
MEMORANDUM

TO: Lawrence S. Schwartz
FROM: Representative Sean Patrick Maloney
DATE: February 6, 2014
RE: NY-18 Priority Projects

CDBG-DR Wallkill Project

The Wallkill River has flooded several times in recent years, damaging property and disrupting Orange County's agricultural economy. In 2011 alone, flooding caused over \$80 million in damage.

Currently, the lack of a cost-sharing agreement has halted flood mitigation work between the state and the Army Corps. The Army Corps project has languished and may no longer be the best option to achieve flood mitigation goals. The project may be best served by designating Sandy Relief appropriations for Wallkill flood mitigation, specifically the Community Development Block Grants for Disaster Relief, or CDBG-DR. CDBG-DR is the biggest single source of funds within the bill and is the most flexible in terms of their application.

Orange County Soil and Water has submitted a grant application to the FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for this project. Our office has submitted a letter of support for that application. However, County Executive Neuhaus has agreed to submit an additional, more comprehensive grant application directly from Orange County specifically for CDBG-DR funds. The Governor's support of this forthcoming grant application is essential to achieving this long-sought result for the farmers and communities of Southern Orange.

Exit 131/Woodbury I-87 Interchange

Exit 131 sits at the intersection of SR 17 (Future I-86) and SR 32, and is adjacent to the Harriman Toll Barrier to the New York State Thruway System. According to the NYSDOT Route 17 Transportation Corridor Study, Exit 131 experiences the heaviest traffic volume along Route 17, and Woodbury Common expansion plans are expected to further increase this volume.

The proposed renovation of Woodbury Common includes the construction of an additional 60,000 square feet of retail space, and is expected to generate 300 to 500 construction jobs, create 400 new retail jobs, generate approximately \$5.5 million in additional sales tax, and an additional \$700,000 in property tax. This expansion is vital for the economic development of Orange County, but without significant restructuring the expansion will drastically exacerbate the already untenable traffic issues at Exit 131.

Our office sent a letter in Spring of 2013 to NYSDOT Commissioner Joan McDonald requesting that NYSDOT include the project (Project ID#: 800684) in the State's application for TIGER 2013 funding. That request was denied by the Commissioner's office, which felt that the Interchange was not a good fit for TIGER because the project cost was significantly higher than a typical TIGER award. NYSDOT has indicated that the project will need to be done with a combination of funding sources from all stakeholders, and that P3 legislation is needed at the state level. In reality Orange County, Woodbury, and a private developer together would not be capable of contributing a majority of the funding for this project. The Commissioner's office stated that they were putting together a funding plan for Exit 131, but after more than 6 months that plan has yet to materialize.

The Exit 131 project is currently listed on the 2011-2015 Orange County Transportation Council Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and was submitted by NYSDOT Region 8 for consideration under the Strategic Transportation Enhancements Program (STEP). Phase 1 of the total project is \$40M. The

Exit 131 interchange improvement is the most critical transportation project in the Hudson Valley. The state has pushed back the start date to 2018. This project is already long overdue. Any start to Phase 1 of this project in 2014 would be seen as a major victory for the county and surrounding municipalities.

I-684 Resurfacing

I-684 handles significant daily commuter volume and is the main north/south connection between I-84 and I-287 east of the Hudson River. It carries average daily traffic volumes of approximately 65,000 to 70,000 vehicles. These sections of road are original surface and are roughly 40 years old. The first segments of I-684 were built in 1968 and the road was completed in its current form by the end of 1974. The roads are in desperate need of repair, but NYSDOT has previously and continues to insist that they do not have funds to complete all of the existing transportation projects and must focus on “priority roads”. The condition of I-684 is the most frequently cited infrastructure request of our Westchester and Putnam County residents.