

7. Conclusions

Summary

A handful of scenarios meet the village traffic reduction goal of 15-20%. (Round 1 Alternatives 1 and 6; and Round 2 Alternatives 2, 3, 2B, 3B, 4B). In all Round 1 and 2 scenarios, many major connectors change to LOS E except for two scenarios (Round 2, Alternatives 3 and 3B). The speed decreases and loss of reserve capacity can be tolerated, but the LOS E/F is not generally acceptable. Therefore, the alternative with the most support is Round 2, Alternative 3/3B. Based on the modeling results, implementing changes in capacity on Village roads is more effective in diverting traffic than removing user fees on toll roads.

Given current circumstances, it is not likely that the Thruway would consider removing user fees for portions of local trips. Yet, this Tech Memo could result in future study to determine if it would be advantageous to pursue that option further. In addition to the question of removing user fees for portions of the Thruway, providing an incentive or guiding traffic to use the Thruway was discussed as part of this modeling effort.

Overall, this study met its intended goal (to look at options to determine if further study is warranted). Liverpool Bypass (Round 1) met the traffic reduction goals, but it is the most financially expensive option. Round 2, Alternatives 3 and 3B could also possibly be considered in a future study to reduce traffic in the Village.

Member Agency Comments

Some SAC members had specific comments on the results of Rounds 1 and 2, as noted below.

The Onondaga County Department of Transportation (OCDOT) does not want traffic moved from the Village only to be concentrated on other roads in the area. If traffic is dispersed evenly on a number of roadways, the changes in volume would be manageable. Also, OCDOT does not support increasing capacity to LOS E or F on any of their roads. OCDOT does support Round 2, Alternatives 3 and 3B.

The City DPW was concerned with truck traffic that needs to use the Village or surrounding area as a through route or a destination route. Most likely truck traffic will be slowed down (a less dangerous option) or deferred to other routes.

The Town of Salina did not support any results with Old Liverpool Road nearing capacity (LOS E or F) as a result of other changes to the surrounding road network.

Next Steps

If a member agency or municipality wants to pursue a related project further, it should be submitted with a letter of support for the SMTTC's UPWP. Significant support would be needed; a major sponsor, such as NYSDOT or OCDOT, should be on board. This technical memorandum is a technical analysis as a precursor to a possible future planning effort.

Appendix A: SAC Meeting Summaries

February 28, 2008

Attendees:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>
Sean Murphy	NYSDOT
Megan Costa	Syracuse/Onondaga County Planning Agency
Tony DeStefano	OCDOT
Robert Geraci	Onondaga County Parks
Nick Kochan	Village of Liverpool
Mark Nicotra	Town of Salina
Pete O'Connor	City of Syracuse
Jack Silvia	City of Syracuse, DPW
Mark Territo	Town of Clay, Planning and Development
James D'Agostino	SMTC
Jason Deshaies	SMTC
Ahmed Ismail	SMTC

This was the first Study Advisory Committee (SAC) meeting for the Liverpool Transportation Modeling Project. The purpose of this meeting was to introduce the SAC members, review the scope, determine a geographic project area and develop preliminary scenarios to be modeled with the SMTC Travel Demand Model for the project.

SAC Member Introductions

The SAC members introduced themselves. Mr. D'Agostino thanked everyone for participating in this project.

Study Purpose, Scope, Status

Mr. Deshaies provided a brief overview of the project scope. The project is being done at the request of the Village of Liverpool and Town of Salina. The purpose of the project is to examine existing transportation conditions and plan for future transportation conditions through the use of the SMTC's Travel Demand Model (TDM).

Mr. Deshaies began the presentation, which explained generally what a TDM is, how it is developed, where it is used, and what types of inputs and outputs are associated with such a model. (Note: The Power Point presentation is available to SAC members upon request.)

Mr. O'Connor asked if the model used includes truck and commercial traffic. Mr. D'Agostino responded by explaining the model does not differentiate types of vehicles, but rather gives a total volume output. Mr. Kochan suggested looking at the new land use plans in Van Buren and Lysander for land use inputs into the model. Mr. Kochan and Mr. D'Agostino both mentioned that any corrections or improvements made to the model during this project provide a more accurate and reliable model for future projects.

Mr. Deshaies then conducted the presentation about the Village of Liverpool specifically. Members of the SAC agreed to the project study area as proposed by Mr. Deshaies. Further discussion between members was mostly centered on developing preliminary alternatives. Mr. Kochan suggested adding several local roads into the model to account for cut-through traffic. The group agreed to include Myers Road from Route 370 to Route 57, 7th Street from Tulip Street to Vine Street, as well as 6th Street from Route 57 to Tulip Street in the model.

Alternatives discussed included the Liverpool Bypass, NYS Thruway, modification of Onondaga Lake Parkway, and various road widening/narrowing at various points north and south of the Village of Liverpool. Mr. Kochan suggested a cost-benefit analysis on the bypass extension/NYS Thruway Alternatives. He also mentioned that the whole idea behind this project was basically to “shave” some of the peak hour traffic off the Village roads. Mr. Geraci noted that the Parkway seems to be the root of the traffic problem in the Village. Mr. Kochan responded by stating that the Village is not looking to eliminate traffic congestion entirely, but to reduce peak hour traffic volumes by 15%-20% as stated in the Village’s Commercial Market and Retail Analysis.

While members generally agreed it might take upwards of six years, development of the Liverpool Bypass from Route 370 to Henry Clay Boulevard may be a possibility and should be looked at in the model. Mr. DeStefano mentioned that the county never purchased the right-of-way for the complete bypass.

Mr. D’Agostino suggested that a potential “big-box” retail north of Liverpool be considered in the model for one of the alternative scenarios. The SAC members agreed that it should be modeled independently and any additional volumes created by such development noted. Mr. Kochan mentioned that Liverpool has recently promoted mixed-use development, and they are only looking to sustain the bicycle-pedestrian activities currently in their jurisdiction. Both Mr. Geraci and Mr. Murphy suggested that even if the Onondaga Lake Parkway had a reduced speed or lower capacity, exit 36 off of the NYS Thruway, Old Liverpool Road and many surrounding local roads would have to be closely watched in the model.

Mr. Nicotra asked if Destiny USA was at all considered in the model. Mr. D’Agostino responded by noting that the 2027 future base model includes Phase 1 (800,000 square feet) of the Destiny USA project but nothing else due to the lack of plans. Ms. Costa mentioned that traffic issues on the weekends may be different than typical issues during the weekdays. Mr. D’Agostino responded by mentioning that the model is a 24-hour model based on a weekday and does not model weekend conditions.

Mr. Deshaies concluded the meeting by reviewing the potential preliminary scenarios with the group including:

1. Change the attributes of Onondaga Lake Parkway and potentially Old Liverpool Road (e.g. lower speeds and capacity)
2. Encourage use of Thruway (e.g. no user fees)
3. Complete the Liverpool Bypass (from Route 370 to Henry Clay Blvd)
4. Traffic calming in the Village (e.g. lane reduction)
5. Addition of “big-box” retail north of Village on the corner of Route 57 and Liverpool Bypass

(Note: These are general descriptions of the preliminary scenarios. SMTC will produce maps and written details for each scenario. SMTC may combine scenarios if necessary. All scenarios will be discussed at the next SAC meeting.)

Informational Maps

SAC members were provided with maps showing the potential project area, current and projected traffic count and volume/capacity information for selected roads in the area. Information provided was for both the 2003 year as well as the projected data for 2027.

Data Requests

Mr. D'Agostino offered to send a digital copy of the Onondaga Lake Parkway Transportation Study to members of the SAC. Also, Mr. Deshaies agreed to create a graphic representing the potential modifications to the Liverpool Bypass and to send that graphic to Mr. DeStefano for review. The PowerPoint presentation on Travel Demand Modeling is also available to SAC members upon request.

Next Steps

SMTC staff will be setting up another meeting time, possibly in two weeks. By then, the Liverpool Bypass Alternative will have been looked at by Mr. Deshaies and Mr. DeStefano. The purpose of the next SAC meeting will be to review the existing conditions data and review the proposed scenarios to be modeled.

The meeting concluded at 11:30 a.m.

Actions:

- o Mr. DeStefano will look for previous John Glenn Boulevard and Liverpool Bypass plans.
- o Mr. Deshaies will prepare preliminary scenario mapping with transportation and/or land use modification details for SAC member review.
- o Mr. Deshaies will provide an electronic copy of the Onondaga Lake Parkway Transportation Study to SAC members that have requested it.

January 26, 2009

Attending:

John Eallonardo, Onondaga County Parks
James D'Agostino, SMTC
Jennifer Deshaies, SMTC
Jason Deshaies, SMTC
Tony DeStefano, OCDOT
Lori Dietz, MDA
Nick Kochan, Village of Liverpool
Sean Murphy, NYSDOT Region 3
Mark Nicotra, Town of Salina
Jack Silvia, City of Syracuse, DPW

Ms. Deshaies began the meeting with an overview of the purpose (goals) of the SAC meeting. She asked the SAC to think about options for Round 2 scenarios (Are there any alternatives that are attractive? Feasible? That the SAC wants to combine? Eliminate?) as the group reviewed the Round 1 results, and if there was a need to run any scenarios for Round 2 at all.

Ms. Deshaies also gave an update on a Thruway Alternative that was not modeling in Round 1 as scheduled. She explained that the model is not accurately reflecting the Thruway use because the user fees are not appearing. This doesn't null data; it just doesn't penalize Thruway trips. Although we don't anticipate much change, we will fix the user fees issue and run it in Round 2. If the difference is more than 10%, we will let SAC know and redo all of Round 1.

The SAC then reviewed scenarios in detail and discussed issues regarding the results. The results were summarized in the document that was mailed to the SAC prior to the meeting.

Volume to capacity (v/c) ratio maps were also completed for each scenario and shown at the meeting. The v/c ratio maps were e-mailed to the SAC after the meeting.

Alternative 1, Liverpool Bypass, shows a sharp increase in traffic on the current portion of the Liverpool Bypass, and the new portions of the Bypass are already nearing capacity. Many other east-west connectors also increase in traffic. This alternative significantly reduces traffic in parts of the Village.

Alternative 2, Onondaga Lake Parkway to 35 mph, reduces traffic volumes on Parkway by 38%, and a significant amount of traffic is diverted to Old Liverpool Road (42%-77%). This alternative decreases traffic in the Village in the range of 8% to 17%.

Alternative 3, decreases the number of lanes by one on Onondaga Lake Parkway, has a significant decrease on the traffic on the Parkway. It decreases traffic ranging from about 6%-12% in the Village.

Alternative 4, decreases speed to 35 mph on Old Liverpool Road, moves traffic from Old Liverpool Road to the Parkway and Buckley with minimal reduction in volume through the Village (2%).

Alternative 5, decreases number of lanes on Old Liverpool Road (1 lane each direction), has an insignificant volume decrease in the Village (about 1% decrease).

Alternative 6, traffic calming, includes reducing number of lanes on Oswego Street in Village of Liverpool (1 lane each direction), reducing number of lanes and speed on Onondaga Lake Parkway (1 lane each direction, 35 mph), and narrowing lanes on Oswego Street and Tulip Street. This scenario reduces volume on Parkway by 54%, and much of the traffic is moved to Old Liverpool Road (48%-74%). In the Village, traffic decreases consistently around 20%.

Alternative 7 adds "big box" retail on a corner of Rt. 57 and Liverpool Bypass. This doesn't create much change in the entire network, but does increase traffic on Liverpool Bypass 12%-14%.

Traffic in the Village is increased by 1%-3%, therefore if this retail change occurs, there may be a need for additional traffic mitigation.

After reviewing the Round 1 scenarios in detail, the SAC determined that there were enough options to pursue Round 2. The following scenarios were outlined:

Part A

Thruway Alternative from Round 1

Part B*

1. Onondaga Lake Parkway – 35 mph year round and 1 lane each way *AND* Old Liverpool Road- 35 mph and 1 lane each way (*Group 3- combine A and B*)
2. Reduce number of lanes by 1 on Oswego Street. in the Village of Liverpool *AND* reduce speed to 35 mph on Onondaga Lake Parkway *AND* narrow lanes on Oswego Street and Tulip Street (*Group 5- Traffic Calming minus the lane reduction on the Parkway*)
3. Reduce number of lanes by 1 on Oswego Street in the Village of Liverpool *AND* reduce to 1 lane each way on Onondaga Lake Parkway *AND* narrow lanes on Oswego Street and Tulip Street (*Group 5-Traffic Calming minus the speed reduction on the Parkway*)

*For Part B, then add in the Thruway Alternative

Ms. Deshaies noted that she would e-mail the summary of scenarios for Round 2 by Wednesday, and any comments would be due by Friday (1/30/09).

The next steps for this project will include a SAC meeting to review the results of Round 2 modeling, and then a technical memo summarizing the procedure and results. There will be no recommendations as part of the tech memo, and no public participation process for this project. If anyone wants to pursue any of these, it will have to be a separate project, with support, to be submitted for the next UPWP. The next SAC meeting was tentatively scheduled for either March 2 or March 4 at 2:00 p.m.

March 2, 2009

Attending:

John Eallonardo, Onondaga County Parks
James D'Agostino, SMTC
Jennifer Deshaies, SMTC
Jason Deshaies, SMTC
Tony DeStefano, OCDOT
Rob Dressing, NYSTA
Robert Geraci, Onondaga County Parks
Nick Kochan, Village of Liverpool
Pete O'Connor, City of Syracuse, DPW

John Reichert, NYSDOT Region 3
Jack Silvia, City of Syracuse DPW

Introduction

Ms. Deshaies opened the meeting at 2:00 p.m. After introductions, she gave an update on the results of the Thruway Alternative from Round 1. User fees are working correctly in the model now. In the Round 1 re-run, there was a change of around 3% in network adjacent to the Thruway, and 10% on Thruway. Maps are available to view; please contact Ms. Deshaies if you would like to see them. In the Base Updates, Longbranch Road now reflects a one-way bridge.

Review of Round 2 (including 2B, 3B, 4B) Scenarios:

Round 2, Alternative 1: Traffic increases on the Thruway 8%-16% and decreases in the Village 3%-6%. Volume to capacity (v/c) ratios (similar to future 2027 base) are reaching or at capacity for ramps (Thruway and other); Level of Service (LOS) E occurs just north of Heid's, Rt. 370 north of Longbranch, Morgan north of Wetzel, 81 at 90 and 690 at 695. Differences from the future 2027 base include Commerce Blvd. and Liverpool Bypass decreases in traffic, and increases on Thruway (near 81) and ramps.

Round 2, Alternative 2: Old Liverpool Road is nearing capacity, but Oswego Street just north of Heid's is improved. It meets the goal of 20% reduction of traffic in the Village. Regarding v/c ratios, ramps are at/over capacity; Thruway is at acceptable levels except for ramps and 81/90 interchange; Oswego Street just north of Heid's is acceptable (a change from the future base); portions of Rt. 370 are over capacity; portions of I-690 are over capacity; Morgan north of Wetzel is over capacity; and Van Buren Road and Rt. 48 is over capacity.

Round 2, Alternative 3: A basic summary of this alternative is significant volume reduction on the Parkway and significant volume increase on Old Liverpool Road and the Thruway. It meets the goal of 20% reduction of traffic in the Village. V/C ratios are over capacity on Thruway ramps, the Thruway between Electronics and I-81 ramps, and on Oswego Street just north of Heid's.

Round 2, Alternative 4: A basic summary of this alternative includes significant volume reduction on the Parkway and significant volume increase on Old Liverpool Road and the Thruway. It almost meets the goal of 20% reduction of traffic in the Village. V/C ratios are nearing capacity on the Parkway, Rt. 370 north of Longbranch and 7th North Street; but over capacity on some Thruway ramps and Oswego Street just north of Heid's.

Round 2, Alternatives 2B, 3B and 4B: These are very similar to Alternatives 2, 3, and 4, but with user fees collected/applied on the Thruway. The 20% reduction in traffic in the Village is still met, even with about a 4% increase in traffic due to the existing toll system on the Thruway. The Thruway is not a total solution; even when no user fees, not all cars will use that – they get dispersed.

Comments:

Based on the modeling results, implementing changes in capacity on Village roads is more effective in diverting traffic than no user fees on toll roads.

From a social/political perspective, to take a route away is more difficult to sell than using the Thruway, but it's good to offer an alternative. The key is not the Thruway (though it helps).

The question is whether it is even feasible to remove the Thruway user fees. It seems not, in the current climate, but this study will look at if we should consider it or pursue it further. A result is it can be used and it will work, but it is not critical. Mr. Geraci questioned how people could be forced to use it, and Mr. D'Agostino responded that they couldn't. Mr. Kochan noted that an incentive is needed. A 1991 study was discussed; the media coverage was not the whole picture. The reduced cost portions were limiting (i.e. tickets needed) and were done to help with a construction project in the Village, not to decrease traffic long term. No other permanent incentive or disincentive to use another route was given.

OCDOT looked in detail at the scenarios and facilities, including Round 1, prior to the meeting (except 3B and 4B that were handed out at the meeting). Five scenarios meet the 20% goal. (Round 1 Alternatives 1 and 6; and Round 2 Alternatives 2, 3, and 2B). In all cases, a county facility goes to LOS E except for 1 scenario, that being Round 2, Alternative 3. The decreases and loss of reserve capacity can be tolerated, but the LOS E/F is not acceptable to the County. Only Round 2, Alternative 3 can be supported by the County, unless capacity improvements to be made are equitably shared, as there is a decrease in capacity on Old Liverpool Road. Buckley, Old Liverpool Road, and Bypass are the key roads in looking at options. OCDOT does not want traffic moved from the Village only to be moved somewhere else in the area.

Mr. Silvia questioned if the truck traffic was with a destination in the Village (or general area). Mr. Kochan stated that in a retail study, the State wanted an upgrade, but community consensus didn't happen. Businesses thought that more traffic was good for business, but the study (Market Analysis in Liverpool's Comprehensive Plan) showed that more traffic was actually bad. Business was improved with a decrease in traffic. Trucks are slow, and that is OK. Some truck traffic does need to go through Village, and slower speed is not as dangerous. Other trucks can take interstates or other routes.

Comments were also submitted on Round 2 from people who could not attend the meeting. The Thruway Authority would like to change the term "penalty" to "user fees". Mark Nicotra, Town of Salina, noted that though the impacts in the Village are greatly lessened, it seems that Old Liverpool Road would be maxed out. He did not support an outcome with Old Liverpool Road nearing capacity.

Overall, it was felt this study met the goal (to look at options to determine if further study is warranted). The most beneficial alternative seems to be the Liverpool Bypass (Round 1), but it is the most expensive option by far. There may be other feasible options, if further study occurs.

Next Steps

A technical memo summarizing the procedure and results (which will not include public participation or recommendations) will be e-mailed to the SAC for comments, and completed by the end of the month. There will be no further meetings, unless a member of the SAC requests another meeting for discussion purposes. If anyone wants to pursue a project further, it should be submitted with a letter of support for the next UPWP. Significant support would be needed; a

major sponsor, such as NYSDOT or OCDOT, should be on board. The technical memorandum is not a public document. It is a technical analysis as a precursor to a possible further planning effort.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:45 p.m.