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TSTC Review Finds Issues in Tappan Zee Bridge DEIS

TSTC's preliminary review has found a number of issues with the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) for the Tappan Zee Bridge replacement project. Among them are:

1. The state has not fully examined all possible alternatives for the project. During the October scoping hearings, there was a clear call for public transit on the bridge, but the DEIS does not address it.
2. Despite a consensus among Lower Hudson residents that bus rapid transit (BRT) would solve the region's congestion problems, the DEIS does not plan to include it.
3. The DEIS suggests that the bridge replacement will have no negative air quality impact. TSTC regards this projection with skepticism, since previous environmental documents have said that public transportation was necessary to address congestion and pollution in the Hudson Valley.
4. The DEIS claims that the new bridge is in compliance with New York's Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act, a piece of legislation that requires infrastructure projects to incorporate sustainability measures and plan for the future. In particular, projects must "encourage and allow for greater public transportation options with the goal of reducing automobile usage." In the case of the Tappan Zee Bridge, this requirement is unmet.
5. The document ignores the economic benefits of building public transit. We maintain that a BRT system in the I-287 corridor would create jobs now and in the future.
6. There is still no financial plan for the project.

TSTC reminds New Yorkers that the public conversation is not over yet: there are public meetings on February 28 and March 1. We also invite people to visit our website, brtonthebridge.org, to learn more about the need for a 21st century bridge.

TSTC will release a more complete assessment of the DEIS next week.