

M E M O R A N D U M

To: Route 109 Corridor Planning Committee and Interested Parties

From: Suzanne LePage, Transportation Planner

Date: December 5, 2003

RE: December 1, 2003 meeting of the Route 109 Corridor Committee

On December 1, 2003, the Route 109 Corridor Committee convened at the Wells Urgent Care Facility on Route 109. Those in attendance included: Mimi Cerveny, Dennis Emidy, and Fred Michaud from MaineDOT; Suzanne LePage and Josh Mack from SMRPC; Jim Gulnac and Bob Hardison from the Town of Sanford; and Jonathan Carter, Kenneth Creed, Edgar Moore, James Spiller, and Harry Tomah from the Town of Wells.

Suzanne LePage opened the meeting by describing the Draft Purpose and Needs Statement, which was distributed to Corridor Committee members prior to the meeting. Like the study undertaken last year for the Route 111/202 Corridor, the Route 109 Corridor Committee is intended to coordinate a variety of planning activities in an effort to preserve roadway capacity and enhance safety along the corridor. The ensuing discussion, summarized below, covered a number of topics and will be used to modify the Draft Purpose and Needs Statement. The major theme was how industrial, commercial, and residential growth in Sanford and Wells will both affect and rely on the future mobility of Route 109.

The next meeting has been scheduled for **MONDAY, JANUARY 12, 10:00 AM IN THE COMMUNITY ROOM OF THE WELLS URGENT CARE FACILITY.**

MaineDOT Reconstruction Project

- The Maine Department of Transportation (MaineDOT) has just completed preliminary design for the reconstruction of Route 109 between the Maine Turnpike Exit 2 interchange and the High Pine area in Wells. Mimi Cerveny updated the committee on the details of the design, which will include widening to two 12-foot lanes and 8-foot shoulders, horizontal realignment at two bridges, vertical realignment in two locations, and extensive reconstruction of the road base.

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MaineDOT Traffic Study of Corridor

- Traffic data was collected this summer and included traffic volumes, turning-movement counts, vehicle crashes, and headway studies. The data will be analyzed over the next few months.
- Traffic simulation models can be prepared for all signal-controlled intersections, including that at Exit 2, at which Selectmen in Wells noted long vehicle queues (backing up as far west as Route 9).
- The crash data analyzed in MaineDOT’s traffic study will not include those not reported to the state, such as “fender-benders” resulting in less than \$1000 in damages. It was suggested that the local police departments be contacted for this information.

Industrial Growth in both Wells and Sanford/Truck Traffic on Route 109

- Expansion of industrial uses is currently encouraged in both Sanford and Wells. Route 109 will increasingly be relied upon for the movement of heavy vehicles between industrial areas, Sanford Airport, and the interstate highway system.
- The speed of trucks moving through the High Pine area is a concern.
- There are approximately 125 acres of buildable land, which is zoned for industrial use, near the Exit 2 interchange in Wells.
- There are a high number of vehicle crashes at the access to the Wells Industrial Park, which is located to the east of Exit 2.
- The Wells Industrial Park currently generates approximately 700 trucks per day.
- It is anticipated that, as the Exit 4 area in Biddeford is experiencing tremendous retail growth, Exit 2 will increasingly need to support commuters and trucks.

Community/Land Use Planning

- The Route 109 Corridor Study, published in 1999 and adopted as part of the Wells Comprehensive Plan, designates the High Pine area for residential and limited business use and Route 109 north of High Pine to the Sanford Town Line as rural. Between Route 1 and the Turnpike, a Town Center is envisioned.
- Jon Carter recently made two requests to the Maine Turnpike Authority: (1) make improvements to the Exit 2 interchange and (2) reconsider an additional exit in the Moody area.
- Sanford is a designated Service Center and anticipates increasing residential and commercial growth, which will intensify the pressure on Route 109. There may be long-term capacity issues. The limitations on vehicle speed and roadway width

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through the High Pine area are a significant deterrent for access in and out of Sanford. It may be necessary to investigate the potential for a bypass.

- There are two properties in the High Pine area that are considered “historic” by the state. They are located across the street from each other, limiting the ability to widen the highway.
- MaineDOT’s Access Management Rules may not be strict enough for this corridor and do not apply within the urban compact areas. The two communities may want to collectively design and implement a consistent curb cut permitting process for the entire length of the highway.
- The Kennebunk, Kennebunkport, and Wells Water District (KKWWD) owns a significant amount of land in Sanford to protect its watershed, limiting development south of the airport.

Alternative Modes and the Route 109 Corridor

- Use of the Wells Intermodal Transportation Center for carpooling and accessing passenger rail will likely continue to increase in the future.
- The Eastern Trail will have a major entry point on Route 109, approximately one mile from the Wells Intermodal Transportation Center.
- Plans for Sanford Airport include designating it as a “Free Trade Area,” expanding the use of the airport for the movement of cargo, and serving private and charter passenger aircraft.
- The Wheels to Access Vocation and Education (WAVE) service runs along the Route 109 corridor bringing workers from the Sanford area to jobs and education sites in South Sanford and Wells. The demand for this service is expected to rise, and the need to maintain a schedule is critical to its success.
- There is not yet year-round transit serving the Wells Intermodal Center. The Wells trolley operates only during the tourist season. Also, there is no regular service to Sanford. However, there is currently an effort underway to study the potential for a “Coastal Explorer,” which would connect the coastal southern Maine towns with the Downeaster train service at its various southern Maine stops. Should such a service be implemented successfully, connections to Sanford via Route 109 and Route 111 may be a logical next step.
- Park-and-ride lots are another Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategy. Potential locations in Sanford should be investigated.