



New Report Reveals that NYSDOT's Own Data Shows that its Proposal to Spend \$1.4 billion Widening SR-17 Would Not Be Cost-Effective

A close independent analysis of NYSDOT's own traffic figures reveals that the agency's proposals to widen Route 17 are unnecessary, wasteful and harmful. NYSDOT proposed spending \$1.4 billion (a preliminary figure that is likely to increase) to widen about 20 miles of Route 17 between Harriman and Middletown. A close expert review of NYSDOT's own Scoping Report reveals that the data does not support it. Here's what the numbers actually show:

The congestion problem is small and targeted — not corridor-wide.

NYSDOT's traffic data shows that today's congestion on Route 17 is concentrated in a single, short stretch between Exits 130 and 130A. The vast majority of the corridor operates at satisfactory levels during weekday commuting hours. Targeted, cost-effective improvements to this one section could address the problem at a fraction of the cost of widening the entire corridor. The NYSDOT report also significantly overvalues summertime, directional recreational travel on Friday afternoons westbound and Sunday afternoons eastbound, a tiny fraction of the hours that are contained in a 365 day year.

The traffic growth projections are likely significantly overstated.

The growth forecasts driving this project rely on household survey data from 2010-2011— before remote work, before the pandemic and before a change in driving patterns of younger generations. Even after reviewing updated data, the traffic growth projections for this project chronically overestimate growth, a trend that is shared by many similar agencies across the country. The actual ten-year trend in peak traffic volumes on Route 17 is down, not up.

Widening the highway would not have the meaningful impact on "safety" that NYSDOT claims it would.

NYSDOT's own statewide safety screening found no segment of Route 17 to be a high crash location. The corridor as a whole does not exceed statewide average crash rates. Targeted ramp and interchange improvements — not a billion-dollar widening— are the appropriate response.

Widening Route 17 will make traffic and pollution worse

The science is clear: adding highway lanes induces more driving. Widening Route 17 would generate an estimated 206 to 309 million additional vehicle miles traveled every year, the equivalent emissions of roughly 25,000 passenger cars annually, through 2050. This directly contradicts New York State's climate commitments and its commitments to provide clean air and a healthful environment to the surrounding communities.

Our region deserves smarter solutions.

The Marshall report documents in great detail that spending \$1.4 billion to widen SR-17 is not justified by independent cost-benefit analysis. In short, the report documents that spending that money would be a colossal waste of tax dollars.

Instead, that same \$1.4 billion could fund real transportation choices for the Catskills and Hudson Valley workers, families and visitors. Expanded transit, safer roads, and investments that strengthen our communities rather than just moving cars through them faster. It's time to [ReThink Route 17](#) and direct taxpayer dollars towards community-supported investments.