

## **I-80/Route 26 Section A18 Local Access Interchange**

### **Policy Options for Consideration by the CCMPO Coordinating Committee In Response to Marion Township Request to Reconsider the Interchange (Revised June 18, 2009)**

#### **Current Status of I-80/Route 26 Section A18 Local Access Interchange and I-99/I-80 Section B18 High Speed Interchange Projects**

1. Because of fiscal constraint, the Construction phases of the Local Access and High Speed Interchange projects are not included on:
  - Centre County Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) 2030
  - 2009-2012 Centre County Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
2. The projects are included in the LRTP document as “Projects for Future Consideration”, which indicates that they are priority projects for which funding is not currently available.
3. The CCMPO has actively pursued funding opportunities to advance the projects.
4. Design of the Local Access Interchange is nearly complete, and the project will be ready for a September 2009 bid letting if construction funds are committed on the LRTP and TIP.
5. Design of the High Speed Interchange is approximately 60% complete, with a possible bid letting two years after the Local Access Interchange is bid.

*(Policy options follow on the next two pages).*

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<b>Impacts Associated with the Options</b>			
<b>Policy Options</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<p><b>Option 1</b></p> <p><b>Proceed with the projects as planned</b></p>	<p>Replaces the outdated existing Exit 161 with a new interchange that improves safety and traffic flow between the interstates, and eliminates conflicts with local traffic.</p> <p>Completes reconstruction of the I-80 mainline and replacement of the existing Exit 161 bridges.</p> <p>Improves emergency response service.</p> <p>Takes advantage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) Discretionary Grants Program as a possible funding opportunity.</p> <p>Positions the project for funding consideration in the new 2011-2014 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).</p>	<p>Increase in quarry truck traffic is anticipated on Route 26 between the A18 and B18 interchanges. This area of Route 26 has the highest concentration of residences in Marion Township. Additional truck traffic will increase conflicts with school buses, farm operations, and residents using buggies and bicycles for transportation.</p> <p>A slight increase in passenger vehicle traffic is anticipated on Route 26 north of the A18 interchange because of trips attracted from Route 150 through Howard Borough. An increase in recreational vehicles accessing the Bald Eagle State Park is also anticipated in this area. Concern has been expressed about conflicts with school buses, farm operations, residents using buggies and bicycles for transportation, and activities at the Marion Township Park.</p> <p>Impacts from incidents that close I-80 or I-99 and require traffic to be detoured to the Routes 26, 150, and 550; particularly the impacts of large trucks.</p> <p>Impacts from improvements to Route 26 relative to right-of-way acquisition needs.</p>	<p>Consider supporting Marion Township's request to complete improvements to Route 26 between the A18 and B18 interchanges prior to the opening of the A18 interchange.</p> <p>Consider strategies for directional and informational signing at the interchanges, and the possible re-signing of Traffic Route 26 to I-80 and Route 150.</p> <p>Clear designation of emergency detours for incidents that do not include use of Route 26.</p>

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<p><b>Option 2</b></p> <p><b>Stop the current projects, reopen the environmental clearance documents for both projects, and re-evaluate alternatives</b></p>	<p>May identify alternatives for providing local access that are less expensive, and have fewer community impacts.</p> <p>May reduce vehicle trips on Route 26 that are attracted from Route 150.</p>	<p>The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) may not be favorable to reopening the environmental studies.</p> <p>There is a substantial time element and cost associated with reopening the environmental studies to re-evaluate alternatives, with no guarantee that the current approach is not selected again.</p> <p>FHWA will require repayment of federal funds for previously-completed environmental studies and design phases, which would likely be drawn from the CCMPO's base allocation of funds for the TIP (for example, the Final Design phase of the A18 interchange is approximately \$5 million).</p> <p>May miss other funding opportunities while the re-evaluation occurs.</p>	<p>Continue to evaluate Route 26 between Route 150 and Exit 161 for improvements to accommodate current volume of traffic.</p> <p>Consider strategies for directional and informational signing at the interchanges, and the possible re-signing of Traffic Route 26 to I-80 and Route 150.</p> <p>Clear designation of emergency detours for incidents that do not include use of Route 26.</p>