

# UCTC City of Kingston Intermodal Facility Facility Site Location & Conceptual Design Analysis

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### LOCATION ANALYSIS

#### Goals and Objectives

The project goal was developed at the kick-off meeting with the TAC on October 11, 2006. The goal was to establish an intermodal facility which would act as a catalyst for economic development, integrating tourism into the program. The program would combine the various transportation organizations in order to create a more efficient, integrated, facility. This will be accomplished in a collaborative, cost effective manner, while meeting appropriate programming, scheduling, environmental and cost parameters.

#### Initial Potential Sites

The main purpose of early TAC meetings was to discuss and determine the appropriate grading criteria for scoring the sites to be considered for the Kingston Intermodal Facility. The potential sites were selected from a pool of commercial properties based on a combination of the following criteria:

- Identification by the Abrams-Cherwony Report
- Vacancy
- Sufficiency of size to accommodate the program, either alone or in combination with adjacent properties
- Optimal location due to highway access or surrounding context

Analysis of the defined study area revealed a limited number of properties / parcels that fulfill one or a combination of the above criteria. Based on criteria defined by the TAC, 16 sites were identified as potential locations for the new intermodal facility. Maps of the defined Washington Avenue Corridor Study Area, the locations of the initial 16 sites, and a matrix analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of the 16 sites are provided at the end of this section.

Based on these 16 sites selected, test fit site plans were applied to specific sites chosen (S1, S2, S7, S8, S15) to determine if the desired program could be accommodated. From these initial test fits some were further studied and others were eliminated due to constraints of property acquisition or the inability to accommodate the desired space program. These test fits are provided at the end of this section.

Subsequently, the consultant team made an initial recommendation that five of these potential sites be advanced for further development, tasking the committee members to review their recommendation in order to make the final determination. The committee decided to wait for the results of the January 30, 2007 Public Information Meeting before deciding which sites should be advanced. Committee members were asked to consider the identified sites and provide feedback to Wendel Duchscherer. It

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was suggested this feedback include which sites seem most viable, which do not, and reasons why.

The summary of the TAC's recommendations are as follows:

Site Designation	Number of Recommendations
S1 Existing Terminal with Platers Company	6
S2 Former Sheriff's Office	4
S15 Broadway & I-587 intersection (Domino's area)	3
S9 Existing Visitor's Center	2
S11 East end of the Plaza	2
S3 West end of the Plaza	1
S5 Vacant site south of I-587 bet. Sandy Road & Powell Lane	1
S12 Lilli Pond of Kingston	1
S14 Uptown Parking Garage	1
S16 WKNY	1

The following sites received no recommendations for further study:

- S4 Vacant site south of I-587 between Sandy Road and Esopus Creek
- S6 Corn field at the northeast intersection of I-587 & Sawkill Road
- S7 Vehicle repair shop at the northwest intersection of I-587 and Sawkill Road
- S10 Vacant site immediately south of Trailways maintenance shop
- S13 Dock Street Associates site, north of I-587

In regards to site S8, it was unavailable at the time of initial screening, however it became available later in the study effort.

In their initial feedback to Wendel Duchscherer, Trailways did not recommend further study of site S11 (the east end of the Plaza). However, Trailways has since stated they would consider utilizing this site as the new Intermodal Center under the condition that dedicated entry and exit ramps from I-587 be constructed as part of the project.

### Sites selected for further study

After significant discussion, it was decided to advance the following sites for more detailed study and analysis:

- S1 Existing Terminal with Utility Platers (both as stand alone and in combination with S2).
- S2 Former Sheriff's Office (both as stand alone and in combination with S1).
- S9 Existing Visitor's Center.

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- S11 East end of the Plaza, with the condition new dedicated entry and exit ramps from the I-587 would be constructed.
- S12 Lilli Pond of Kingston, in conjunction with the existing Kingston Hospital Dialysis Center on Albany Avenue.

Though not being advanced at this time, it was also agreed that a detailed study sketch would be developed for site S15 to analyze its area and size in relation to the current program. Trailways, however, does not feel site S15, even with a new roundabout at the I-587 / Broadway intersection, would be a viable location for their operation due to traffic access and congestion issues. The detailed study sketch illustrated that the parcel would not be sufficient to provide adequate space for both the transportation station and on-site parking.

S3 was not pursued primarily due to the adjacent residential community (the Dutch Village Apartments) and the conflict with the existing rail right-of-way and associated potential "rails to trails" development. S14 was not pursued primarily due to its insufficient size to accommodate the program, traffic issues with the Kingston Plaza entrance, and its designation as the site of a proposed mixed-use development project considered a "high and better use" for that location. S16 was ruled out as not as optimal or advantageous in comparison with the other potential sites.

The City stated there is potential to consider constructing a parking structure on the existing surface lot located on North Front Street directly behind the existing car dealership on Schwenk Drive. They recommended this be considered as part of the development option for site S2, wherein parking for the new facility could be accommodated by this parking structure. The City would prefer the Plaza site to be considered holistically, and not necessarily identified as the "Hannaford Plaza Site" and the "Ames Plaza Site". However, it was also acknowledged that the site at the west end of the Plaza, near the former Ames store, would present challenges due to its adjacency to the Dutch Village Apartments. The City does not prefer the new Intermodal Center be located near the intersection of the I-587 and Broadway (site S15), citing the same traffic and access issues as Trailways. The UCTC will initiate a study later this year to analyze the feasibility of constructing a roundabout at this intersection and has also recommended a cost benefit analysis be performed for the proposed dedicated entry and exit ramps from the I-587 to a potential Plaza site. In relieving traffic access and congestion issues, these ramps may benefit the entire area.

Site S5 was not advanced for further study. While it was acknowledged that this site had excellent potential due to its size and proximity to I-587, the City stated the costs associated with mitigating the flood plain issues would be cost prohibitive and ill-advised. The City stated that property acquisition costs, not mitigation, should be the goal for funding allocations. They further added that site S5's location did not offer ideal visibility for an intermodal facility and associated economic development. It is problematic since it is immediately adjacent to residential properties. Based on current planning efforts, left hand turns from Washington Avenue to this property may not be allowed.

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The City also expressed concern for site S9, likewise located in the flood plain, for the same reasons as noted for site S5. Ulster County Planning recommended the combination of site S12 and the Dialysis Center on Albany Avenue be studied in more detail. There was a possibility of some consolidation within the local medical community, allowing this site to become available. One of the advantages of this site, should it be vacated, would be adaptively reusing part of the existing building for the new terminal building. Additional analysis revealed the grade differential between the two parcels would be too significant to overcome; therefore, this option was dropped from further consideration.

NYSDOT stated their agreement with advancing sites S1 and S2 for further study. Previously, NYSDOT had stated the desire to avoid major highway work as part of this project, but have since agreed to consider consenting to roadwork if the TAC deems it the most appropriate approach.

NYSDOT also feels the option of a combination of sites S1 and S2 should be studied, and have stated that the parking issues need to be properly addressed. This may mean including a parking structure and/or a park-and-ride lot in the design options, depending on the site. Ideally, the park-and-ride lot would be located close to the existing traffic circle. Depending on the direction which the project takes, UCTC staff commented that NYSDOT and NYSTA may need to pursue additional park-and-ride lots as a separate issue.

Trailway's input was essential to each site development study. Even though they stated their natural preference was Site 1, home to their current facility, they would be amenable to relocate their operation. The ability to acquire the adjacent parcels to expand their operation appealed to continuing the commitment to their regular ridership. Trailways also thought site S8 was a viable location due to its adjacency to I-87 and I-587.

Citibus has stated that the sites being advanced for further study are viable locations for the new intermodal facility, with the possible exception of site S9, due to the site's poor pedestrian access. Given that Citibus users are predominantly pedestrians, site S9 would not be optimal for their central operations.

A summary of the TAC's feedback for the sites being advanced for further study is as follows (refer to the end of this section for conceptual site development options for these sites):

Site S1: (Toward the end of the study, this site became unavailable due to private development)

- A. This site plan layout resulted from responding to the various constraints of the parcels, both in area and elevation (existing grades). The constraints primarily consist of 1) no access from Washington Avenue and North Front Street; 2) the area

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- and geometry of the three parcels being utilized; and 3) significant elevation (grade) differentials across the parcels.
- B. No access from Washington Avenue and North Front Street would necessitate access from Frog Alley and / or Schwenk Drive, which would require property acquisition or establishment of easements through parcels which are not currently available.
  - C. Additional property may be needed in order to make this site function as desired.
  - D. This site option needs to be a denser urban design. Utilize a multi-story building approach and consider using an extension (overhang) of the second and/or third floor as a "canopy" for the buses.
  - E. Consider using the elevation / grade differential as an opportunity to recess a portion of the new building into the site as part of the operation design. This may result in various points of access for different operational components (park-and-ride users, kiss-and-ride users, pedestrians, etc.) occurring on different levels.
  - F. The new building should be located adjacent to the intersection, if possible.
  - G. Consider providing access into the site from North Front Street by stopping westbound traffic at the diner.
  - H. There was an expressed concern regarding using Frog Alley as the primary bus access. As a narrow street, its use as the primary site access would potentially preclude on-street parking.
  - I. Reconsider the "no access from Washington Avenue" constraint. This constraint was established by the Washington Avenue Corridor Study prepared for the City of Kingston. Consideration should be given to a "bus only" access point to the site from Washington Avenue, if necessary.
  - J. Consideration should be given to incorporating the existing diner into the new facility in such a way that it retains its own identity, access and parking, and also provides convenient access for user of the intermodal facility.
  - K. The relocation of two popular local businesses is a concern.

### Site S2:

- A. The established constraint for this site was to utilize only the former Sheriff's Office and the existing car dealership properties. This site option offers a very safe configuration, since all users embark or disembark on a central island and can transfer without having to cross vehicular traffic, with the exception of long-term parking.
- B. Availability must be accurately determined for this property. It is not known if the former Sheriff's office is under a long-term lease. At the time, no contact was made with the car dealership.
- C. The primary reservation is in regards to the amount of modification required to Schwenk Drive, and the resulting traffic control issues introduced with the buses entering and exiting along Schwenk Drive.
- D. Wendel Duchscherer was asked to do a concept sketch showing the potential connection to the City-owned parking lot on North Front Street, based on the premise that the parking lot would have sub-grade parking levels, with a possible parking structure above.

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Site S1a:

- A. This option combines the existing terminal site (S1) and the former Sheriff's site (S2). To date, the only viable option is to locate the long-term parking on the S2 site, with the remaining components of the new intermodal facility to be located on the S1 site.
- B. It was universally agreed this separation of long-term parking from the other components was impractical. The distance between the lot at site S2 and the new facility would be too great for users to reasonably walk with luggage but too short to warrant shuttle service. Additionally, the site is not ADA accessible due to steep grades.
- C. One thought expressed by the City was the potential to relocate Esposito's and the tree service business to the former Sheriff's site, and then use these vacated parcels to supplement the options for site S1.
- D. In addition, the same property availability issues as outlined for sites S1 and S2 apply to this option.
- E. Since this option is so dependent on the configuration of site S1, it was agreed this option would be further studied once the option for site S1 is finalized.

Site S9:

- A. While this site has sufficient size and capacity for the new intermodal facility and a significant amount of support parking, the main concern with this option is it is located within the 100-year flood zone.
- B. This site is not convenient for the majority of Citibus and UCAT users who are pedestrians and must walk to their bus stop. This site is a significant distance from the urban neighborhoods where most of the Citibus and UCAT users originate and/or are employed.
- C. It was also noted the new vehicle access to Washington Avenue required by this option, along with possible new traffic signals, would potentially conflict with traffic engineering standards required by the Washington Avenue Study recommendations.
- D. In the last meeting, the County mentioned the owner of this site was attempting to contact them. This is still in progress.

Site S11:

- A. This option presumes new dedicated access for buses is provided from I-587 to the new Intermodal Center. This is a requirement stipulated by Trailways before it will consider this site a viable option for their operations and be willing to relocate to this location. NYSDOT has previously stated that they prefer a site that does not require a costly, heavy highway work; however, they are willing to consider this an option.

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- B. The property owner has been contacted about this project and is willing to discuss property acquisition, with the qualification that his final decision would be based on the proposed design.
- C. An access between the new intermodal facility and the rest of the Plaza must be provided for Citibus and UCAT. This will be for their use only.
- D. The exact configuration of the access opening at the I-587, and the entire issue of decertifying the I-587, needs further investigation based on FHWA regulations. Construction of a roundabout at this location was offered as a possibility.
- E. The Committee felt that cars and buses should be allowed to use the dedicated access from the I-587, with separation of cars and buses occurring at some demarcation point between the I-587 and the new facility. Allowing cars to use this access would provide for traffic congestion relief in the surrounding area.
- F. Before this option can be finalized, a meeting with the property owner must occur in order to determine if there are any location constraints. The City will arrange for this meeting and Wendel Duchscherer will attend.

### Additional Discussion and Analysis

Two additional site plan layouts for the existing terminal site were created. These were identified as S1 Option 2 and S1 Option 3. In order to address specific concerns and issues raised by the TAC members concerning the existing terminal site, additional site grades were obtained, allowing Wendel Duchscherer to produce these two additional options.

The difference between the two options is the number of parcels utilized. S1 Option 2 is based on utilizing just three parcels (the existing terminal, the existing adjacent parking lot, and the Utility Platers' property). S1 Option 3 is based on utilizing the adjacent diner and tree service parcels in addition to the other three parcels.

After discussing Options 2 and 3, the committee tasked Wendel Duchscherer to develop a fourth option that would incorporate selected components from Options 2 and 3. The established guidelines for Option 4 would be:

- A. Leave the diner at its current location.
- B. Provide a new bus-only driveway, south of the existing diner, from North Front Street. An easement would be necessary for this new driveway. This would be the only bus access for the site.
- C. Revise the parking for the diner to accommodate the new bus-only driveway.
- D. Provide an exit-only curb cut for the buses onto Washington Avenue, right-out only.
- E. Provide parking for 150 cars by designing a parking structure with below and above grade levels as necessary to meet that quantity.
- F. Provide a cars-only access into the new parking structure from Schwenk Drive, right-in and right-out only.

As a result of these guidelines, Option 4 was an exploration of a two-level facility for bus and cars, with the bus slips located on the second level. This would allow for the

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intermodal facility, and any associated development, to have a much larger ground floor area available while creating an urban edge and feel with prime pedestrian access. However, operational issues and concerns associated with bus passengers with luggage being required to traverse escalators or use elevators, discourage this option from being accepted.

This led to the conception of Option 5, which was developed during an intensive work session with Trailways, Citibus, UCAT, NYSDOT, UC Planning, UCTC, and the design team. While all agreed Option 5 was an optimal solution operationally, it generated concern over the amount of property acquisition required to construct it, as well as associated issues regarding construction costs and loss of tax revenue.

Therefore, Wendel Duchscherer was tasked with one more effort to produce a design that incorporated the most advantageous aspects of Option 5, while using less property. This resulted in a final design option for site S1 that was actually a variation of the previous Option 3. This final option is called S1, Option 3, Rev. 1, and may be reviewed at the end of this section.

Based on the TAC feedback and work sessions with Citibus, UCAT, Trailways and the Kingston Plaza owner, five options were developed for site S11. Throughout the course of this study, site S11 was a strong contender for locating the new intermodal facility, primarily due to its proximity to the de facto local bus hub outside of Hannaford's in the Kingston Plaza, the amount of available area for development, and the Plaza owner's willingness to partner with the project. However, there were overriding concerns regarding the expense and time associated with constructing four-way access and exit ramps to I-587, which was a condition of Trailways agreeing to relocate to this location. In addition to the significant construction expense, as well as issues of ownership and maintenance of the ramps, the time involved with implementing the required NEPA and SEQR environmental processes, with no guarantee of a favorable outcome, would likely take a minimum of several years to complete. These challenges discouraged the TAC from recommending site S11 be advanced for further three-dimensional conceptual design.

### **Final Sites Recommended by the TAC for Further Study**

#### S1 Existing Trailways Site

- All agreed this site should be one of two advanced.

#### S8 Ulster/Sawkill Road Site

- Site S8 re-entered at this phase because the property, which was initially off the market, became available for development. When the property became available, the TAC requested that Wendel Duchscherer study options for accommodating the new intermodal facility on this site. It became apparent this site had more than sufficient area to accommodate the program and vehicle circulation required. Its close proximity to the thruway entrance and existing

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park-and-ride lot are also strong advantages of this location, as is its potential to convey a "gateway image" for the region. Due to the significant costs and time associated with constructing dedicated access and exit ramps to I-587 for site S11, as previously described, the TAC recommended this site, instead of site S11, be advanced along with site S1 for three-dimensional design study. While in a floodplain, this does not preclude the site from being studied. The public pointed out that this is not a pedestrian friendly site and quite removed from the urban core. The public did not endorse this site.