

'11 SEP 12 RCVD

September 6, 2011



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Janice Osadczuk
Engineering Services Team Leader
Federal Highway Administration
575 North Pennsylvania Street, Room 254
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

HDA-IN

Re: Louisville-Southern Indiana Ohio River Bridges Project Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS)

Dear Ms. Osadczuk,

TARC is responding to your letter dated Aug. 10 soliciting review and comment within 30 days of receipt regarding a Draft Range of Alternatives Document relating to the Bridges Project.

TARC is pleased that the document states that a range of alternatives including mass transit from the 2003 FEIS will be reevaluated to determine if they warrant detailed study as viable alternatives.

The potential for enhanced bus service and mass transit to help address the project's purpose and need as part of any selected alternative deserves careful consideration especially in light of plans to scale back the project and to rely on tolls to help cover the costs. Public transportation can help relieve traffic congestion, thus improving safety, reduce air pollution, and provide a cost-effective means of travel for people needing to get to and from jobs, educational opportunities and other destinations. Public transportation is a lifeline and the only option for many people to access necessities and what life has to offer.

TARC has recently demonstrated the popularity of public transportation in Louisville with convenient, predictable service. On our two major routes, ridership has increased dramatically – 30 percent - since February when TARC was able to improve service so that buses arrive at all stops every 15 minutes from 6 a.m. – 9 p.m. on weekdays. The public has embraced this frequent service and a recent survey commissioned by a task force appointed by Mayor Greg Fischer indicated TARC users want improved bus service.

Enhanced bus service was part of the selected alternative for the project in 2003, although specifics were not clearly defined. Because the construction phase will cover a long period of time, enhanced bus service will be needed to help maintain traffic flow. This service could in some ways become permanent as a result of the public's familiarity with the service and the direct benefits to users and the general public.

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TARC believes enhanced public transportation, both during construction and as part of the built project, will benefit the project and the greater community. Planning, design, construction and funding for enhanced bus service should be incorporated in the project's development/traffic maintenance plan and should be part of the completed project.

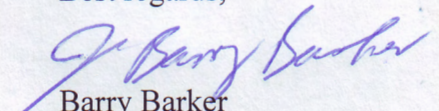
Specifics to be addressed include: ensuring that turning radii, lane widths and other project features meet design criteria to accommodate buses; establishment of permanent park-and-ride facilities in final construction contracts; express and shuttle bus service during construction; improved and/or new bus stops, shelters, benches, sidewalk access and pull-off areas for buses; and an aggressive public information campaign and increased tools including use of emerging technology to communicate with the public about public transportation service and arrival times of buses.

Because the use of public transportation has community-wide benefits and because many people are dependent on public transportation as their travel option for economic, disabilities and other reasons, TARC services and the passengers who use public transportation in the project area should be exempt from paying any tolls associated with the project.

TARC looks forward to working with Bridges Project representatives on issues relating to public transportation and to improving mobility and public safety on our roads and bridges throughout Greater Louisville.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments.

Best regards,



Barry Barker
Executive Director