead**, Fay, Spofford & Thorndike  
**Justin Howard**, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG)  
**Anthony Komornick**, Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC)  
**Andrea Leary**, Merrimack Valley Transportation Management Association  
**Paul Materazzo**, Town of Andover, Planning Division  
**Anne McKinnon**, Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates  
**Joe Onorato**, Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD)  
**Hardy Patel**, MHD-Highway Design  
**Steve Robertson**, Billerica DPW  
**Steve Sadwick**, Town of Tewksbury  
**Elliot Schmiedl**, MassRIDES  
**Rep. David Torrasi**, State Representative  
**David Walker**, Rockingham Regional Planning Commission  
**Beverly Woods**, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG)

### Purpose of meeting

Update the Advisory Group on the status of the Interstate 495 Corridor Transportation Study and to review the 2006 conditions, 2030 projections, and improvement ideas for the Interstate 495 corridor.

### Summary

#### *Welcome and introductions*

Ethan Britland, project manager from the Executive Office of Transportation and Public Works, welcomed the Study Advisory Group (SAG) and led introductions. He said the project has been delayed due primarily to delays with the modeling. The 2030 projections were prepared by the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS), which provides technical and policy-analysis support to Boston Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), and its volume of other work was so great that it was a long time before it could start the work. The study is on schedule to finish at the end of June 2008.

#### *495 Corridor Review*

Ed Hollingshead from Fay, Spofford & Thorndike (FST), lead consultant for EOTPW, described the study area, a 40-mile-long corridor that runs through 13 cities and towns. He reviewed the goals of the study—to improve

safety and mobility in the corridor. For analysis purposes, the corridor was divided into western and eastern sections. Ed Hollingshead described the three analysis cases: 2006 existing conditions, 2030 projected without improvements, and 2030 projected with potential improvements. Improvement options will be roadway, transit/TDM, and land use modifications.

**2006 peak-hour traffic volumes:** Daily traffic volumes in the western segment are generally higher than in the eastern segment. Traffic volumes in the a.m. and p.m. peak hours are evenly balanced in the western segment but not in the eastern segment.

**2006 level of service:** Ed Hollingshead reviewed the concept of level of service (LOS). Level of service measures amount of delay and is measured at signalized intersections, merge/diverge points, weaves, and on the mainline. Thirty-one intersections were studied—10 are signalized and 21 are unsignalized. None of the signalized intersections in the a.m. peak operated at LOS F and only 4 were F in the p.m. peak. At unsignalized intersections, 6 operated at LOS F in the a.m. peak and 10 were F in the p.m. peak.

At intersections off Interstate 495 on/off ramps with Interstate 495 travel lanes (merge/diverge/weave operations), the analysis of 2006 conditions shows that there are only a small number of problems. Of a total of 53 diverge points, only 6 operate at LOS F in the peak hours. Of the 49 merge movements, none operates at F in peak hours. Of the 19 weave movement, 6 operate at LOS F in the peak hour.

**Top crash locations:** The three crash locations that have the highest number of crashes are the I-495/I-93 interchange (Exit 40), the I-495/Rte. 125 interchange (Exit 51), and the I-495/Rte. 3 interchange (Exit 35). The top two crash locations are both full cloverleaf interchanges which require merge and weave movements in a congested interchange.

**Projected 2030 peak-hour traffic volumes:** The CTPS regional traffic model was used to project the future volumes along Interstate 495 in the study area. Known projects that will generate additional traffic were also included. In general, in the western segment, volumes are projected to increase between 8% and 18% by 2030. In the eastern segment, volumes are projected to increase at a higher percentage due largely to the fact that the overall volumes in the eastern segment are lower to start with. The analysis shows that in 2030, if no improvements are made, operations at some of the unsignalized intersections will worsen to an undesirable level of service (E or F). Nine unsignalized intersections will operate at LOS E or F in 2030 compared to 5 in 2006. Two signalized intersections are projected to worsen in 2030. Merge/diverge/weave locations that will operate at undesirable LOS are expected to increase from 14 to 52 throughout the corridor, with most of the problems found in the western segment.

**Potential improvements:** Ed Hollingshead described the nature of potential improvements the study team is looking at for the Interstate 495 corridor. Near-term improvements are those that would be done in less than 2 years (examples include signal retiming and lane restriping); mid-term; 3–8 years (examples include installing traffic signals and lengthening acceleration/deceleration lanes; and long-term, more than 8 years (examples include widening the Interstate 495 mainline and adding a new interchange).

Potential near-term improvements (less than 2 years)

- Exit 38 NB                      retime signal
- Exit 39 SB                      retime signal
- Exit 46 NB                      retime signal

Potential mid-term improvements (3–8 years)

***Western segment***

- Exit 32 NB                      lengthen acceleration lane
- Exit 32 NB and SB              lengthen deceleration lanes
- Exit 33 NB                      install new signal
- Exit 34 NB and SB              install new signal

- Exit 34 NB and SB lengthen acceleration lanes
- Exit 34 NB and SB lengthen deceleration lanes
- Exit 35 SB lengthen acceleration lane
- Exit 37 NB and SB install new signal
- Exit 37 NB and SB lengthen deceleration lanes
- Exit 38 SB lengthen acceleration lane
- Exit 39 NB and SB lengthen acceleration lanes
- Exit 40 NB and SB lengthen acceleration lanes

***Eastern segment***

- Exit 41 NB and SB lengthen acceleration lane
- Exit 41 NB and SB lengthen deceleration lanes
- Exit 42 NB and SB lengthen acceleration lanes
- Exit 42 NB and SB lengthen deceleration lanes
- Exit 43 NB and SB install new signal
- Exit 43 NB lengthen deceleration lane
- Exit 44 SB install new signal
- Exit 46 NB lengthen deceleration lane
- Exit 47 NB lengthen acceleration lane
- Exit 47 NB lengthen deceleration lane
- Exit 48 NB lengthen acceleration lane
- Exit 49 NB install new signal
- Exit 49 SB lengthen acceleration lane
- Exit 50 NB lengthen acceleration lane
- Exit 50 SB install new signal
- Exit 51 NB and SB lengthen acceleration lane
- Exit 52 NB and SB lengthen acceleration lane
- Exit 53 NB and SB lengthen acceleration lane
- Exit 54 NB lengthen deceleration lane
- Exit 55 NB and SB lengthen acceleration lane

Ed described the analysis of the non-standard merge/diverge/weave locations. The findings show that 29 of 49 acceleration lanes are non-standard and 21 of 53 deceleration lanes are non-standard. Three acceleration lanes are too short by a relatively few feet and two non-standard acceleration lanes would require lengthening bridges to accommodate longer acceleration lanes—nothing is proposed for these. Similarly, there are five deceleration lanes that are short by only a little and two that would require lengthening bridges to accommodate longer deceleration lanes—nothing is proposed for these locations. Nonetheless, 23 of the non-standard acceleration lanes and 14 of the non-standard deceleration lanes are candidates for improvements in 3–8 years. Although improving the acceleration/deceleration lanes may not have a dramatic impact on level of service, the improvements will help safety and driver comfort.

**Potential long-term improvements (more than 8 years)**

Western segment: Approximately 15 miles of widening from Exit 32 to beyond Exit 40

Eastern segment: Approximately 7 miles of widening from Exit 43 to beyond Exit 49

A long-term project such as a proposed Add-a-Lane project is likely to require 5–8 years for environmental review and design plus 3–4 years for construction. Given that implementation is likely to take 8–12 years, for the widening to be in place by 2030 work must start by 2018. Consequently, first steps are to include the Add-a-Lane projects in the NMCOG and MVPC Long-Range Transportation Plans. Also, it will be important for NMCOG and MVPC to conduct on-going checks of traffic-volume growth on Interstate 495 to monitor traffic increases. If traffic is increasing at a much greater rate than expected, the RPAs will have a handle on it through on-going monitoring.

Finally, Ed reviewed outstanding issues. A proposal for a new interchange at Rte. 225 in Westford is being evaluated. CTPS is preparing estimates of new traffic at this proposed interchange, and the estimates will be incorporated into this study soon. The evaluation of transit-improvement benefits, including new park-and-ride lots and other transportation demand management solutions, will be finished and presented at the next Study Advisory Group meeting in late March.

### ***Questions and discussion***

Dennis DiZoglio, MVPC, asked for more information on the near- and mid-term improvement projects. Ed Hollingshead said the near-term projects included retiming signals and restriping lanes. Mid-term improvements could include projects that would be on the Transportation Improvement Program to get in line for federal funding, such as new signals or simple improvements to acceleration/deceleration lanes.

Andrea Leary, Merrimack Valley TMA, asked if the recommendations will include identifying locations for more park-and-ride lots in the corridor. She said that steps to promote long-term institutional change are needed as part of the planning study's recommendations. Ed Hollingshead said the Study Advisory Group meeting at the end of March will go into detail about the impact transit and TDM improvements could have on congestion and mobility as well as possible long-term recommendations for mobility enhancements.

Curt Bellavance, No. Andover Community Development, asked about the 2030 travel demand model. Does it reflect the projected traffic as worst case or average? Statistics from MassHighway in the past have shown increases in drivers and miles traveled. Ed Hollingshead said travel demand model incorporates these factors. A key question to understand is who is using Interstate 495—if most of the drivers are from outside the region going to destinations along Interstate 495, then attempting to control traffic growth via land use is hard. However, if local trips are growing, then influencing land use decisions could have an effect.

Beverly Woods, NMCOG, asked about the impact of trucks. Ed Hollingshead said that the study team, with the help of the NMCOG and MVPC, estimated the percentage of trucks on Interstate 495. Trucks were counted at four locations and were estimated to be up to 14% of the daily traffic on Interstate 495. This is a high percentage, but there are other locations in the state with similar truck volumes. The study team re-analyzed the merge/diverge/weave level of service incorporating the new truck volumes and the LOS was not changed. Nevertheless, driver comfort and convenience are affected by high numbers of trucks, and addressing the geometric constraints along the corridor may improve drivers' comfort around trucks. Beverly said many have a perception that accidents are often caused by trucks. Ed said the study team did not study the individual accident reports to determine how many involved trucks.

Ethan Britland clarified that the recommendations for the long-term Add-a-Lane projects are at this point based on this initial analysis of projected volumes in 2030. He acknowledged that the impacts of widening are significant in many ways and said the mid-term improvements would have an impact on operations and safety. Dennis DiZoglio asked what the impact on Interstate 495 would be if I-93 in Massachusetts is not widened. Ed Hollingshead said there would be fewer vehicles traveling from I-93 to Interstate 495 at the peak time, but drivers would still make the trips.

Rep. David Torrisi asked if cost estimates will be prepared. Ed Hollingshead said cost estimates will be presented as ranges based on this planning level of analysis. Joe Onorato, MassHighway, asked how the three top crash locations would be improved to address the safety issues. Ed Hollingshead said the Add-a-Lane projects would incorporate these three interchanges and would eliminate the cloverleaves, thereby improving the design of the interchange for safety and operational reasons. Andrea Leary asked how realistic land use controls would be when there is so much developable land. Ethan Britland said the Commonwealth does not control land use and zoning making it difficult for state agencies to influence local land use decisions. Andrea Leary said the non-highway and multimodal recommendations part of the study report can be instrumental in helping cities and towns promote and plan for alternatives to the automobile.

Tony Komornick, MVPC, asked if there are links on the Interstate 495 mainline with significant crash activity

that might indicate design problems. MassHighway was doing a study of lane departure crashes. Ed Hollingshead said the study team looked at an area in Westford for this purpose but could not identify design-related issues; it was inconclusive. Joe Onorato said Industrial Avenue in Lowell is often used as a short cut from Interstate 495 to Rte. 3 and should be noted. He suggested that the report describe fully the scope of the Add-a-Lane projects to ensure that people understand the bridges and interchanges would be part of the Add-a-Lane projects, too.

Beverly Woods asked that the PowerPoint slides be posted to the [www.495studyinfo.com](http://www.495studyinfo.com) Web site.

#### **Next Steps**

- Continue the analysis and refine the proposed near term (1–2 years); mid term (3–8 years); and long term (8+ years) improvements (highway and non-highway)
- February and March: Meetings with RPC committees and other interested organizations
- Late-March: Study Advisory Group meeting; focus on non-highway improvements and actions
- April: Public meetings, one in the NMCOC region and one in the MVPC region, on the draft recommendations
- June: The final report, the Corridor Improvement Plan, will be prepared incorporating input from the outreach and public meetings. This document will be a road map for MassHighway and cities and towns to use to identify projects to advance.

The meeting adjourned at 12:16 p.m.



## STUDY ADVISORY GROUP MEETING

**Wednesday, April 23, 2008**

**1:00 PM – 3:00 PM**

Tewksbury Public Library  
300 Chandler Street  
Tewksbury, MA

### AGENDA

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Non-Highway Improvements
3. Refined Highway Improvements
4. Discussion of Public Informational Meetings
5. Questions/Discussion

**Tewksbury Public Library**, 300 Chandler Street, Tewksbury  
Phone: 978-640-4490

**Directions**

The Library is located on the corner of Main Street (Route 38) and Chandler Street. Following are directions from points North and South on I-495 and I-93.

495 North and South:

Take exit 38 off of I-495. This will bring you to Route 38. Take a left onto Route 38 (you will be driving south) and travel approximately 2.5 miles. After you pass through the center of Tewksbury, you will come to a set of lights with a Shell gas station on your left. Take a left onto Chandler Street. The library is located at 300 Chandler Street on your right hand side.

93 Traveling South:

Take exit 42 off of I-93. This is Dascomb Road. Dascomb Road turns into East Street almost immediately. Travel approximately 3 miles on East Street. You will see the Tewksbury Hospital campus (surrounded by a stone wall) on your left hand side. Look for a blinking light, this is Chandler Street. Take a left onto Chandler Street. The library is located at 300 Chandler Street on your left hand side.

93 Traveling North:

Take exit 42 off of I-93. This is Dascomb Road. Take a left onto Dascomb Road, which turns into East Street almost immediately. Travel approximately 3 miles on East Street. You will see the Tewksbury Hospital campus (surrounded by a stone wall) on your left hand side. Look for a blinking light, this is Chandler Street. Take a left onto Chandler Street. The library is located at 300 Chandler Street on your left hand side.



Executive Office of Transportation and Public Works  
**I-495 Corridor Transportation Study  
Study Advisory Group Meeting**  
Wednesday, April 23, 2008  
Tewksbury Public Library, 1:00 p.m.

## Meeting Summary

---

### Attendees

**Rachael Bain**, Executive Office of Transportation and Public Works, Office of Planning (EOTPW)  
**Ethan Britland**, EOTPW  
**Lisa DeMeo, P.E.**, Lowell Engineer  
**Ed Hollingshead**, Fay, Spofford & Thorndike  
**Jeffrey R. Gomes**, City of Lowell  
**Joanne Haracz**, DMJM Harris  
**Justin Howard**, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG)  
**Anthony Komornick**, Merrimack Valley Planning Commission (MVPC)  
**Andrea Leary**, Merrimack Valley Transportation Management Association  
**John Livsey**, Town of Westford  
**Paul Materazzo**, Town of Andover, Planning Division  
**Anne McKinnon**, Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates  
**Paul Nelson**, EOTPW  
**Hardy Patel**, MHD-Highway Design  
**Constance Raphael**, MassHighway District 4  
**Steve Sadwick**, Town of Tewksbury  
**Elliot Schmiedl**, MassRIDES  
**Michelle Stein**, Town of Tewksbury  
**Joanne Weinstock**, EOTPW  
**Beverly Woods**, Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG)

### Purpose of meeting

Update the Advisory Group on the status of the Interstate 495 Corridor Transportation Study, focusing on the non-highway options, refined highway improvements, evaluation of the proposed interchange at Route 225, and plans for public meetings in May.

### Summary

#### *Welcome and introductions*

Ethan Britland, project manager from the Executive Office of Transportation and Public Works, welcomed the Study Advisory Group (SAG) and led introductions.

#### *495 Corridor Review*

Ed Hollingshead from Fay, Spofford & Thorndike (FST), lead consultant for EOTPW, said there are basically three types of improvement options for Interstate 495 in the study area: land use modifications, multi-modal options, and roadway-oriented improvements.

#### *Land-use modifications:*



A potential solution for preserving future Interstate 495 operations through land use changes involves studying how many trips start or end in the corridor and how many trips start and end in the corridor and use Interstate 495. In 2006, 58% of all a.m. three-hour peak-period trips stay in the corridor. Of the trips that start or end in the corridor, only 19% use Interstate 495 and only 14% of the trips that start and end in the corridor use Interstate 495. About 80% of the trips in the corridor communities do not use Interstate 495. Further, about 51% of all trips in the three-hour a.m. peak period are through trips not going to destinations in the study area. When considering how much impact land use changes could have on corridor congestion in 2030 given these facts—only about 1,450 additional trips by direction are projected for the entire corridor starting or ending in corridor communities—it appears to be small.

***Multi-modal (non-highway) options:***

Existing transit radiates from hubs in Lowell, Lawrence, Andover, North Billerica, and Haverhill. Transportation Management Associations (TMA) such as the Junction TMO and The Merrimack Valley TMA provide ridesharing and vanpool services that supplement MBTA and RTA transit services. Options for increasing transit, carpool, and vanpool patronage include adding new Park and Ride lots in the study area. Potential locations for further study include:

- Chelmsford at Route 3 and Route 27
- Tewksbury at Exit 39 and Rote 133
- Haverhill at Route 97 near Exit 50
- Haverhill at Route 110 near Exit 52

***Roadway-oriented improvements:***

**Near-term improvements (less than 2 years): Signal retiming**

- Exit 38 NB and Route 38                      retime signal
- Exit 39 SB and Route 133                   retime signal
- Exit 46 NB and Route 110                  retime signal

Near-term estimated cost: \$3,000 per location, Total Cost \$9,000

**Mid-term improvements (3–8 years): Intersection improvements**

***Western segment***

- Exit 33 NB                                      install new signal
- Exit 34 NB and SB                          install new signal
- Exit 37 NB and SB                          install new signal

***Eastern segment***

- Exit 43 NB and SB                          install new signal
- Exit 44 SB                                     install new signal
- Exit 49 NB                                    install new signal
- Exit 50 SB                                    install new signal

At Exit 51 at Route 125 an opportunity exists for a capacity improvement that would take advantage of an underutilized travel lane, the two-way left turn lane on Route 125.. The roadway could be reconfigured to provide two 12-foot travel lanes and a 5-foot shoulder NB and one 12-foot lane and a 5-foot shoulder SB. This reconfiguration would improve level of service.

**Mid-term improvements (3–8 years): Merge and Diverge improvements**

***Western segment***

- Exit 32 NB                                    lengthen acceleration lane
- Exit 32 NB and SB                         lengthen deceleration lanes
- Exit 34 NB and SB                         lengthen acceleration lanes

- Exit 34 NB and SB           lengthen deceleration lanes
- Exit 35 SB                   lengthen acceleration lane
- Exit 37 NB and SB         lengthen deceleration lanes
- Exit 38 SB                  lengthen acceleration lane
- Exit 39 NB and SB         lengthen acceleration lanes
- Exit 40 NB and SB         lengthen acceleration lanes

***Eastern segment***

- Exit 41 NB and SB         lengthen acceleration lane
- Exit 41 NB and SB         lengthen deceleration lanes
- Exit 42 NB and SB         lengthen acceleration lanes
- Exit 42 NB and SB         lengthen deceleration lanes
- Exit 43 NB                  lengthen deceleration lane
- Exit 46 NB                  lengthen deceleration lane
- Exit 47 NB                  lengthen acceleration lane
- Exit 47 NB                  lengthen deceleration lane
- Exit 48 NB                  lengthen acceleration lane
- Exit 49 SB                  lengthen acceleration lane
- Exit 50 NB                  lengthen acceleration lane
- Exit 51 NB and SB         lengthen acceleration lane
- Exit 52 NB and SB         lengthen acceleration lane
- Exit 53 NB SB              lengthen acceleration lane
- Exit 54 NB                  lengthen deceleration lane
- Exit 55 NB and SB         lengthen acceleration lane

Mid-term estimated costs:

Intersection improvements: Western segment—\$1.15 million; Eastern segment—\$1.5 million—\$X.XX million. Total corridor: \$2.65 million.

Acceleration and deceleration lane improvements: 24 merge/diverge locations, \$51,000

Route 125 reconstruction: Approximately \$500,000

Total: \$3.2 million

Potential long-term improvements (more than 8 years)

Western segment:    Approximately 15 miles of widening from Exit 32 to beyond Exit 40

Eastern segment:    Approximately 7 miles of widening from Exit 43 to beyond Exit 49

Long-term estimated costs:

Widening in the median and replacing all interchanges along 15 miles of highway (excluding Route 3 and the Lowell Connector): Approximately \$84 million

Timetable for the long-term improvements: Environmental analyses and design will take between 5 and 8 years and the construction will take about 3 or 4 years. To be in place by 2030, work must start by 2018.

**Proposed Route 225 Interchange**

A proposal for a new interchange at Route 225 in Westford was evaluated. Typically, interchanges are spaced about 1 mile apart, and the proposed interchange would be 1 mile from both Exit 31 and Exit 32. The Central Transportation Planning Staff projected the volumes that would use the new interchange and estimates of impacts of the new interchange on Exits 31 and 32. The new interchange would add about 850 vehicles to Route 225 SB at Route 110 and about 600 vehicles to Route 225 NB at Route 110 in the a.m. peak hour. One of the goals of building a new interchange was to relieve Exit 32, but the analysis shows that the new interchange would have more of an impact on Exit 31 (Route 119) in Littleton. Beverly Woods said the Route 225 intersection was originally supposed to be improved by a developer, and a proposed bypass road would have helped the situation.

Westford could consider the bypass road at some point again

### ***Next Steps***

Ed Hollingshead said the Corridor Improvement Plan will be finalized over the next month. The report will be sent to the SAG, Working Group, and available on the Web site. Two public meetings will be held, one in each Regional Planning Agency area:

Thursday, May 22, 2008, Lowell City Hall 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 27, 2008, Northern Essex Community College 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

The study will be completed by June 30, 2008.

Ethan Britland said communicating the key issues and recommendations to the public and getting input is key to advancing the improvements. He encouraged SAG members to help get the word out to people and businesses.

### ***Questions and discussion***

Joanne Weinstock, EOTPW, asked if there is a “margin of error” for the estimated 2030 volumes. Ethan said the Federal Highway Administration has standards that it uses, and the CTPS estimates are within the allowable range. Ed Hollingshead said the volumes are solid estimates based on a series of documented assumptions. These estimates should be strong if the assumptions hold.

Tony Komornick asked if the transit analysis included improved or additional service on commuter rail. Discussions about double-tracking the Haverhill line have been underway along with the possibility of extending commuter rail service to Plaistow, NH. Ed said these were not factored in, but typically, the impacts would be seen south of the station expansion or service upgrade. Tony requested that these commuter rail improvements be referenced in the final report

Stan Wood, MassHighway, questioned the cost estimates for the widening and the bridge reconstruction. These will be checked again. Steve Sadwick, Tewksbury, asked how the Route 495/93 interchange would be addressed. Ed said this location would receive additional study either under the future study to widen I-495 or as part of a future study to widen I-93. Constance Rafael, MassHighway District 4, suggested rephrasing the “future steps” for the long term projects to say that the RPAs and MassHighway will work to develop projects for their TIP. She asked what the cost estimate for the signals includes. Controller only. Beverly Woods requested that the cost estimates be presented as ranges. She said the costs for the signals seemed low.

Constance Rafael asked for details on which acceleration/deceleration lanes were included in the mid-term improvements. Some could possibly be included in resurfacing projects. Paul Nelson, EOT said all of the acceleration and deceleration lanes that are non-standard should be listed despite some being short by only a few feet.

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 p.m.

## **PUBLIC MEETING NOTES**



## ***Executive Office of Transportation and Public Works***

### **I-495 Corridor Study Public Meeting**

#### **Meeting Notes**

**May 22, 2008**

**Lowell City Hall, Lowell, MA**

**Attendees:** See attached attendance sheet.

---

Following an Open House that began at 6:00 where the public could review graphics and plans with project staff, the public meeting began at 6:30. The meeting began with a presentation focusing on the western part of the I-495 from the Westford Town Line to I-93 by Ethan Britland, EOTPW Project Manager; Ed Hollingshead, consultant Fay, Spofford & Thorndike (FST) Project Manager; and Joanne Haracz, DMJM + Harris Project Manager. The PowerPoint presentation from the meeting is available to the public on the project web site [www.495studyinfo.com](http://www.495studyinfo.com).

#### **Questions from the Public**

The following questions were raised by attendees and answered by the team.

Q: As gas prices go up, what is the impact on volumes? Has this been accounted for in the study?

A: This has not been accounted for in the study.

Q: Of interest to the public are alternative modes of transportation, such as public transit, park & rides, etc. Someone should develop a model of mode choice based on gas prices.

A: The model uses employment, population, land use, etc.

Q: Short-term issue – reactive to growth/development once fleet converts to alt. fuel, growth could continue.

I-495 Corridor Study  
Public Meeting  
Sign-In Sheet

Lowell City Hall, Lowell, MA, Thursday, May 22, 2008

Please Print Clearly

Name	Affiliation	Complete Mailing Address	Telephone/Email
*12) MARK E. GOLDMAN	Concerned Citizen	58 Oakland St. Lowell, Ma. 01851	978-441-1374
Elliot Schriell	Massrides	10 Park Plaza Boston, MA 02116	617-892-6097
Lise Redmond	Lewell San	491 Dutch St. Lewell	lredmond@lowellma.org
DAVID GINNS	NMCOG	115 THORNDIKE ST. 01852	978/454-8021x13
BRUCE KELLER	TOWN OF AMESBURY	62 FRIEND ST, AMESBURY MA 01913	978 388-8110 x313
Beverly Woods	NMCOG	115 Thorndike St, Lowell 01852	978-454-8021x20
Lisa DeMaio	CITY	375 MERRIMACK ST.	978-970-3331
Prudence O'Talley	FHCA	55 BROADWAY CAMBRIDGE	617-494-2528
Jeffrey R. Gomez	City of Lowell	50 Arcand Drive Lowell MA 01854	978/970/7200

## ***Executive Office of Transportation and Public Works***

### **I-495 Corridor Study Public Meeting**

#### **Meeting Notes**

**May 27, 2008**

**Northern Essex Community College, Haverhill, MA**

**Attendees:** See attached attendance sheet.

---

The meeting began with a presentation focusing on the western part of the I-495 from I-93 to I-95 in Salisbury by Ethan Britland, EOTPW Project Manager; Ed Hollingshead, consultant Fay, Spofford & Thorndike (FST) Project Manager; and Joanne Haracz, DMJM + Harris Project Manager. The PowerPoint presentation from the meeting is available to the public on the project web site [www.495studyinfo.com](http://www.495studyinfo.com).

#### **Questions from the Public**

The following questions were raised by attendees and answered by the team.

Q: A signal has recently been put in place at one of the proposed signal locations.

A: The team was unaware of the signal installation- they will look into it.

Q: Questions about Exit 51 Reconstruction, lane widening and lane utilization.

A: The history of the exit interchange was discussed by the Regional Planner (in attendance) and the project team addressed comments and stated southbound widening was not a solution because the traffic was only a problem in one peak direction.

Q: Is the middle lane reversible?

A: It was looked into by the project team, and not found to be a possible solution.





**STUDY ADVISORY GROUP (SAG) MEMBERS**



## Study Advisory Group members (invited members)

<b>First</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Town /Agency</b>
Honorable Cory Atkins	State Representative	14th Middlesex District
Honorable Steven Baddour	State Senator	1st Essex District
Joseph Bevilacqua	President & CEO	Merrimack Valley Chamber of Commerce
Curt Bellavance	Director of Community Dev.	North Andover
Honorable Linda Campbell	State Representative	15th Essex District
Robert Carroll	Chair, Board of Selectmen	Salisbury
Kay Carson	Program Director	MassRIDES
Edward "Bud" Caulfield	Mayor	Lowell
Sally Cerasuolo-O'Rorke	President	Greater Haverhill Chamber of Commerce
Rosemary Connelly Smedile	Chair, Board of Selectmen	North Andover
Kelley Conway, P.E.	Town Engineer	Billerica
Joe Costanzo	Administrator	Merrimack Valley Reg'l Transit Authority
Honorable Michael Costello	State Representative	1st Essex District
Honorable Brian Dempsey	State Representative	3rd Essex District
Lisa DeMeo, P.E.	City Engineer	Lowell
Dennis DiZoglio	Executive Director	Merrimack Valley Planning Commission
Richard Doyle	Regional Administrator	Federal Transit Administration
Philip Eliopolous	Chair, Board of Selectmen	Chelmsford
Honorable Susan Fargo	State Senator	3rd Middlesex District
Honorable Barry Finegold	State Representative	17th Essex District
James Fiorentini	Mayor	Haverhill
Stan Franzeen	Director	Junction TMO
Stanley Gee	Division Administrator	Federal Highway Administration
Joseph Gill	Former Selectmen	Tewksbury
Honorable Thomas Golden, Jr.	State Representative	16th Middlesex District
Daniel Grabauskas	General Manager	MBTA
Honorable William Greene, Jr.	State Representative	22nd Middlesex District
Honorable Geoffrey Hall	State Representative	2nd Middlesex District
Robert Halpin	President	Merrimack Valley EDC
Geraldine Healy-Coffin	Former Selectmen	Westford
David Hildt	Mayor	Amesbury
Tony Komornick	Transp. Program Manager	Merrimack Valley Planning Commission
Honorable William Lantigua	State Representative	16th Essex District
Andrea Leary	Executive Director	Merrimack Valley TMA
Patricia Leavenworth	District 4 Highway Director	Massachusetts Highway Department
Honorable Barbara L'Italien	State Representative	18th Essex District
William Manzi	Mayor	Methuen
Paul Materazzo	Director of Planning	Andover
Honorable James Miceli	State Representative	19th Middlesex District
Maria Miles	President	Salisbury Chamber of Commerce
Honorable Kevin Murphy	State Representative	18th Middlesex District
Honorable David Nangle	State Representative	17th Middlesex District
Jeanne Osborn	President & CEO	Greater Lowell Chamber of Commerce
Ann Ormond	President	Greater Newburyport C of C and Industry
Joe Onorato	District 4	MassHighway
Honorable Steven Panagiotakos	State Senator	1st Middlesex District
Hardy Patel	MassHighway Design	MassHighway
Camille Pattison	Transportation Planner	Nashua Regional Planning Commission
Lowell Richards	Dir., Econ. Plng. & Dev.	Massachusetts Port Authority
Michael Rosa	Chair, Board of Selectmen	Billerica
Steve Sadwick	Community Development	Tewksbury
James Scanlan	Administrator	Lowell Regional Transit Authority
Honorable Harriett Stanley	State Representative	2nd Essex District
Michael Sullivan	Mayor	Lawrence
Ted Teichert	Board of Selectmen	Andover
Honorable John Tierney	U.S. Congress	6th District of Massachusetts
Honorable David Torrisi	State Representative	14th Essex District
Honorable Niki Tsongas	U.S. Congress	5th District of Massachusetts
Carol Traynor	Board of Selectmen	Merrimac

Honorable Susan Tucker  
David Walker  
Dennis Welcome/Stefanie McCowan  
Beverly Woods

State Senator  
Transportation Planner  
Executive Director  
Executive Director

2nd Essex and Middlesex Districts  
Rockingham Planning Commission  
Alliance for Amesbury  
No. Middlesex Cncl. of Government

## **WEBSITE COMMENTS**



**Name:**

**Date:** 8/8/2006 6:05:07 PM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

1. **Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Chelmsford

2. **Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

Yes

Chelmsford to Andover.

3. **What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

Overall not too bad during the day although constantly congested but moving. Do see bottlenecks at the route 3 interchange and the 93 interchange.

4. **What are the most important issues this study should address in your opinion?**

Lengthening of onramps for cars and especially large trucks to accelerate to highway speed before entering the main lanes. Adding a fourth lane would possibly offer a significant improvement to traffic flow, but off-ramps and on ramp design need a serious redesign as to minimally affect traffic already in main lanes.



**Name:** Siedzik, Michael

**Date:** 12/30/2006 10:04:22 AM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

1. **Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

No

If I did live nearby, I would encourage the use of quiet pavement.

2. **Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

Yes

Amesbury (live in NH) to Westford (work in Westford).

3. **What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

I find traffic moves well, except for a few bottleneck areas:

1) AM commute, southbound, I-93 interchange. Traffic merging from I-93 south onto I-495 south can cause backups to the double decker bridge. The problem is compounded by the hill trucks must climb after merging. A short-term solution could be to pave a 4th lane to the right of the 3 existing lanes and force slow moving vehicles (or all vehicles from I-93 south) to use this lane. The overpass at the top of the hill will limit the length of this lane, but I think it would help. A long-term solution may be to split I-495 into local/express lanes at the I-93 interchange, as happens at the Rt3 interchange.

2) Evening commute, northbound, Rt-3 interchange. Too many cars. May need to add a 4th lane from Rt3 all the way to I-93.

3) Evening commute, northbound, Exit 41-50. Again, too many cars. The congestion quickly clears up after exit 50. What might help between exits 48 and 50 is driver education. Use signs or a radio campaign to let people know that the left lane is for passing only. A lot of cars continue to cruise along in the left lane at 45mph after the congestion clears. These slow cars fall behind the car in front of them by 10 or 20 seconds, which greatly reduces overall highway capacity.

Also, I think the road surface is in excellent condition. Good job!

4. **What are the most important issues this study should address in your opinion?**
- a. Lane expansion, where necessary.
  - b. Driver education (left lane is for passing only).
  - c. Driver information (electronic signs which warn of accidents and/or road conditions).
  - d. Encourage carpooling by adding a park-and-ride lot in Amesbury.
  - e. Public transportation. Have buses or vans, which travel from the park-and-ride lot to major technology parks along the I-495 corridor.

**Name:** Reitz, Paul

**Date:** 1/17/2007 12:02:34 PM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

1. **Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

No

2. **Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

Yes

I commute from Hopkinton to Chelmsford exit 33 or 35, depending on time of day, and reverse, about 36 miles.

3. **What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

I must arrive Hopkinton prior to 6 am to prevent a very stressful commute.

4. **What are the most important issues this study should address in your opinion?**

There is usually very limited visibility due to roadspray when the roadway is wet EXCEPT for one stretch of this corridor, northbound, from about 3 miles south of the Chelmsford rest area to exit 33, where the paving seems to reduce road spray.

The improvement in visibility is so obvious and so amazing that I must ask whether the feature is intentional. If it is a design feature, then kudos to the engineering team!! If not, please investigate whether the characteristic can be replicated elsewhere. That segment of the study corridor is much easier and safer to drive in dense traffic on rainy days than other sections.

**Name:**

**Date:** 1/17/2007 1:20:39 PM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

- 1. Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Westford

- 2. Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

Yes

Westford-Andover, and Andover to 95

- 3. What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

495/3 interchange is a mess, as is the 495/93 interchange. The distance between on ramps and off ramps causes un safe conditions and "road rage" driving to enter/exit the highway. Drivers often skip the line and plow through traffic to get through faster.

- 4. What are the most important issues this study should address in your opinion?**

Exit structure and road conditions, Potholes don't seem to get fixed for over a year.

**Name:** Hooper, Tyler

**Date:** 1/17/2007 5:37:41 PM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

1. **Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Amesbury, between exit 53 and 54

2. **Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

No

I primarily use 95 South to Route 1. I would love to be able to get to 95 South from 495N. This would save considerable congestion along rt110 especially in the summer with the beach traffic.

3. **What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

I travel through the Merrimack Valley regularly between Methuen and Salisbury. The traffic through Lawrence, Methuen, and Haverhill can be very slow. It was a factor leading to my move from Haverhill to Amesbury.

4. **What are the most important issues this study should address in your opinion?**

I would like you to consider making connections between 495N and 95S and from 95N to 495S. This would relieve significant congestion from the Route 110 area in Amesbury and Merrimack year round. Amesbury and Salisbury would greatly improve in the summer.

**Name:** Farrell, Bernard

**Date:** 1/17/2007 8:12:01 PM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

1. **Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

No

I live in Littleton (just outside the area) and commute daily to Chelmsford.

Can you provide an RSS feed for this site, so I can subscribe for updates to the site?

If this is not possible, it would be nice to problem a mailing list so I could receive an update by e-mail when available.

2. **Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

Yes

From Littleton to Chelmsford. For about 4 years now.

3. **What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

Increasingly busy. Even in the slow lane, it's hard to maintain a 65 MPH speed limit, as the speeds on the highway seem to often exceed 75 MPH.

4. **What are the most important issues this study should address in your opinion?**

Better on and off ramps, extra road width for busy portions.

**Name:**

**Date:** 1/18/2007 10:42:53 AM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

1. **Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Live in Methuen. A short term problem I see in the AM commute at the lights to enter 495 South at exit 46 are the traffic light and sign indicate only the left lane to enter 495 south. However the 2nd lane from the left is painted with an arrow to enter 495 south. The one lane can back up and require up to 3 signal changes to get on the highway during some rush hours. Therefore drivers use the 2nd lane from the left to cut cars off in the correct lane to get on. I have seen angry drivers and near accidents. This was a change from the original contraction several years ago when the lights were installed. I believe it would be better to allow 2 lanes of traffic to enter the highway. This may be safer if the on ramp was widened a bit to allow cars move room to merge to a single lane before entering the highway.

2. **Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

Yes

Commute to exit 28 in Boxborough weekdays.

3. **What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

95% of time commuting for the work hours of 7:30am to 4:00pm is great 65mph each way. I take off Fridays on 3 long summer holiday weekends as commuting home is at least doubled due to the expected holiday traffic heading north.

This was not the case for several years when the bridges were rebuilt over Rt 3 the same time the double decker bridge in Lawrence had to be replaced.

**4. What are the most important issues this study should address in your opinion?**

Short term I notice some steel bridge beams have been maintained but other look like they are corroding. Long term I would like this study to be able to keep a step ahead of maintenance increased future traffic flow and growth.



**Name:** Morgan, Kenneth

**Date:** 3/13/2008 1:35:59 PM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

1. **Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Westford.

The large increase in traffic on I-495 has resulted in significantly higher noise levels experienced by abutters, particularly residences. I feel that consideration of noise barriers is essential to this study and would like to know whether noise barriers have been/will be included?

2. **Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

No

3. **What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

The large increase in traffic on I-495 has resulted in significantly higher noise levels experienced by abutters, particularly residences. I feel that consideration of noise barriers is essential to this study and would like to know whether noise barriers have been/will be included?

4. **What are the most important issues this study should address in your opinion?**

The large increase in traffic on I-495 has resulted in significantly higher noise levels experienced by abutters, particularly residences. I feel that consideration of noise barriers is essential to this study and would like to know whether noise barriers have been/will be included?

**Name:** Morgan, Kennth

**Date:** 3/14/2008 9:48:34 AM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

- 1. Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Westford

- 2. Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

No

- 3. What are the most important issues this study should address in your opinion?**

Noise barriers between Interchanges 31&32.

**Name:** Budrow, Jackie

**Date:** 5/10/2008 9:56:07 AM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

1. **Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Lowell between exits 37 & 38.

Will the future construction to increase the amount of traffic on 495 are there any plans to install sound barriers along this section?

My house backs up to 495 and the traffic noise has got to be so bad that I can't leave my windows open.

2. **Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

No

I commute via the Lowell Commuter rail from North Billerica to Boston.

3. **What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

15 years ago when I first moved to this area the traffic was at its heaviest in the morning and even commutes. Now the traffic and traffic noise is virtually non-stop.

4. **What are the most important issues this study should address in your opinion?**

Installation of sound barriers in areas that housing abuts 495.

**Name:** Impink, Paige

**Date:** 5/22/2008 12:14:29 PM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

- 1. Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Tewksbury. The merge from Rt 3 N to 495 N is horrible. The way the lines are painted, it puts two lanes of traffic together, leaving the drivers to sort out which car will "win", which we know doesn't work. The line from the "already" northbound 495 stream, the line from the "going to the Lowell connector but decided not to" and the "coming from Rt 3 N" all collide. There needs to be more delineation for longer before cars sort out their lanes.

- 2. Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

No

Just live in the area. Mom with kids.

- 3. What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

It is a very fast road. The trucks are everywhere. There should be better signage for out of state drivers, of which there are tons on 495. Perhaps signs such as "slower vehicles keep right" would be useful. Also, a better heads up before exits would be good.

- 4. What are the most important issues this study should address in your opinion?**

The massive clog at Rt3 N/Rt 495N in the summer. Much could be mitigated by repainting the lines as referenced in my earlier comments.

**Name:** Doherty, Sandra

**Date:** 5/22/2008 1:04:41 PM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

1. **Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Billerica

2. **Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

Yes

Billerica to Lowell

3. **What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

I go against the flow so it is not too bad and I also work 7:30 to 2:30

**Name:** Dean, Aemy

**Date:** 5/22/2008 3:12:14 PM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

1. **Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Tewksbury

2. **Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

No

3. **What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

I travel on 495 on almost a daily basis. I travel north to the Andovers as well as south to Chelmsford for classes, medical appointments, etc. As an urban planner, I see many aspects of the roadway that are unsafe. For instance, the interchange from 495 South to Rt. 3 South is extremely dangerous even during times of light traffic. Having three lanes of traffic merging and crossing lanes in such a short space is chaotic at best. Also, the merge from Rt. 3 North to 495 North is dangerous and poorly designed. Again, the merging of three lanes of traffic in such a short stretch of roadway is dangerous and nerve-racking for drivers. These designs may "work" in theory but that's when everyone obeys the rules of the road and properly yields the right-of-way, which is a rare occurrence indeed.

4. **What are the most important issues this study should address in your opinion?**

Roadway design and traffic logistics especially during times of high traffic volume.

**Name:**

**Date:** 5/22/2008 4:30:08 PM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

1. **Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Tewksbury

2. **Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

No

3. **What are the most important issues this study should address in your opinion?**

The merge northbound just after Rt. 3 is an issue. The highway contracts from five lanes to three, creating a traffic bottleneck due to mergers. It would be best to start a forth lane from there onto Salisbury, or at least to Exit 37. Also making Exit 40 a flyover would help with safety and flow.

**Name:**

**Date:** 5/22/2008 5:33:52 PM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

1. **Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Tewksbury

2. **Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

Yes

Not for work, but use 495 quite often

3. **What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

Do not like the merge from Rt3 North to Rt495 North



**Name:** Ward, Max

**Date:** 5/22/2008 7:47:58 PM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

1. **Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Chelmsford

2. **Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

Yes

Chelmsford to Marlboro

3. **What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

Increasing traffic over the last 15 years that I've been commuting.

4. **What are the most important issues this study should address in your opinion?**

Eliminate the half-exit from 495 to North Rd in Chelmsford. The only purpose this exit appears to have is to allow NH commuters to bypass the rte 495-rte 3 interchange by cutting down North Rd (Rt 4), creating large volumes of traffic on North Rd. Personally, I have no problem getting off and on the rte 110 exit instead of exiting on rte 4.

**Name:** Impink, Paige

**Date:** 5/22/2008 9:37:08 PM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

1. **Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Tewksbury

2. **Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

No

Just live in the area.

3. **What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

Very fast road. Definitely would never pull over if I had car trouble- too dangerous.

4. **What are the most important issues this study should address in your opinion?**

The downramp at exit 37 Woburn Street on 495 N- it is much too short to make a safe stop, and the hill is too steep. Not enough run time to come to an easy yield, and many people blow through the yield

Also, 495 S, same exit other side- hard to see oncoming cars to make the left, pavement is a mess, brush makes it hard to see, and when the trains let out from No. Billerica Station, there is no chance to take a left toward Billerica or Tewksbury

**Name:** Doherty, Brian

**Date:** 5/23/2008 12:36:50 AM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

1. **Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Chelmsford

2. **Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

Yes

Chelmsford to Tewksbury

3. **What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

Problem area is in Chelmsford on the northbound side where Route 3 traffic comes on. There are 5 lanes that merge into three, and this seems to be an area that can be improved.

4. **What are the most important issues this study should address in your opinion?**

For me, it is the on-ramp in Chelmsford on Route 4 to 495 South and the off-ramp on Route 4 from 495 North. It would seem worthwhile to figure how much traffic flow is using Route 4 as a cut through to, or from, Route 3.

**Name:** Freeman, Kenley

**Date:** 5/23/2008 7:19:09 AM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

1. **Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Chelmsford

2. **Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

Yes

Chelmsford to Haverhill

3. **What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

Generally good as I am mostly against traffic. Biggest problem is at 495/93 intersect

4. **What are the most important issues this study should address in your opinion?**

495/93 intersects. In rush hours traffic is stopped in travel lanes attempting to exit. This includes middle lanes. Dual exit lanes would be helpful.

Also, Rt 4 Chelmsford exit traveling northbound on 495 is unnecessary, dangerous, and a general hemorrhoid to Chelmsford residents. It offers no benefit to residents but gives NH residents a convenient cut-through at high speeds on city streets.

**Name:**

**Date:** 5/23/2008 7:26:18 AM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

1. **Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Andover, exit 41

2. **Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

No

3. **What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

Noisy. In the past 4 years the noise level has gotten worse.

4. **What are the most important issues this study should address in  
your opinion?**

Noise.

**Name:**

**Date:** 5/23/2008 8:41:45 AM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

1. **Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Andover

2. **Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

Yes

Andover to Boston

3. **What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

It is very dangerous. Cars drive way too fast for the amount of congestion.  
Fatal accidents are common.

4. **What are the most important issues this study should address in  
your opinion?**

Safety.

**Name:**

**Date:** 5/23/2008 9:48:40 AM

**Publication Consent:** No

---

- 1. Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Chelmsford

- 2. Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

No

- 3. What are the most important issues this study should address in your opinion?**

My issue is the ramp system from 495 South to 3 South. After you take the exit and cross under the Lowell Connector, there are two on-ramps in a row (one from Lowell Connector and one from 3 North) that each add a lane. So now you have about 700 feet to cross over two lanes of traffic to get onto 3 South, at the same time folks from 3 North are moving to the left to get onto 495 South.

**Name:** Gazda, Thomas

**Date:** 5/23/2008 11:21:18 AM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

1. **Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Live in Chelmsford.

2. **Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

Yes

Frequently travel north to Lawrence, Methuen, Andover, N. Andover, Haverhill and beyond. Less frequently to the south to I-290 and glad to hear recently that efforts are progressing to redesign the I-495/I-290 interchange. I encourage that process!

3. **What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

Rush hour traffic is problematic due to poor design of entrance/exit ramps and their proximity to each other, particularly in the Lowell Connector area.

Note: please feel free to contact me with regard to my comments and suggestions. I will be more than glad to discuss them and even join engineers at the sites to explain these further.



**4. What are the most important issues this study should address in your opinion?**

Here are some suggestions:

1. Lower speed limit from Exit 33 (Rt. 4) on I-495 North to Exit 36 (Woburn Street) and on I-495 South from Exit 36 (Woburn Street) to Exit 34 (Rt. 110).
2. The Rt. 495 northbound for Rt. 3/Lowell Connector (Exit 35 A-B-C) feeder/collector road should be extended on the northern end (approaching the Carlisle St. underpass. Traffic exiting the feeder/collector road is currently in two lanes, which has free access to cut across lanes and enter the main 495 northbound flow. The alternative by extending the feeder/collector portion (with an extended separation barrier) would be to have those two lanes merge into one lane in the feeder/collector so that only one lane is merging from the feeder/collector into the three northbound travel lanes of 495 north. This merge should occur approximately ½ mile further north near the Carlisle street, making for safer merges and improving mainstream 495 north traffic flow.
3. The southbound feeder collector road on 495 southbound for Exit 35 A-B-C to the Lowell Connector and Rt. 3 should be extended (with extended barrier separation) to separate exit traffic from the main southbound 495 traffic and preventing exiting traffic from using a travel lane to queue for these exits.
4. The exit from the southbound feeder/collector should be modified to force merging traffic into one lane before merging into the main southbound 495 traffic flow.
5. Exit 33, Rt. 4 Chelmsford: Install traffic signals at end of ramp at Route 4 north/south. Redesign end of this ramp so that both left and right turns are controlled by the traffic light. (Eliminate free merge to Rt. 4 south to prevent running off the ramp direct into Rt. 4 south traffic. Widen ramp slightly to accommodate two stacking lanes, one for left and one for right turns.
6. Redesign intersection of Rt. 495 North/South and Rt. 93 North/South with feeder/collector roads. (Similar to the setup at Rt. 495 North/South and Rt. 3 North/South.)

**Name:** belanger, Barbara

**Date:** 5/24/2008 9:11:19 AM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

1. **Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Chelmsford

2. **Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

Yes

Chelmsford and all along the Merrimack Valley

3. **What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

Very tight near Lowell connector, route 3  
also tight in Lawrence over bridges going north

4. **What are the most important issues this study should address in  
your opinion?**

Safety. We need sound barriers at the end of Chamberlain Road in  
Chelmsford - noise pollution

**Name:**

**Date:** 5/24/2008 4:39:36 PM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

1. **Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Chelmsford

2. **Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

No

3. **What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

They should call it truck highway. It must be about 75% trucks. Give them their own high-speed lane and let them go, keep them off my bumper. They go 80 anyways, kinda scary having them right on your bumper.

4. **What are the most important issues this study should address in your opinion?**

Have partial lanes - longer - for people coming onto 495, sometimes you're having to jump in the slow lane with heavy traffic or stop in the breakdown lane. Need more room to merge.

**Name:** Barnum, Roger

**Date:** 5/28/2008 2:01:09 PM

**Publication Consent:** Yes

---

1. **Do you live in the study area?  
If yes, please list which town.**

Yes

Marlborough

2. **Do you commute along the 495 corridor?  
If yes, from which town and to which town?**

Yes

From Marlborough up to Tyngsboro

3. **What is your experience on the 495 corridor?**

Very crowded around routes 290 and 3 at rush hours (particularly in summer). Pavement and center landscaping seems to be in poor shape at some locations (good to see current project around route 2 addressing). I was under the impression that Solomon Pond mall developer had to pay for added lanes at 290 interchange - why hasn't this been done?

4. **What are the most important issues this study should address in your opinion?**

Traffic, location of interchanges, surrounding developments, timeline and milestones for getting particular projects done

