



# COMMENTS FROM NOVEMBER 8, 2004 PUBLIC WORKSHOP

113

## US 113 North / South Study

November 2004

### Milford Area

#### • Milford Workshop Summary

- ▶ More comment forms indicated a preference for an eastern bypass alternative than any other option. Of the 57 forms supporting an east bypass, alternative sections F and 3 received the most favorable comments. Sections B, E, and 2 also received a generally positive response. Alternatives C and 1 received only negative responses; response to D was generally neutral. A petition signed by 500 residents was presented opposing impacts to the Whitehead farm, which would be substantially impacted by alternative 1 and slightly by alternative 2.
- ▶ Attendees commenting on the west bypass alternatives disliked them by a nearly three to one margin, mostly citing natural resource and farm impacts.
- ▶ Opposition to the on-alignment alternatives was slightly less intense than at the previous public workshop, primarily due to the addition of option 3, which garnered some support. Most support for the on-alignment options, however, was more general in nature, saying that the improvements should be made where the businesses are. There was very little support for on-alignment options 1 and 2. Residents of the Hudson Pond Acres community near the south end of the study area were particularly vocal in this regard.
- ▶ Four respondents recommended the no-build alternative in conjunction with limiting development. Two suggested upgrading the local road network instead.
- ▶ A number of attendees expressed concern that the project is being developed to benefit tourists at the expense of local residents and business owners.

#### • Milford Working Group Summary

- ▶ The working group members strongly oppose on-alignment improvements (options 1 and 2) north of Johnson Road/Fitzgeralds Road. Key issues include:
  - Economic, quality of life, and traffic issues
  - Emergency service access
  - Divides the town
  - Functions as a short-term rather than long-term solution
  - Causes indirect access, particularly for trucks and buses
- ▶ Bypass options were favored by the members, but there was not consensus regarding whether the bypass should be west or east of Milford. Somewhat more members preferred an east bypass, citing less environmental impact, as well as the fact that much of that area will be developed anyway. Supporters of the west bypass believe that such development will make the east bypass more difficult and expensive. However, the west bypass will likely impact more farmland and natural resources. The members agreed that more information on traffic, cost, and economic impact would assist them in developing recommendations.



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#### • Agency Summary

- ▶ There was general concern regarding the extent of natural resource impacts associated with the west bypass alternatives.
- ▶ The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers questioned whether east bypass alternative B was even reasonable, given the extent of wetland and forested land impacts at its west end, near existing US 113.
- ▶ The Corps also indicated that alternative C1 appeared to have the least potential environmental impacts.

#### • County

- ▶ Sussex County generally echoed the public's support for an east bypass alternative as a natural extension of the existing SR 1 Milford bypass.

#### • Overall Summary / Recommended Action

- ▶ Based primarily on public and agency input, as well as some members of the working group, it appears that an eastern bypass alternative would have the most support. A summary of natural resource impacts supports that conclusion, but potential cultural resource impacts must be better defined. Alternatives E, F, 2, and 3 enjoy particular support from the public and the City.
- ▶ There is little support for on-alignment options, at least north of Johnson Road/Fitzgeralds Road. Any on-alignment alternative must adequately address access for emergency vehicles, trucks, and buses. Issues related to economic impact and community cohesiveness must be addressed. In short, the working group and public agree that a limited-access on-alignment option appears fundamentally incompatible with the City of Milford.