

Questions to Maine DOT
Submitted January 9, 2012
By Carol Woodcock
Office of US Senator Susan Collins

I have attached several documents that I will refer to in my questions. Of particular note, I'd like to refer you to the I-395/Route 9 Transportation Study of February 2002 which, was prepared as a rationale for constructing a section of Maine's National Highway System from I-395 in Brewer to Route 9. In the opening paragraphs of the study, it lists improving system linkage is a key consideration in selecting an alternative route. It went further to state that "Alternatives that do not provide a limited access connection to Route 9 east of Route 46 would not provide a substantial improvement in regional mobility and connectivity and would negatively affect local access."

1. Was the PAC Meeting of 4/15/2009 the last public meeting where the I395/Route 9 Transportation Study was discussed?
2. Have there been any other meetings held outside of a public forum with any of the affected communities in this study area between the MDOT, the USACE or any other Inter-agency member of this Study Group?
3. Refer to the attached handouts from the 4/15/2009 PAC Meeting for the next few questions. . First, who compiled these handouts that were given to PAC members and the public?
4. What is the definition of System Linkage Needs to satisfy this study?
5. Looking at the same map - are there any alternative routes, with the exception of the Alternative Route 1 Upgrade, that do not meet the system linkage need of this study?
6. Does a connection point west of route 46 satisfy the System Linkage need of this study?
7. Refer to the Impacts to Land Use (acres) table, the Displacements table and the Impacts to Streams, Wetlands and Floodplains table contained in this same handout. Please read the note at the bottom of each table: *Note: Does not satisfy the long-term system linkage need that is satisfied by other study alternatives. What is long-term system linkage? How does it relate to the current alternative 2B-2?
8. Refer to the Purpose and Needs Matrix in this same handout. Who compiled this matrix? Does 2B-2 satisfy the Study Purpose?
9. Does 2B-2 satisfy the USACE purpose?
10. Does 2B-2 satisfy the System Linkage need of this study.
11. Does 2B-2 satisfy the Traffic Congestion need of this study.
12. Why was alternative 2B-2 carried further for consideration with these four known deficiencies? In the minutes of the 4/15/2009 Meeting it was mentioned that the Army Corps wanted one alternative carried forward with a west of route 9 connection point.
13. Is this the reason 2B2 was held for further consideration?
14. Please provide a complete definition of alternative 2B-2. Does alternative 2B-2 require a rebuild of the 4.5 mile section of route 9 from the connection point at Meadow Brook east to route 46? Or is it using the existing Route 9?
15. Identify all alternative routes that, per this matrix, satisfied the purpose and needs of this study.
16. Was the RING route the preferred route at that time in April of 2009?
17. Does the word "preferred" mean that the MDOT, USACE and all Agencies involved in this study had signed off in full acceptance of supporting 3EIK-2?
18. What changed after 2009, to remove the Ring route from its "preferred" status?
19. Did the RING route satisfy the Purpose and Needs of this Study?

20. Identify the four routes on this matrix that were removed from further consideration in Dec. 2010.
21. Why is 2B-2 now the preferred alternative if it does not meet the Purpose and Needs of the study?
22. There were 17 PAC meetings in the years of 2001 and 2003. At that time there were only two routes going to detailed studies: alternative 3EIK-2 and no-build - . There were two PAC meetings in 2008 and only one PAC meeting in 2009 - the last public meeting held. There are a few media reports that the issue was still being discussed but no record of meetings at all. Was anything being done from 2003-2008 or had this matter been temporarily shelved?
23. The 3EIK-2/RING route was the preferred route for about six years. These routes had been studied extensively. Sometime after the PAC meeting in 2009 and during early 2011, something happened to remove this route from consideration. What was it?
24. Were interagency meetings held to discuss this route? Were additional environmental, safety, or logistics studies conducted? Please provide me with correspondence, reports or studies that were undertaken or discussed during this time frame that ultimately led to a decision of removing 3EIK-2 from consideration.
25. Please refer to the Document titled USACE Highway Methodology Phase 1 Submission dated October 2003 page 5 of the summary. "Prior to the eleventh PAC meeting on February 20, 2002, the system linkage need was examined in greater detail to further aid in reducing the number of preliminary alternatives." To meet the need of improved regional system linkage while minimizing impacts to people, it was determined that an alternative must provide a limited-access connection between I-395 and Route 9 east of Route 46." Is it accurate to say that the system linkage need was the most important parameter that you were expected to meet? Does 2B-2 meet the System Linkage Need?
26. What is the cost of the study, including the PAC meetings? Was the PAC disbanded in 2009 because of a lack of funds? Are there funds available to resume PAC meetings?
27. When was the news of December 2010 available to the public?
28. Was anybody told not to release the information from the December 2010 Interagency Meeting until a later date?
29. When was the Maine DOT Study web site updated with the current map and text indicating that the only routes left in consideration were 2B-2 and two other similar routes though Brewer?
30. Have you taken into account the impact the alternatives would have on residences within 500 ft. of the proposed roadway for the alternative routes? Is there a set a criteria that are considered when the route would affect residences and, if so, what are those criteria and how are they applied?
31. Will a west of route 46 connection point do anything to relieve traffic concerns on route 46 and route 1A?
32. What are the plans for noise abatement for residences within 500' of the roadway?
33. If an owner objects to the state's acquisition of his property, will the state invoke its eminent domain powers?
34. What is the difference between improvements to route 9 or a rebuilt route 9?
35. What are the current plans to rebuild route 9 to connect to alternative 2B-2? Which would be completed first: the rebuilding of Route 9 or the alternative route for the interstate highway?
36. How much of that 4.5 miles east of route 9 from the 2B-2 connection point will be limited-
37. Will the proposed connecting route be built to interstate grade standards?
38. Is this going to be designed as a four-lane, divided highway?
39. Are there construction funds?
40. What do you anticipate as the process going forward?