



DRAFT PROJECT SCOPING REPORT

INNER LOOP IMPROVEMENT PROJECT City of Rochester, Monroe County, New York PIN 4940.T7

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City of Rochester, Department of Environmental Services



New York State Department of Transportation



Federal Highway Administration

Prepared by:
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Stantec

PROJECT APPROVAL SHEET

(Pursuant to SAFETEA-LU Matrix)

A. IPP Approval:

The project is ready to be added to the Regional Capital Program and project scoping can begin.

The IPP was approved by

Regional Director

B. Recommendation for Scope Approval

The project cost and schedule are consistent with the Regional Capital Program.

Regional Planning & Program Manager

Regional Design Engineer

C. Scope Approval:

The project cost and schedule are consistent with the Regional Capital Program.

Regional Director

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LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

A	Go / No Go Traffic Assessment
B	Safety Considerations, Accident history and Analysis
C	I-490 Ramp Evaluation and Analysis
D	Main Street Alternatives
E	Minimum Lane Requirements
F	Hazardous Waste
G	Endangered Species
H	Probable Cost and Benefit/Cost Analysis
I	Memorandum of Understanding (Draft)

CHAPTER 1 - PROJECT SCOPE

1.1. Introduction

This report is being prepared by the City of Rochester to assess the existing Inner Loop transportation facility located on the southeast side of the City's Central Business District. The study's primary focus is to further develop and refine alternatives for the Inner Loop in this area, as previously identified in the City of Rochester's Inner Loop Improvement Study, dated September 2001, the Center City Master Plan, dated 2003, and the Rochester 2010 plan.

This project is about capturing the opportunity to reconnect neighborhoods, spur economic development, and provide an appropriately-scaled urban boulevard by the elimination of a grade separated, access controlled expressway facility. This section of the Inner Loop, which creates a barrier between neighborhoods, has served its purpose and is now greatly underutilized as a transportation facility. It is now time to rebuild this section of the city with a true sense of place and to the appropriate urban scale. To accomplish this, the City proposes to rebuild the neighborhood connections that once existed, provide for economic opportunity in the 9.4 acres that would be vacated by the expressway, and encourage a more sustainable and appropriately scaled transportation system. The intended purpose of this study is to examine both short term and long term alternatives for the corridor.

Herein, alternatives are organized to consider options for the primary corridor - Inner Loop from Monroe Avenue to Charlotte Street, and the connections at the south (I-490) and north (East Main Street) ends. Development of alternatives considered a facility of appropriate scale, size and configuration that best meets the community's needs for transportation circulation, access, neighborhood cohesion and land use. Considering this project is a Locally Administered Federal Aid project, this report is presented in a Project Scoping Report format in conformance with the NYSDOT guidelines.

The Rochester Inner Loop (NY 940T) is a Federal Aid principal arterial on the National Highway System that comprises an internal circulation ring around the Center City, connecting with I-490 in the vicinity of West Main Street and in the vicinity of South Clinton Avenue. This study focuses on the southeast quadrant of downtown, Monroe Avenue to East Main Street, where the feasibility of eliminating the facility has been identified as consistent with traffic demand, supportive of community objectives and economic development. This southeast section of the Inner Loop exhibits infrastructure significantly overbuilt for the transportation needs, and represents a physical barrier between downtown and the southeast neighborhoods. This report was prepared in accordance with the NYSDOT Project Development Manual and considers a range of alternatives for the corridor. A preliminary environmental screening of the project assumes the project to be classified as a Type II Action in accordance with the definitions of the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) Act 17 NYCRR Part 15, and as a Class III action under United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Regulations 23CFR 771.117(d)(1). The project is anticipated to comply with the requirements of a Categorical Exclusion with Documentation.



2007 Downtown Charrette Report Recommends:

"Eliminating the southeast portion of the Inner Loop may be the single most transformational infrastructure project we could pursue at this time."

1.2. Purpose and Need

1.2.1. Where is the Project Located?

The Inner Loop is an expressway that encloses the central business district for the City of Rochester, Monroe County, New York. Although the expressway is a continuous loop, only the portion of the loop north of Interstate 490 (I-490) is signed as the "Inner Loop". The official western terminus of the Inner Loop is at I-490 exit 13 west of downtown, while the eastern terminus is at I-490 exits 15 and 16 directly south of downtown on the east bank of the Genesee River. North of I-490, the loop is designated New York State Route 940T (NY 940T), an unsigned reference route, by the New York State Department of Transportation. This segment, however, is visibly signed with unique orange trapezoidal shields with the words "Inner Loop" in white.

The Rochester Inner Loop Improvement Study focuses on the southeast portion of the Inner Loop from Monroe Avenue to Charlotte Street, and the connections at the south (I-490) and north (East Main Street) ends. Exhibit 1.1 shows the location maps. The limits of the project study area are shown below. The study area has been split into three primary areas for the ease of analysis.

Area 1: Inner Loop expressway from Charlotte Street to Monroe Avenue

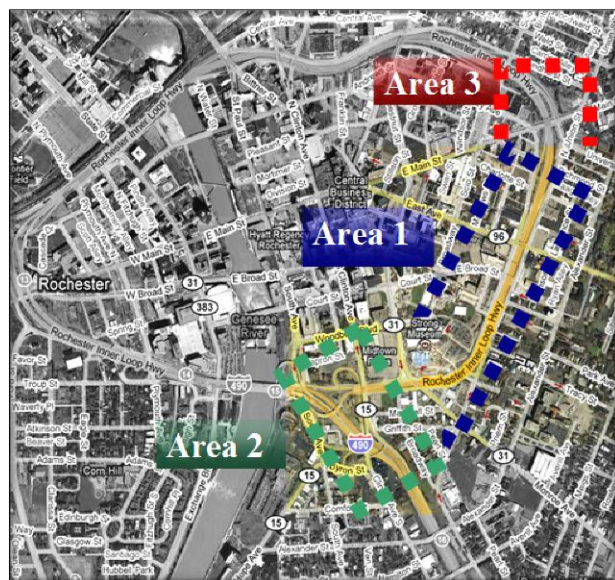
Area 2: Inner Loop Ramps to I-490

Area 3: Inner Loop Juncture at East Main Street, University Avenue and Union Street

Exhibit 1.1 – Location Maps



Source: GTC Transportation Management



1.2.2. Why is the Project Needed?

With the vehicle population explosion in and around the City of Rochester in the 1930's and 1940's, the New York State Department of Transportation and the City of Rochester developed plans in the late 1940's for a network of boulevards and expressways designed to reduce traffic congestion on the local city streets and improve access around the center city. The Inner Loop Expressway was part of the new network built to serve a function by better distributing traffic through and around downtown, connecting to I-490, and ultimately completing the intended I-390 extension to the Central Business District area, which never came to fruition. The construction of the expressway, combined with urban renewal, had a distressing effect on the surrounding neighborhoods.

Over the last 19 years, the City of Rochester has completed various initiatives focused on revitalizing the Center City and the surrounding neighborhoods in order to rejuvenate districts, thus providing for future economic opportunities in order to be able to compete in the global marketplace. These City initiatives have included:

- *The Vision 2000 Plan*
- *The Neighbors Building Neighborhoods Program*
- *City of Rochester's Inner Loop Improvement Study 2001*
- *Center City Master Plan 2003*
- *Rochester Regional Community Design Center – Charrette – A Community Based Vision Plan for Downtown Rochester 2007*
- *The Renaissance 2010 Comprehensive Plan*
- *GTC Long Range Transportation Plan 2035*

The 2001 Rochester Inner Loop Improvement Study assessed the existing configuration of the Inner Loop and identified feasible modifications that met the established project goals and objectives at that time. The 2001 Inner Loop study looked at a broader study area from the I-490 interchange on the south, to the North Clinton Avenue interchange on the north side of the Central Business District. The 2001 Inner Loop study area was broken into three segments covering the north section from East Main Street to North Clinton Avenue, from Monroe Avenue/Chestnut Street to East Main Street, and the I-490/Inner Loop interchange. Numerous conceptual alternatives were developed at that time for the three study areas including the Inner Loop proper, expressway connection on I-490 and the East Main Street juncture. The recommendation included more detailed traffic analysis and review of alternatives; progress three distinct projects through the Federal Aid process; and, the first phase implementation should be the southeast section from Monroe Avenue to East Main Street as an at-grade facility. The north section from East Main

Center City Master Plan 2003 Guiding Principles

- ❖ *Pedestrian Friendly Downtown;*
- ❖ *Connectivity;*
- ❖ *Greener Downtown;*
- ❖ *Beautiful Gateways;*
- ❖ *Elimination of the Inner Loop;*
- ❖ *Making the River a Central Feature;*
- ❖ *Encouraging Housing Development;*
- ❖ *Creation of Downtown Design Standards.*



Street to North Clinton Avenue has notably higher volumes and further evaluation will need to be progressed at a later time. The first phase was recommended due to the low volume of traffic and constructability factors. Hence, this initial recommendation for the southeast section is being progressed and refined herein.

The 2001 public involvement program included a Technical Advisory Committee, a Citizens Advisory Committee, and a series of public information meetings. The study identified various feasible alternatives that met the overall goals and objectives established for the study. The alternatives focused on eliminating the depressed Inner Loop expressway around the southeast portion of the City and providing an at-grade boulevard. No changes were recommended for the northeast section (East Main Street to North Clinton Avenue) of the Inner Loop, due to the fact that this portion of the Inner Loop carries significantly higher volumes (almost 2.5 times) and it is a major link in the overall transportation network. Further study of a possible westbound I-490 off ramp to the Inner Loop was recommended along with alternatives at the East Main Street juncture.

Since then, the 2003 City Center Master Plan (page 1-5) and the 2007 Downtown Charrette Report evaluated the challenges and opportunities associated with the possible removal or transformation of the Inner Loop in the southeast quadrant. Both studies focused on creating a plan for the downtown area including the evaluation of needs for each of the neighborhood districts. The 2007 Downtown Charrette Report identified the Southeast Loop area as having the biggest need:

“...to seamlessly connect the greater downtown and the southeast neighborhoods centered on Monroe, East and University Avenues. Streets need to be “right-sized” and reconceived as a complete environment for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit and private vehicles...”

The following provides a synopsis of the **Challenges** presented in the Charrette Report for the Southeast Loop area:

- *Overcome the barrier created by the underutilized Inner Loop between downtown and the southeast neighborhoods centered on Monroe, East and University Avenues;*
- *“Right-Size” wide streets that discourage pedestrian activity, while encouraging speeding and aggressive driving;*
- *Break up “superblocks” that impede pedestrian and vehicular movement;*
- *Maximize development potential of vacant and underutilized land.*

The following provides a synopsis of the **Opportunities** identified with removal of the southeast portion of the Inner Loop:

- *Makes it possible to reconnect University Avenue and create a major gateway at the east end of Main Street;*
- *Makes it possible to create a center for the East End that provides sites for new development, civic space and parking;*
- *Makes it possible to repair the damage done to South Union Street creating new infill development opportunities that complement the historic housing stock;*
- *Makes it possible to reconnect Monroe Avenue to downtown through the addition of continuous building frontages;*
- *A narrower Chestnut Street makes it possible to expand and improve Manhattan Square Park and create a major civic space in front of the Strong Museum;*
- *An extended Woodbury Boulevard improves connections to Manhattan Square Park and creates new opportunities for infill development;*
- *Extensive new infill development creates new neighborhoods that provide a built-in constituency for Manhattan Square Park and other downtown destinations;*
- *A narrower Broad Street provides new building site opportunities that would create a stronger public realm.*

The 2007 Downtown Charrette Report identified the need to connect distinctive districts and neighborhoods in Downtown. The Southeast Loop area occupies some of the most valuable real estate in Center City. While it is currently underutilized and underdeveloped, with careful planning and a consistent, coordinated effort, the opportunity exists to realize the original vision of a “new town, downtown” that completes and connects this portion of downtown to its adjacent neighborhoods. Within the southeast area, connecting the East End (west side of Inner Loop from Main Street to Broad Street), Upper East End (east side of Inner Loop from University to north of Howell) and the Manhattan Square (west side of Inner Loop from Broad Street to Monroe Ave) districts is essential, and removing the southeast section of the Inner Loop will make it possible. The study also identified land use recommendations, which are in harmony with the adjacent districts, for new development resulting from the removal of the Inner Loop. The removal of the southeast portion of the Inner loop can pave the way for the transformation of the remainder of the Inner Loop.

The southeast section of the Inner Loop is a four to six lane divided expressway with parallel two to three lane frontage roads. The frontage roads and the Inner Loop are connected with entrance and exit slip ramps located at service points in the system. This results in a facility that in some places has as many as twelve travel lanes and occupies a width ranging from 182 feet to 355 feet (curb to curb). This section serves approximately 6,990 vehicles per day just south of East Main Street, and 10,560 vehicles per day just north of Monroe Avenue/Chestnut Street. These volumes are better served by a lesser facility (such as an at grade boulevard), which is more in context with the neighborhoods and consistent with prior plans that call for the “right-sizing” of city streets. In fact, the volume of traffic carried by the frontage roads is higher than the volume of traffic on portions of the Inner Loop expressway. In addition to the previously mentioned multi-modal deficiencies and need for neighborhood connectivity, the pavement condition was rated in fair condition by NYSDOT (2010), and three multi-span bridges have structural flags.



Conceptual Sketch – Center City Master Plan

Thus the question, should the southeast section of the Inner Loop, which was designed and built in the early 60's to serve arterial level traffic, but today is grossly underutilized and creates a significant barrier between neighborhoods, continue in its present form?

With the existing facility reaching 50 years of service, it is now time to evaluate major rehabilitation/reconstruction options for the future, while considering the facility's context within this important urban setting. To accomplish this, the City has reviewed options to redevelop the corridor, rebuild the neighborhood connections, encourage economic redevelopment in the vacated lands by the expressway, and encourage a more sustainable/ multi-modal transportation system.

This study will expand upon the challenges and opportunities, as well as define feasible alternatives for the southeast section of the Inner Loop from I-490 to East Main Street. This study includes an analysis of transportation benefits, possible environmental and social impacts, the life cycle costs, as well as safety and structural analysis of the existing infrastructure that will remain in place.

In summary, based on reviews of the physical conditions of the transportation system, evolution and history of the system, as well as local community plans, the following provides an overview of capacity, highway design, structural issues, safety, community cohesion, economic redevelopment and environmental needs identified in the corridor. These are a summary of the information contained within this document, which assesses the existing and future conditions.

Capacity: The overall expressway system is operating significantly under capacity with traffic volumes better reflecting arterial levels. There is more traffic on the adjacent service road network than using the southeast section of the Inner Loop.

Highway Design: When the Inner Loop was constructed in the 1960s, highway design standards were different from today. The primary study corridor geometrics represent areas where deficiencies (non-standard and non-conforming features) are evident between past and present design standards. Inner Loop non-standard design features include: horizontal curvature, super elevation, sight distance and road widths (shoulders, medians and clearances) along the mainline. Non-conforming features include the layout of the existing slip ramps, which provide ingress and egress to the Inner Loop.

Structural Issues: There are 10 bridges in the study limits, with four major bridges (Monroe Avenue, Broad Street, East Avenue, and East Main Street) in the primary area. The East Avenue, Broad Street and East Main Street bridges will require future investment to repair current deficiencies. NYSDOT is currently performing emergency



preventive repairs on the Broad Street and East Avenue bridges.

Safety: The southeast section of the Inner Loop expressway is not shown to have safety concerns, as there is little traffic. Accident rates are below the statewide average for similar interstate systems. There are isolated safety concern areas on the local system such as along the South Union Street corridor (East Avenue and Broad Street intersections), with safety concerns attributable to sight distance restrictions from adjacent buildings and bridge railings over the Inner Loop.

Community Cohesion: Past public input, through various City community initiatives, has identified significant challenges surrounding the southeast section of the Inner Loop expressway, primarily related to livability and accessibility. These challenges include: overcoming the barrier effect, right-sizing the streets, breaking up the superblocks, and maximizing development potential. A seamless connection to the greater downtown and the southeast neighborhoods centered on Monroe, East and University Avenues is desired. Creating gateways to these districts, creating civic space and new/infill development to reconnect various neighborhoods has been identified. Streets need to be 'right-sized' and reconceived as a complete environment for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit and private vehicles.

Economic Redevelopment: The city has completed various initiatives focused on revitalizing the Center City and the surrounding neighborhoods (East End, Upper East End, Manhattan Square) in order to rejuvenate districts, thus providing future economic development opportunities in order to be able to compete in a global marketplace. The southeast loop area occupies some of the most valuable real estate in Center City and optimal use needs to be considered.

Environmental: A need for sensitivity exists related to the environmental resources located adjacent to the Inner Loop expressway such as: historic and cultural resources, parks and recreational resources. In addition further review will need to be undertaken to reduce or maintain the effects of the project on air quality, noise, contaminated and hazardous materials, and stormwater management. Consideration of these resources and potential impact areas are a need for the project as detailed assessments are progressed during the preliminary engineering phases.

1.2.3. What are the Objectives/Purposes of the Project?

The purpose of this study is to assess the existing configuration of the Inner Loop expressway and further define feasible modifications that meet the project goals. The project goals focus on considering a new vision for the southeast segment of the Inner Loop. The new vision fits Center City redevelopment efforts, the current traffic demand, and community needs, therefore improving the overall connectivity and the economic vitality of the City. The following summarizes the overall goals extracted from the City of Rochester's series of revitalization plans over the last 20+ years including some of the corridor deficiencies:

- *Consistency with the City's Vision for the 21st century,*
- *Create a properly scaled transportation facility that removes the barrier,*
- *Develop alternatives that will enhance neighborhood and downtown development, by maximizing development potential,*
- *Improve the aesthetics of the existing transportation corridor,*
- *Improve connectivity between Downtown and the surrounding neighborhoods by re-establishing a grid system,*
- *Improve multi-modal accessibility by breaking down superblocks,*
- *Minimize maintenance and long term repairs by addressing current deficiencies, and'*
- *Provide a cost effective long term solution.*

Based on the prior goals and the needs identified above, the following project goals and objectives have been established:

Enhance the Transportation Network

- *Eliminate structural deficiencies using treatment strategies that provide the lowest life cycle maintenance cost that restore bridge condition ratings or minimize future major investment in reconstruction.*
- *Improve geometric design through the application of appropriate design standards to minimize or eliminate non-standard elements and/or geometries.*
- *Improve connectivity and identify alternative mode improvements.*
- *Improve or maintain peak period mobility.*
- *Improve connectivity between Center City and adjacent neighborhoods by reconnecting the street grid system.*

Improve Public Safety

- *Reduce accident occurrences to at or below statewide average for similar facilities.*
- *Improve the safety of alternative modes of transportation.*

Support or Enhance Community Quality of Life

- *Enhance local connectivity between Center City and adjacent neighborhoods.*
- *Reconnect the street grid system by breaking superblocks.*
- *Improve the visual built environment through context sensitive design that contributes to roadside/street ambiance, community character and public safety.*
- *Encourage sustainable land use patterns that are consistent with historic districts and community needs.*

Enhance Economic Opportunities

- *Maintain or improve economic opportunities by addressing multi modal access.*
- *Create opportunity for new and infill development consistent with community plans.*
- *Support local community land use plans.*
- *Improve transportation system efficiency, reliability and reduce travel costs.*

Preserve or Enhance Environmental Health

- *Minimize or maintain air quality and noise impacts on adjacent neighborhoods.*
- *Minimize impacts on designated community landmarks and historic resources.*
- *Minimize storm water impacts and improve water quality.*
- *Support local, regional and state environmental initiatives.*

1.3. What Alternative(s) Are Being Considered?

Normally, there are several alternative scenarios that are considered when assessing the needs of a highway in a built environment including: reconstruct, remove, elevate, bury, depress or relocate the highway. In the case of the Inner Loop, past studies have eliminated alternatives to elevate, bury or relocate the expressway based on the underutilization of the existing expressway along with community needs. The feasible options at this time are to either reconstruct/rehabilitate or remove the expressway. The reconstruction alternative will be considered the traditional “no-build” scenario and will primarily include maintenance and rehabilitation of the existing highway, as needed.

In considering the removal of the Inner Loop alternative, a series of concept alternatives were developed as part of the 2001 Inner Loop Improvement Study. Additional concepts of what the removal of the Inner Loop may look like have been reflected in subsequent planning efforts (2003 Master Plan, 2007 Charrette Plan, and the Renaissance Plan). In cooperation with the City of Rochester and the Technical Advisory Committee that includes the New York State Department of Transportation, Monroe County Department of Transportation and the Genesee Transportation Council additional concepts were identified or refined for this section of the Inner Loop and summarized as follows.

Area 1: Inner Loop expressway from Charlotte Street to Monroe Avenue

- **Alternative 1A Remove the Inner Loop** - This alternative transforms the limited access expressway to a community-scale urban boulevard that will re-establish the street grid system. This option includes complete reconstruction and raising the Inner Loop to grade between Monroe Avenue and Charlotte Street along the South Union Corridor (east side). This alternative would eliminate bridges at East Avenue, Broad Street and possibly Monroe Avenue, and reduces the number of travel lanes from ten lanes to no more than five lanes. Ultimately, this alternative eliminates underutilized assets/infrastructure, reduces future capital expenses associated with maintenance efforts, and reconnects neighborhoods that were separated during the 60’s when the Inner Loop was constructed.
- **Alternative 1B Maintain/Rehabilitate Existing Expressway** - Under this alternative, the basic infrastructure would be retained and maintenance and rehabilitation efforts would be performed by primarily the State, along with City and County forces to extend the service life of the existing pavement, structures and adjoining service roads and intersections. Overall the existing facility is an expensive long term facility to maintain with its expressway and frontage road layout, retaining

walls and bridges at East Avenue, Broad Street, and Monroe Avenue. The original facility was built in 1965 and eventually will need significant investment.

Area 2: Inner Loop Ramps to I-490

- Alternative 2A, New I-490 Ramp - This alternative considers a new ramp connection from I-490 to the Inner Loop. The ramp would be placed on I-490 westbound immediately west (downstream) of the present two-lane Clinton Avenue exit. The I-490/Inner Loop interchange is currently a partial interchange, as the I-490 westbound ramp is non-existent. Access to this area from I-490 westbound is via the Goodman Street exit. This alternative would up-grade the interchange to fully directional. This alternative is only feasible if alternative 1A, Remove the Inner Loop, is constructed.
- Alternative 2B, Maintain Indirect Connection from I-490 – Maintain existing access to the general area via the Goodman Street exit. This is the no build alternative for Area 2, as access is provided via the Goodman Street exit and the Broadway frontage road (through city neighborhoods) to Union Street / Inner Loop.

Area 3: Inner Loop Juncture at East Main Street, University Avenue and Union Street

- Alternative 3A, Raise the Inner Loop at East Main Street (multiple options) - This alternative considers complete reconstruction and raising the Inner Loop to grade from Charlotte Street through the East Main Street juncture. This alternative increases traffic at the existing at-grade intersections of East Main Street/University Avenue/Union Street, which already has very complex vehicle queuing, pedestrian movement, and operational needs. Alternatives were found to satisfy project objectives; however, they would not have notable positive impacts and therefore were eliminated from further consideration at this time.
- Alternative 3B, Maintain Grade Separated Interchange – this alternative would retain the existing infrastructure as-is and routine maintenance and rehabilitation efforts would be performed by State, City and County forces to extend the service life of the pavement, structures, retaining walls and intersection operations. Should the “Area 1 -Remove the Inner Loop from Charlotte Street to Monroe Avenue” alternative be progressed, then downscaled ramp connections to the northerly Inner Loop would be included.

In summary, the outstanding feasible alternatives include removing the Inner Loop from I-490 to Charlotte Street, constructing a new at-grade South Union Street that reconnects the neighborhoods, and constructing a new ramp from I-490 to the Inner Loop. As a matter of procedure, the no-build options for both areas are feasible and will need to be carried through the preliminary engineering phase.

1.4 How will the Alternatives Affect the Environment?

The no-build alternatives for each of the areas are not anticipated to have additional effects on the environment. That being said, they also do not offer the opportunity to improve upon the environment either.

The preferred alternative further described in section 1.6, offers the potential to positively affect the environmental conditions in the corridor. A preliminary environmental screening of the preferred project alternative suggests the project could be classified as a Type II Action in accordance with the definitions of the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) Act 17 NYCRR Part 15, and as a Class II action under United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Regulations 23CFR 771.117(d)(1). The project is expected to comply with the requirements of a Categorical Exclusion with Documentation.

Removing the Inner Loop and transforming it to a community-scaled urban boulevard will reconnect the Center City and the adjacent eastern neighborhoods by allowing the original street grid system to be rebuilt (Charlotte Street, Woodbury Boulevard, etc.) as well as conversion of South Union Street (the new at grade boulevard) to two-way operation that will allow significantly improved access to adjacent properties. The combination of improved local access, lower travel speeds, and eventually new development consistent with existing communities will increase property values. ***The quality of neighborhoods and lifestyles will be positively affected as a result of raising the Inner Loop.*** The new roadway network and elimination of the expressway system will allow for improved accessibility by pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles between neighborhoods, eliminating the isolation of these neighborhoods from the vibrant Center City.

A preliminary screening to identify environmental effects that could result from the feasible project alternatives was completed and highlights are summarized as follows:

- ***Environmental Justice*** – feasible alternatives will be assessed during the preliminary engineering phase for impacts in accordance with EO 12898, Environmental Justice using the guidance of the FHWA Technical Advisory 6640.8A includes, as applicable: relocation impacts, community cohesion, changes to travel patterns, accessibility, safety issues, and other environmental impacts or project results which could potentially impose a disproportionate and adverse health or environmental impact on a minority and/or low-income population.
- ***Waterbodies, Watercourses and Stormwater Management*** - Coverage under NYSDEC State Pollution Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) General Permit (GP-01-10-001) will be required since the project will exceed the 1-acre of ground disturbance applicability threshold. The project-specific Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) will be developed in future phases. An Erosion and Sediment Control Plan will be included as part of the SWPPP. Since the project involves the conversion of an existing transportation system into a more context sensitive transportation solution, it will most-likely qualify as a “Redevelop” project.
- ***Historical and Cultural Resources*** - The approach for Historical and Cultural resources in the study area will be to avoid the resources where possible, minimize impacts and mitigate effects when needed. Based on our initial research, it is unlikely that significant, unknown archeological sites are located within the project limits. The project is located within the City of Rochester and there do not appear to be any areas within the study limits that have not been significantly disturbed by previous construction activities. A couple of sites were identified to be on the National Historic Registry within the project limits. In addition, many structures that are potentially registry eligible historic sites are located within the project limits. Our initial research also indicated that there are five register eligible Historic Districts in the study area. Further review will be necessary to determine and evaluate the project’s potential effect on the Registered and registry eligible structures.
- ***Parks & Recreational Resources*** - Initial research did not reveal the presence of recreation areas, and wildlife or waterfowl refuges within the project limits. Although the Inner Loop improvements may not require the acquisition of additional right-of-way (ROW) that is currently used as a public park or significant historic site, it is anticipated that the proposed project would impact lands with the noted uses. Therefore, Section 4(f) evaluation will be required and will be completed during the next design phase.
- ***Air Quality*** - The need for an air quality study will depend on the nature and extent of the proposed Inner Loop improvements. Portions of the roadway will be on a new alignment or widening of an existing roadway and therefore may increase traffic volume more than 10%; may reduce source receptor distances by more than 10%; and otherwise may change existing conditions to such a degree that attainment of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards must be further investigated. While future use of alternative transportation modes is difficult to quantify, expected reductions in vehicle emissions by 6-8% and fuel consumption is expected based on the projected traffic volumes assessed for this project.

- **Noise** - The proposed Project is a Type I project per FHWA highway noise regulations, 23 CFR 772, due to the significant change in the vertical alignment. Type I projects require evaluation for potential noise impacts. A detailed noise assessment will be required during the later design phase of the project. Although the vertical alignment change, which will bring the roadway up to grade, would generally result in increased noise levels to adjacent properties (receptors), the reduced speed on the roadway will result in decreases in overall noise levels.
- **Contaminated and Hazardous Materials** - An initial assessment of the project corridor was performed to determine neighboring areas that may present a concern to the project. Environmental Data Resources (EDR) Review identifies numerous sites that may have a potential impact upon the project. Based upon the preliminary project concept, analysis of potential environmental impacts is generally limited to management of excavated soil and worker health and safety issues. It is recommended that during the subsequent design phase, a review of these environmental sites be conducted to determine their potential impact on project design details.

During the subsequent preliminary design phase, if any additional environmental concerns not previously identified are evident, their evaluation and associated mitigation strategies will be investigated.

A full list of anticipated permit(s), certification(s) and coordination required for the project will be determined during the Design Report. The known necessary environmental approvals needed to proceed at this time are listed below:

City of Rochester – Department of Neighborhood and Business Development - Bureau of Planning and Zoning – these documents and processes will be completed during the Preliminary and Final Design stage of the project.

- Site Plan Review
- SEQRA and NEPA Compliance

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation:

- SPDES General Permit (storm water management)

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation:

- Cultural Resources coordination and documentation.

1.5. What Are The Cost & Schedule?

The following are initial probable costs (in 2010 dollars) for the feasible alternatives in the two areas as compared to the Null/No build scenario. The no build scenario is the community investment needed to ultimately reconstruct the Inner Loop Expressway in kind.

Retain Inner Loop Expressway (Null/No Build Condition) – based on the current condition of the Inner Loop, ultimately bridges, walls, railings, and pavement reconstruction covering 8.4 lane miles will need to be reconstructed.

Area 1: Alternative 1A Remove the Inner Loop expressway from Charlotte Street to Monroe Avenue. This section can be advanced as one project, or if necessary, based on funding availability, this section can be constructed in two phases:

Phase I – Construct a community-scaled urban boulevard from a new roundabout at Howell Street to a new roundabout at Charlotte Street including approaches. This phase would begin at the existing Inner Loop under Monroe Avenue and end under the East Main Street overpass

(Monroe Avenue would remain grade separated at this time). This phase also includes reconstruction of the grid system to include Charlotte Street, East Avenue, Broad Street, Woodbury Blvd along with a section of Pitkin Street.

Phase II – Remove the Inner Loop from the Clinton Avenue overpass to the Howell Street roundabout (this phase includes removal of the Monroe Avenue bridge) and construct a community-scaled urban boulevard. This phase can be considered at a later date, potentially with construction of the new I-490 ramp in Area 2.

Area 2: Alternative 2A Inner Loop Ramp to I-490 – this option includes a new connecting ramp from I-490 westbound to the Inner Loop. This ramp will provide direct access to potential redevelopment efforts that may result from removing the Inner Loop in Area 1. This ramp may be phased, if necessary, to a later time as part of the overall project, but cannot advance prior to removal of the Inner Loop (Phase II).

Refer to Section 4.3.4 for detailed costs and benefits of alternatives considered. Exhibit 1.2 shows a breakdown of the probable costs for Area 1. It is anticipated that a Draft Design Report will be initiated in October 2011 and be completed within 10-12 months. Final Design Report/ADP's are anticipated to be completed in approximately 8-10 months following Design Approval. The construction phase should be completed in a two year period. A detailed project schedule will be developed during the Design Report stage.

No Build Investment**\$23,663,875****Area 1 Investment
Range****\$18,160,000 –
20,855,000****Area 2 Investment****\$2,285,000**

Exhibit 1.2 Probable Cost - Raising the Inner Loop from Monroe Ave to Charlotte Street	
Basic Project Summary	Cost (2010\$)
Five Lane Roadway, Clinton Avenue to East Main Street (4,430 Feet)	\$ 2,800,054
Five Lane Roadway - Drainage	\$ 609,770
Side Streets (Monroe, South Union, Canfield, Broad, East, Charlotte, Pitkin)	\$ 1,449,224
Side Street - Drainage	\$ 471,627
Retaining walls (Charlotte to East Main)	\$ 583,500
Waterlines	\$ 681,504
Lighting	\$ 701,444
Landscape	\$ 387,617
Fill	\$ 2,485,333
Roundabouts	\$ 480,000
Structure Removals	\$ 720,000
Wall Removals	\$ 640,917
Signing and Striping	\$ 99,845
Misc (field office & temp concrete barrier)	\$ 148,000
Traffic Signals (Monroe, Broad, East)	\$ 360,000
Removal of south portion of Pitkin St	\$ 43,750
<i>Basic Contract Items Total</i>	\$ 12,662,585
Additional Costs	
Mobilization (4%)	\$ 506,503
Survey (3%)	\$ 379,878
MPOT (8%)	\$ 1,013,007
General Contingency Items (20%)	\$ 2,532,517
Design (12%)	\$ 2,051,339
Construction Inspection (10%)	\$ 1,709,449
Total Basic Project Cost	\$ 20,855,278

1.6. Which Alternative is Preferred?

Feasible alternatives including the no-build will remain viable options for further consideration through the design report phase. A decision will be made after evaluation of the alternative impacts, comments on the draft design approval document, and comments received from the public information meetings. The preferred alternative specifically focuses on Areas 1 and 2 which remove the Inner Loop by transforming it into a community-scale urban boulevard along the South Union Street alignment. This alternative allows for re-establishing the street grid system in the area including Charlotte Street, East Avenue, Broad Street, and Woodbury Boulevard. The preferred alternative includes the completion of the project terminus at I-490 with a new ramp. The Area 1 effort can be developed independently of the terminus option at I-490 and will address the corridor's long term infrastructure needs and is consistent with community plans. The preferred alternative includes:

- Area 1 – Alternative 1A Remove the Inner Loop by transforming it to a community-scale urban boulevard from Monroe Avenue to Charlotte Street. Pending funding availability, this section can be constructed in two independent phases. This alternative includes re-establishment of the street grid system.
- Area 2 – Alternative 2A Construct the new I-490 westbound ramp connection.

1.7. Who Will Decide Which Alternative Will Be Selected And How Can I Be Involved In This Decision?

The City of Rochester is the project sponsor for the development of the Inner Loop reconstruction options in close coordination with the New York State Department of Transportation as the project is a Locally Administered Federal Aid Project under the oversight of the New York State Department of Transportation in consultation with the US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration. The project is proposed to be advanced through the Federal Aid process in close consultation with the Genesee Transportation Council (MPO) and its involved agencies for future funding and implementation. Considering the premise of this effort is to eliminate a State expressway and convert it to an community-scale urban boulevard, the ultimate decision making will be made by the City of Rochester and the New York State Department of Transportation (with FHWA consultation) for the development of feasible alternatives and the Genesee Transportation Council for implementation funding. Throughout this process, the City of Rochester has, and will continue to, solicit public input. The initial study, completed in 2001, included a Technical Advisory Committee, a Citizens Advisory Committee, and a series of information meetings (June 22, 2000 and on November 13, 2000). The preliminary design phase and final design phase will include advisory committees and public information meetings.

Meetings have been held with local officials as part of the Technical Advisory Committee as listed below. The Technical Advisory Committee includes representatives from the City of Rochester, New York State Department of Transportation, Monroe County Department of Transportation, and Genesee Transportation Council.

- Technical Advisory Committee Meeting, October 15, 2008
- Technical Advisory Committee Meeting, January 22, 2009
- Technical Advisory Committee Meeting, March 5, 2009
- Technical Advisory Committee Meeting, December 8, 2009
- Public Information Meeting will be scheduled in October 2011

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